

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

In War Veterans

By: Amanda Giarratana

What is PTSD?
 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that follows a traumatic event or experience in an individual's life.

Fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to prepare to defend against the danger or to avoid it. This fight-or-flight response is a healthy reaction meant to protect a person from harm. But in PTSD, this reaction is changed or damaged. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened even when they're no longer in danger.

They stop out of treatment because of the many reminders and flashbacks that come with it - it became too much for them to handle.

War Veterans with PTSD

- Suicide is the leading cause of death in the army
- 18 veterans suffering with PTSD will commit suicide every day
- Many of these vets do not know where or how to get help
- Vets that do get help often drop out of it
- Only 50% that go through full treatment show signs of recovery

Sources

- <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>
- <http://www.maketheconnection.net/>
- <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/>
- <http://www.projectwv.com/hometroops.org/>
- <http://www.wvnm.com/>
- <http://www.npr.org/>
- Grey's Anatomy
- Shepherds of Heimend
- The Things They Carried

THE END

Symptoms

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares or Night Terrors
- Frightening or Negative thoughts
- Anxious, jittery, or worried feelings
- Guilt
- Depression
- Not being able to sleep
- Being easily startled
- A loss in interest in things that used to be cared about
- Not getting along with family or friends

In War

As we know this disorder can be a result from many different reasons, it first came about to the public attention in relation to war veterans.

War-related PTSD has existed as long as war itself.

During the first and second world wars, people called some soldiers suffering from PTSD and stress breakdown "cowards" or "deserters" because of the stigma it brought.

The military has come a long way since then in recognizing the seriousness of this disorder.

What is the Military doing?

- Want more people suffering to get proper treatment
- Changing the way they diagnose and treat this
- Hire more therapists, doctors and support staff. In an effort to shorten the long wait times for an appointment.

By doing this, they are hoping to get rid of the stigma and bring more awareness to this disorder.

Examples

What happens to the body?

When you are afraid, your body activates the fight or flight response. In reaction, your body releases adrenaline, which increases blood pressure and heart rate and increases glucose to muscles. However, once the immediate danger is gone, the body begins a process of shutting down the stress response, and this process involves the release of another hormone known as cortisol.

If your body does not generate enough cortisol to shut down the stress reaction, you may continue to feel the stress effects of the adrenaline. PTSD victims often have higher levels of other stimulating hormones under normal conditions in which the threat of trauma is not present. These same hormones kick in when they are reminded of their traumas.

Many people still see it as a stigma today. For a while people have been diagnosed and treated as "deserters" or "cowards" and it has been hard for them to get help. It's important for the military and the public to recognize the seriousness of this disorder and support the veterans who are suffering from it.

Treatment

Two methods of treatment have been shown to be effective for treating PTSD

- **Counseling** - Professional counseling can help you understand your thoughts and discover ways to cope with your feelings
- **Medication** - Medications, called selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors, are used to help you feel less worried or sad.

It's hard to help the war sleep from my family but I brought the war with me every time I counted the stars. It helps to talk with those who have been there.

Quote shows that they feel like they are putting their family in danger

PTSD is a complex disorder that can be difficult to diagnose and treat. It is important for the military and the public to recognize the seriousness of this disorder and support the veterans who are suffering from it.

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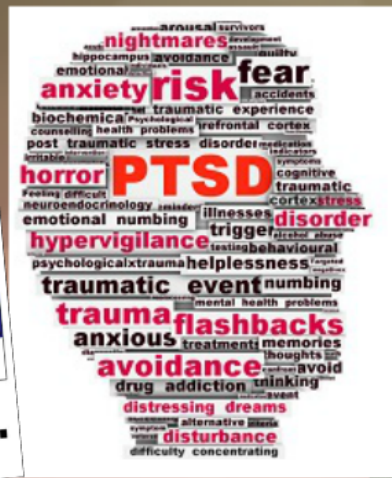
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Quote shows that they feel like they are putting their family in danger

PTSD can be treated. It's important to get help. There are many resources available to help you get the help you need.

