

## Reflection

Title of Graduation project:  
"Centre for wounded warriors"

At the beginning of this project I stated the following problem:

*The increasing number of military personnel returning with PTSD and other related disorders must be dealt with by providing targeted care.*

To elaborate on this statement, the need for this kind of facility has become apparent in recent years with the numbers of PTSD affected soldiers increasing continuously. It has been identified as being a point of particular weakness in the Dutch military health system by the media. Through designing this facility I hope to create awareness of the needs of these patients as well as bringing together knowledge from an international background.

From the problem statement I began researching into the field of PTSD, its diagnosis and the treatment of individuals who suffer from the condition. In particular I was interested in who the patients of such a facility were likely to be in terms of medical requirements and prognoses. The investigation into these areas was carried out early in the course of this project and is summarised in the three reports submitted along with this project. The methods used in this part were mainly literature based and allowed me to gain a theoretical base about what PTSD is as a condition and how it can be treated. Much of the literature I found related directly to the treatment of military personnel with mental health conditions and this I found particularly useful in identifying my target group.

This research was beneficial in allowing me to create a full idea of the requirements such a facility would need as well as the necessary criteria for designing for people with mental health problems such as PTSD.

The main and final part of the research was to try to understand the role of the building in the rehabilitation of these patients, taking the hard data and theory that I had found and applying this into real situations. For me this was when the boundary between research and design became blurred. At the end of my third report I began this process, taking what I had learnt and applying this to a real patient resulting in an imagined space specific to their needs. For me the designing of this project then became a research method in itself.

However from the P2 stage of the studio the focus of the design became not solely on how the design itself worked as a facility but what kind of facility would be acceptable in the given context. For me this led to a complete redesign of the project and a reconceptualisation of what the facility was for. Here I found a conflict between the initial line of investigation that was taken and that which was most suitable for the studio.

In conclusion I feel that the project has run successfully despite various changes in direction throughout the process. In the future I would always try to research and design more simultaneously to avoid the conflict between what research prescribes and what the design context can absorb.