

Veterans find solutions for better sleep

Speaker1: I started to have a lot of trouble sleeping. I would sleep for two or three hours, wake up. Because I just couldn't sleep through the whole night. Some nights I had horrific nightmares.

Speaker2: Getting out of the war and remembering bits and pieces of it, sometimes it happens in nightmares. I wake up sweating. I have to change the shirt, change the sheets. That kind of thing.

Speaker3: I had a lot of trouble sleeping. I was very uncomfortable. If someone touches me when I'm asleep I would jump up and be in attack mode.

Speaker4: My sleep patterns hadn't been good for the past 20 years, and they were getting increasingly worse. Sleep interruptions, night terrors, talking in my sleep, walking in my sleep.

Speaker5: I would wake up. I couldn't sleep. Then I would run through my mind. Could I have done this differently? You start second-guessing everything you did that day.

Speaker6: I didn't sleep well for six months after my first deployment. And sometimes I think I would wake up and I would feel like my brain was still working even though I was asleep. So, looking back at it now I think, okay, maybe it's just my brain doing whatever it needed to do to sort of internalize it and then survive and then move on.

Speaker1: I did a combination. I mainly did individual. I saw a psychiatrist. I was prescribed sleeping medications, to help even out my sleep.

Speaker5: And then I went back into counseling and talked truthfully about what I did and how I felt and why I felt certain ways about things.

Speaker3: Just listening to other guys with the same problems, with the same thoughts, with the same issues they were dealing with. I'm seeing, well, I'm not alone. There are other people that are thinking these same thoughts and having these same nightmares and night sweats.

Speaker7: The biggest improvement overall is now I go to sleep. Which it sounds small to somebody else, but to be able to know that you're going to go to bed in your room and go to sleep is a big deal.

Speaker2: I'm sleeping all the way through the night most of the nights now. I'm not sweating as much. Not having night sweats as much. So, it's helping me out a lot. And I really appreciate the psychologist and the psychiatrist taking time out to try to talk to me and get a handle on it.

Speaker4: Don't wait. Twenty years is too long to go with sleepless nights. You don't have to, and there are others of us out there who have been there and done that. Don't wait. Go and get some help.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION**

Speaker1: Being able to go and get help and to realistically analyze yourself and face that within yourself is more of a strength than it is a weakness.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

MAKE THE
CONNECTION