

## Learning ways to support a spouse with PTSD

**Lisa:** My name is Lisa; my husband Jeffrey served in Iraq. Living with someone who has PTSD I've had to learn to not take things personally. I've had to learn to try to identify things that would trigger anger or depression in him. One of the things I've tried to do is be prepared. For example, I know that certain times of the year he's going to be more sensitive than others. Certain times of the year he's going to be more depressed than others. So, I try to prepare myself more for those times of the year. When I notice him starting to get into a depressed state, I try to refocus him. The signs are there it's just a matter of noticing them. A lot of people say, "The person who left is not the person who comes back." And in a lot of cases that I've seen with friends of ours the response was to split up or to just say, "I just can't take this anymore." And leave.

Even the people who say, "I'm okay, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine." Behind the scenes they're not and that's when it takes somebody to say, "You need help; you have to get help. We'll get help together." Everybody has changed it's just a matter that not all people admit to being different. My dad is a Korean war Vet and, in his era, soldiers never talked about what they went through. Does it mean they didn't go through anything? Absolutely not but it was just you keep it to yourself and you never speak about it.

Now, do I think he carries with him everything that he went through? Definitely and when I see it in my husband, I see that there's a lot that he's been through. Thank God he's getting the help that he needs but even with the help... The help is not going to erase anything that anybody's been through. It's just going to help them deal with what they've gone through. Tomorrow will be different; see what tomorrow holds. Hold onto the hope that the good days are coming.



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