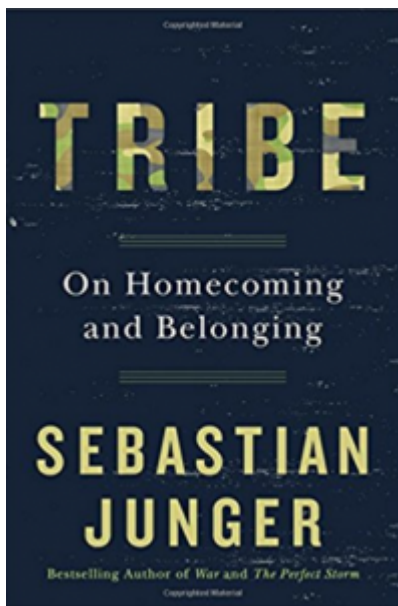


# LTN Book Club: How we all need a 'Tribe'

By Susan Wood

The epiphany occurs near the end of the book when it becomes quite clear that the times that try our souls the most are the ones that unite us like no other.

In "Tribe" (Hachette Book Group Inc., 2016) acclaimed writer Sebastian Junger takes us through examples – some severe – in which even in the face of death people not only overcome life's worst trials and tribulations. They rejoice being a part of humanity.



He cites in the chapter "In Bitter Safety I Awake" how veterans "find themselves missing the war after it's over" because soldiers experience an unparalleled brotherhood not found when they get home. This talked-about theory may seem hard to understand for civilians who have never stared down the barrel of the gun. Ironically, part of the trauma of war appears "to be giving it up." A gunner quoted in this fine, easy-read as being in a "tribal sort of situation where we could help each other without fear."

Junger should know. His past works include the book titled "War," as well as the best-selling, contemporary masterpiece about deep-sea fishing while fighting Mother Nature in "The Perfect Storm." (That was one of my all-time favorite books; Junger makes weather a sexy topic.) His other works, "Fire" in particular, are masterfully crafted in such a way to bring sense to the human condition and living through the elements

that make it difficult.

Most people may only relate to the notion that tragedy brings people together if only having been through a natural disaster. We've all seen it and said it. Assisting one another in a true sense of community is the one shining light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak.

Modern society isn't a piece of cake, nor is it a paradise – emotionally, that is. Yet, we have so many choices that are designed to make life easier. Are they?

As Junger points out, early tribes pulled together in unprecedented ways. The clearest case in point shows how the Native Americans relied on each other for their survival through the basic processes put into place to help them carry on.

But nowadays, the vast majority of us don't personally have to grow or kill our own food, build our own dwellings or defend ourselves from wild animals and enemies. Nonetheless, "we can travel a thousand miles by pushing our foot down on a gas pedal" among other means of modern conveniences.

Perhaps this subtle observation goes to show how simplifying one's life down to the basic needs – connections being the most crucial – makes us happier.

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- Please join in the discussion via commenting. Feel free to pose questions.

- Questions: Can you name and therefore explain a time in your life when you were the most frightened but emerged feeling better about the connections you made through the experience? Do you belong to some type of tribe? If so, what do you get out of the gathering that you don't get elsewhere?

- The next book is "Suitcase Sefton and the American

Dream" by Jay Feldman. The novel blends baseball and Japanese internment camps. The review will be published May 1.