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**From:** [REDACTED]**Date:** Tue, 13 May 2008 11:38:36 EDT**Subject:** Fwd: Fw: Helicopter pilot lessons learned during Vietnam but still true today.

[REDACTED]

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**Forwarded Message****From:** [REDACTED]**To:** [REDACTED],**Subject:** Fw: Helicopter pilot lessons learned during Vietnam but still true today.**Date:** Tue, 13 May 2008 10:11:12 -0400**HTML Attachment****Subject:** Fw: Helicopter pilot lessons learned during Vietnam but still true today.**Subject:****Helicopter pilot lessons learned during Vietnam but still true today.**

1. Once you are in the fight, it is way too late to wonder if it was a good idea.
2. There is no such thing as a "fun" hot LZ.
3. It is a fact that helicopter tail rotors are instinctively drawn toward trees, stumps, rocks, etc. While it may be possible to ward off this natural event some of the time, it cannot, despite the best efforts of the crew, always be prevented. It's just what they do.
4. NEVER get into a fight without more ammunition than the other guy.
5. The engine RPM, and the rotor RPM, must BOTH be kept in the GREEN. Failure to heed this

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commandment can affect the morale of the crew.

6. There are only two kinds of helicopter pilots: those that have crashed, and those who are going to.

7. Cover your Buddy, so he can be around to cover you.

8. Letters from home are not always great.

9. The madness of war can extract a heavy toll. Please have exact change.

10. Always remember that helicopters are different from airplanes. Helicopters are thousands of pounds of parts all flying in loose formation often in opposition to each other, and unlike airplanes, they fly by beating the air into submission.

11. Decisions made by someone over your head will seldom be in your best interest.

12. The terms "Protective Armor" and "Helicopter" are mutually exclusive terms.

13. The further away you are from your friends, the less likely it is that they can help you when you really need them the most.

14. Being good and lucky is not enough, there is always payback.

15. "Chicken Plates" are not something you order in a restaurant.

16. If everything is as clear as a bell, and everything is going exactly as planned, you're about to be surprised.

17. The B.S.R. (Bang, Stare, Read) Theory states that the louder the sudden bang in the helicopter, the quicker your eyes will be drawn to the gauges.

18. The longer you stare at the gauges, the less time it takes them to move from green to red.

19. The sole purpose of our helicopters is to support our grunts. Anyone who forgets that has forgotten the mission.

20. No matter what you do, the bullet with your name on it will get you. So too can the ones addressed "To Whom It May Concern".

21. Gravity may not be fair, but it is the law.

22. If the rear echelon troops are really happy, the front line troops probably do not have what they need.

23. If you are wearing body armor, the incoming will probably miss that part.

24. It hurts less to die with a uniform on than to die in a hospital bed.

25. Happiness is a belt-fed weapon.

26. If something hasn't broken on your helicopter, it's about to.

27. Eat when you can. Sleep when you can. Visit the head when you can. The next opportunity may not come around for a long time, if ever.

28. Combat pay is a flawed concept.

29. Having all your body parts intact and functioning at the end of the day beats the alternative.

30. Air superiority is NOT a luxury.

31. It is always a bad thing to run out of airspeed, altitude, and ideas all at the same time.
32. Nothing is as useless as altitude above you and runway behind you.
33. While the rest of the crew may be in the same predicament, it's almost always the pilot's job to arrive at the crash site first.
34. When you shoot your weapon, clean it the first chance you get.
35. Loud sudden noises in a helicopter WILL get your undivided attention.
36. Hot garrison chow is better than hot C-rations, which, in turn is better than cold C-rations, which is better than no food at all. All of these, however, are preferable to cold rice balls even if they do have the little pieces of fish in them.
37. WHAT is often more important than WHY.
38. If you find yourself in a fair fight, your tactics suck.
39. Girlfriends are fair game. Wives are not.
40. Everybody's a hero on the ground in the officers club and after the fourth drink.
41. There is no such thing as a small firefight.
42. A free-fire zone has nothing to do with economics.
43. The farther you fly into the mountains (or over water), the louder the strange engine noises become.
44. Medals are OK, but having your body and all your friends in one piece at the end of the day is a whole lot better.
45. The only medal you really want to be awarded is the Longevity Medal.
46. Thousands of Vietnam Veterans earned medals for bravery every day. A few were even awarded.
47. In helicopters, there is no such thing as "a good vibration."
48. Running out of pedal, fore or aft cyclic, or collective are all bad ideas. Any combination of these can be deadly.
49. Nomex is NOT fire proof.
50. There is only one rule in war: When you win, you get to make up the Rules.
51. Living and dying can both hurt a lot.
53. While a Super Bomb could be considered one of the four essential building blocks of life, powdered eggs cannot.
54. C-4 can make a dull day fun.
55. Cocoa Powder is neither.
56. There is no such thing as a fair fight, only ones where you win or lose.
57. If you win the battle you are entitled to the spoils. If you lose you don't care.
58. Nobody cares what you did yesterday or what you are going to do tomorrow. What is important is what you are doing NOW to solve our problem.

**59. If you have extra, share it quickly.**

**60. Always make sure someone has a P-38.**

**61. A sucking chest wound may be God's way of telling you it's time to go home.**

**62. Prayer may not help . . . but it can't hurt.**

**63. Flying is better than walking. Walking is better than running. Running is better than crawling. All of these however, are better than extraction by a Med-Evac, even if this is technically a form of flying.**

**64. If everyone does not come home, none of the rest of us can ever fully come home.**

**65. Do not fear the enemy, for your enemy can only take your life. It is far better that you fear the media, for they will steal your HONOR.**

**66. A grunt is the true reason for the existence of the helicopter. Every helicopter flown in Vietnam had one real purpose: To help the grunt. It is unfortunate that many helicopters never had the opportunity to fulfill their one true mission in life simply because someone forgot this fact.**