Virtual technologies are transforming the temporal, aesthetic and spatial framing of war and are linked to changing notions of fitness and work regimen within the military. Cycles of deployment have increased along with shorter rest periods between deployments; institutionally, the military has become focused on psychological resilience and cognitive responsiveness as important components of military fitness. I focus my discussion on Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy and live action stress inoculation that aims to prevent and eliminate PTSD altogether by repetitively exposing soldiers to stressful combat scenes within limited time frames. I argue that the military’s recent preoccupation with that which can be described as “immersive” and possessing “sensorial presence” signals that a concentrated effort aimed at what might be described as a colonization of the senses – a digital Manifest Destiny that envisions the mind as capital – what I am calling military utopias of mind and machine. Military utopias of mind and machine aspire to have all the warfare without the trauma by instrumentalizing the senses within a closed system. In the paper, I argue that such utopias of control and containment are fragile and volatile fantasies. I turn to storytelling and listening to stories as avenues towards healing, allowing people to ascribe meaning to difficult life experiences, affirm social relationships, and escape containment.