Whenever Kim doubts that his eyesight will not return; he falls into a deep depression. Many times, he holds his forehead and bows his head as he mumbles to the other wounded soldiers in his room, “I am desperate. I am confused. I do not know what is happening to me. I do not know what to believe. I don’t know who to believe. Don’t they know anything? I know that I am in total darkness.”

Zelda, a middle-aged nurse in the room overhears Kim. She tells him. “Soldier, you are right. The doctors don’t know, but they are not telling you lies. The diagnosis and testing of blindness has a long way to go to be exact. It will take at least twenty or thirty years to have better x-rays, medical diagnostic equipment, and testing. You don’t have twenty or thirty years to wait. You need to take the bull by its horns and begin to try now!”

Kim doesn’t have a chance to answer her because an attendant has come to take him to see his psychologist. Kim spends a lot of time meeting with physical therapists, clinical psychologists, teachers of the blind and others to aid him in his healing process.

When he gets inside the clinical psychologist’s office, she asks Kim if he would like her to read his official commendation letter from the Department of the Army. He adamantly tells her that he does not want to hear it. She does not give up. She tells him that it will do him good to hear it. He is not interested, but she finally persuades him.

She begins reading his official document aloud. “Kim, the first heading states: Award of the Silver Star by the Authority of the Direction of the President under the Act of Congress. The next heading is titled ‘Reason,’ it is for gallantry in action against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Korea. On that date his company dropped behind enemy lines to conduct a search and clear mission east of Pyongyang, when they came under a heavy volume of small arms fire.”

She stops reading. It is obvious to her by Kim’s groaning that his memories are coming back to him. He is experiencing the painful memories and events of the war.

She waits and waits until he is back in the moment. She hopes that reading the facts of that tragic day from his commendation letter will be beneficial to Kim’s healing. Then she says, “Would you like me to continue? Or would you rather wait until our next session?” He is clenching his fist as he yells at her, “Read it now!”

She begins to read it very slowly to him. “His prompt and courageous actions undoubtedly prevented numerous casualties from an enemy force with an overwhelming advantage. Staff Sergeant Kahana’s personal heroism, professional competence and devotion to duty are keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 11th Airborne Ranger Infantry Division, and the United States Army.”

She stops reading and says, “Kim, you are a hero. You received the Silver Star. It’s one of the highest honors the military can give a soldier. Very few soldiers receive the bronze star, two purple hearts and now the Silver Star. When you get past your raging anger and your depression, you will be able to empower yourself.”

Kim starts shouting at her. “What good is it? I am a blind man! You want me to empower myself to be a blind man? I can’t do that!”

She calmly responds. “Kim, I have spoken to my colleagues about your case. Some of us believe that you have a chance to see with your one eye again, but you won’t, if you do nothing but retreat into depression and anger.”

Kim does not utter a word. The clinical psychologist does not give up. She desperately wants to reach him, as she says, “Other soldiers do not have any chance to ever regain any percentage of their vision. Even if you have a slim chance, you have a chance.”

Kim is beginning to listen to her. She pauses for a minute and then says, “You must take an active part in your healing now. If not, you will leave here blind and in a wheelchair. This does not have to happen. You do not have to leave here helpless”

The clinical psychologist waits for a minute for Kim to respond. When he doesn’t, she says, “Kim, these are the things that you must do under the supervision of our staff. You must do the exercises for your eye. You have not been doing so. You must get out of your wheelchair and train yourself to walk with a cane for your strength and independence. You do not make any effort to help yourself. When the staff gives you a cane, you yell at them and then break the cane in half.” Kim’s only response is to openly laugh at her.

The clinical psychologist demands that Kim stops laughing at her. She tells him that she is not through talking to him yet. She then continues. “Kim, you must exercise all your muscles to build up your strength and balance. You must work with our staff members and not against them. Then, and only then, will you begin a journey on healing and balancing your mind, body and spirit.” She then leans over her desk and tells him, “I believe you can do it.”

After her stern, but heartfelt words, he becomes belligerent, and he shouts at her. “I don’t need a lecture from you, and I don’t need you to be my cheerleader.”

Then he demands her to call an attendant to wheel him back to his room. She thinks that she has failed him. She believes he has given up. The attendant enters and proceeds to wheel him out of the room. Kim tells the attendant to stop. Then Kim mumbles to the psychologist, “I might begin tomorrow.” She watches him leave.

Then she whispers to herself, “I hope so Kim Kahana. I truly hope so.”