

Warning Signs For Traumatic Stress

- Overly talkative or keeping to themselves
- Limited range of emotions: do they have levels of anger or go straight into rage?
- Hyper-vigilance
- Exaggerated startle reaction
- Ignoring the news
- Avoiding former friends
- Lack of intimacy
- Substance abuse
- Personal conversation avoidance with pat answers:
 - ❖ "You wouldn't understand, even if I told you",
 - ❖ "I don't want to talk about it",
 - ❖ "It's something you shouldn't know about"
- The "1000-yard stare"
- Sleep disturbances (nightmares, insomnia, etc.)
- Emotional Flooding, to include:
 - ❖ Crying spontaneously
 - ❖ Overly emotional responses to mild stimuli
 - ❖ Abruptly leaving when patriotic symbols appear
 - ❖ Refusing to watch emotionally charged TV / movies

What do trauma survivors need to know?

- Traumas happen to many competent, healthy, strong, good people. No one can completely protect him- or herself from traumatic experiences.
- Many people have long-lasting problems following exposure to trauma. Up to 8% of individuals will have PTSD at some time in their lives.
- People who react to traumas are not going crazy. They are experiencing symptoms and problems that are connected with having been in a traumatic situation.
- Having symptoms after a traumatic event is not a sign of personal weakness. Many psychologically well-adjusted and physically healthy people develop PTSD. Probably everyone would develop PTSD if they were exposed to a severe enough trauma.
- When a person understands trauma symptoms better, he or she can become less fearful of them and more able to manage them.
- By recognizing the effects of trauma and knowing more about symptoms, a person is better able to decide about getting treatment.

Learn more: Traumatic Incident Reduction Association www.TIR.org
National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder www.ncptsd.va.gov

An informational bulletin from
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