

## Notes and Links for PTSD and Addictions:

### **This should put at the beginning:**

Approximately 22 military veterans a day choose to end their lives.

**Veteran's Crisis Phone Number: 1-800-273-8255**

**You don't have to dial the one if you are in the United States.**

### **PTSD – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder formerly known as a Syndrome**

Notes of interest: My birth father I knew and lived with. He was wounded at Heartbreak Crossroads which was the day the Battle of the Bulge began. You rarely hear about Heartbreak Crossroads. He received a Purple Heart and went to his grave with shrapnel still too close to his heart to be removed.

On the other hand, my adopted father fought in the Pacific Theatre. He was a machine gunner. I did not know him until my mother divorced my birth father and married the man who would eventually adopt my brother and me. My sister born of that union said there were times when she was real little that they would go someplace and there was a certain noise that would initiate a fear in daddy Bigler. Even though he was driving, he would duck and say "They're coming, they're coming!" meaning enemy aircraft. There were times he would awake in the middle of the night with nightmares of the war.

Some military personnel return home from war addicted to medications either prescription or illicit, even alcoholic beverages. Even people who are not veterans of any type of war but a survivor from another type of injury get caught up in the addiction scene. There are links in this message for you.

Both of my fathers survived the war. Yet we have men and women who come home from war wounded in a different manner. Post - Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is a malady I know something about because I suffered from it after a major car wreck when my face broke the windshield in a head - on collision. We had three major impacts. Yet Social Security only claimed I was depressed and surgery would heal the carpal tunnel syndrome. They made light of my serious mental health situation. They did not request all of my medical records and therefore completely ignored the fact I had an arachnoid tear and cerebral hemorrhage. And too, there was a continual battle with Social Security. I tried to appeal on the federal level but they denied by keeping the appeal on the Administrative Law Judge level which was a hearing I never requested. Somebody forged my signature several years after we moved away from the area where that issue occurred.

There were times when I considered suicide. I was knocked unconscious but I do remember my face feeling like it was under a running faucet. That I learned later was blood. I don't remember anything after that and that is only one flashback. As mentioned already, my adopted father had flashbacks of the war. I cannot even begin to imagine the flashbacks our military personnel may have now with the types of equipment now used.

A base of support, doctors, friends and family who believed in me and supported my issues was too weak. Some friends went by the wayside and some doctors did not understand and wrote me off. Our men and women who come back from war can suffer a different kind of PTSD, Post - Traumatic Stress Disorder/Syndrome. They saw people killed and perhaps had to do the killing. They were seriously injured physically and/or saw their comrades killed or seriously injured. That is a horrible thing to experience and remember. They should not have to face a stigma of being labeled and certainly need to be encouraged to seek help. The family may have to be strong and intervene.

Suicide is a permanent decision. My daughter called it selfish. The section below lists several websites that are of great help for those with PTSD and their family and friends known as their base of support.

ADAA Anxiety and Depression Association of America

<https://www.adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/posttraumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>

National Institute of Mental Health

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml>

US Department of Veterans Affairs - PTSD: National Center for PTSD

<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

US National Library of Medicine - PubMed Health

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is an anxiety disorder that develops in reaction to physical injury or severe mental or emotional distress, such as military combat, violent assault, natural disaster, or other life-threatening events.

PubMed Health Glossary

(Source: NIH - National Cancer Institute)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0024667/>

Information on some basics of PTSD:

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-basics/index.shtml>

What can cause PTSD?

Living through or seeing something that's upsetting and dangerous can cause PTSD. This can include:

Death or serious illness of a loved one

War or combat

Car accidents and plane crashes

Hurricanes, tornadoes, and fires

Violent crimes, like a robbery or shooting.

WebMD - information about PTSD

<http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/post-traumatic-stress-disorder>

All the above can lead to addictions of substances.

<https://www.drugrehab.com/addiction/veterans/>

Last but not least, many of our military return home and are left with having to use a wheelchair or a motorized scooter. This next website offers assistive ideas on how to travel and bring your wheelchair or scooter. It is very helpful. The people who offer the advice out of their own need also have their own websites.

<https://mightygoods.com/wheelchair-travelers/>

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