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## David Lynch tackles post-traumatic stress with transcendental meditation

US combat veterans join Clint Eastwood and Russell Brand in praising technique at launch of Operation Warrior Wellness

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Chris McGreal in Washington

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David Lynch, centre, with Donna Karan and Russell Brand at the launch of Operation Warrior Wellness. Photograph: Gary Gershoff/WireImage

If it's good enough for [Clint Eastwood](#), it's probably good enough for the average American soldier. But persuading thousands of troops with [post-traumatic stress disorder](#) (PTSD) after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan that the answer is to spend their days following the transcendental meditation mantras of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi may prove a hard sell.

Eastwood joined an array of celebrities to launch Operation Warrior Wellness today at the behest of [David Lynch](#).

"The soldiers are truly suffering," said Lynch, the director of *Eraserhead*. "No one knows what they've done, what they've experienced, what they've seen and their lives are a true nightmare."

Some studies say that about one third of soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan suffer PTSD. Lynch's own foundation plans to teach 10,000 transcendental meditation (TM) techniques.

He said: "It's a beautiful, beautiful thing for the human being. Sure it is a stress-buster and when these soldiers get this simple effort they're going to get their lives back again. It's not hocus pocus. It's going to save lives, not only the soldiers' lives but the families are suffering, the friendships are suffering."

In a reflection of the scepticism about the claimed benefits for TM by some academic and medical studies, Eastwood was also keen to dispel any notion that it should not be taken seriously.

"I'm a great supporter of transcendental meditation," he said. "I've been using it for almost 40 years now. It's a great tool for stress ... especially considering the stress our men and women of the armed forces are going through. There's enough studies out there that show that TM is something that could benefit everybody."

As well as doctors, the Lynch foundation presented an array of combat veterans, from the second world war through to Iraq, to declare the benefits of meditating twice a day.

Brand's contribution was to reveal that he has been practising TM for 14 months and then talk about himself at length after he was introduced as "extremely brilliant".

He said he was honoured to be among veterans and doctors in pursuit of "such a worthwhile cause".

"In a way this sort of validates me as a human and my formerly secret brilliance. Let's get this out there," he said, adding that the effect of TM felt "like the dissolution of myself".

"I felt a very relaxed sense of oneness. I felt love, love for myself but love for everyone else," he said.

There was no mention of the impact on stress of Brand's autobiography *My Booky Wook*.

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