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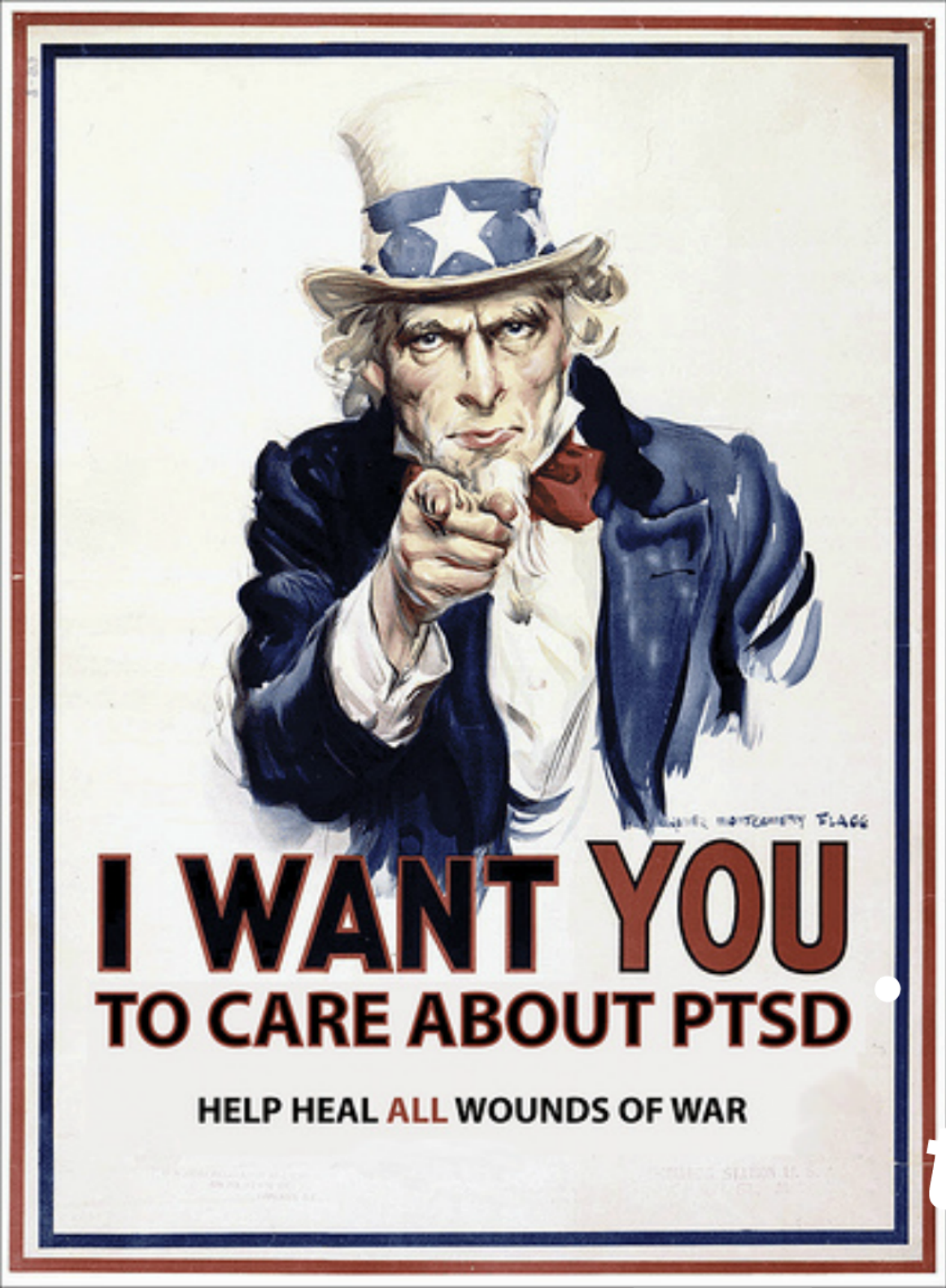
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- disorder changes the biology of the brain. MRI & PET scans can show how changes in memory are stored differently

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