

## **PTSD From Me and My Friends to You and Yours**

### **Plain text and image descriptions**

Each slide has a light orange background with yellow triangles in each corner. The majority of the content is written in black, with some of the subtitles in dark blue

#### **Slide 1**

A resource by The LUNA Project

PTSD

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

powst traw·ma·tuhk stres duh·saw·duh

Part of the 'From Me and My Friends, to You and Yours' series

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#### **Slide 2 - What is PTSD?**

PTSD stands for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It can develop after terrifying or dangerous events known as trauma. Not everyone who goes through trauma develops PTSD as it's a physical change in the brain. PTSD causes your brain to get stuck in a state of constant danger; fight or flight and high alert which can change your brain overtime if not helped.

Image shows PTSD symptoms separated into three categories

#### **Reexperiencing symptoms:**

- Intrusive/distressing thoughts
- Recurrent bad nightmares
- Experience flashbacks
- Intense emotional upset at reminder
- Intense physical reactions at reminder

#### **Avoidance and numbing symptoms:**

- Avoid thoughts/feelings
- Avoid activities/situations/places
- Can't recall important aspects
- Loss of interests in activities
- detached/cut-off from others
- Impaired range of emotions
- Changed future plans/hopes

#### **Hyperarousal symptoms:**

- Difficulty sleeping
- Irritability/anger outbursts
- Difficulty concentrating
- Overly alert

- Jumpier/easily startled

### **Slide 3 - How does PTSD impact my mental health?**

PTSD impacts my mental health in many different ways. I can have big breakdowns with flashbacks where I'm convinced I'm going through it again. I'm loud where I'm crying and shouting. I can zone out to the point where I forget everything, where I am and completely disconnect from the world. I can have subtle flashbacks which look like I'm listening or concentrating but in actual fact I'm reliving and having snippets of flashbacks coming all at once when I'm just trying to go about my daily business. Sometimes I start crying without realising, other times I'm just staring into space. I have hypervigilance, where I'm aware of EVERYTHING. I notice details that others don't because I have to make sure I know everything about where I am and that there are no surprises or triggers. I have nightmares where I wake up covered in sweat, shaking and terrified.

This is just some of the ways it impacts my mental health. It also causes me to have anxiety, irritability and anger.

### **Slide 4 - How does PTSD impact my life?**

PTSD impacts my life massively, I have symptoms and flashbacks everyday. I have to be careful of triggers: when I go out, watch something on tv, go on social media etc. It's a full time job and it's exhausting. Any little trigger could cause me to have a massive breakdown even while we're out and about. It can be completely debilitating.

### **Slide 5 - What are some ways friends can support you with PTSD?**

Some ways friends can support me and others with PTSD is to learn our triggers! This is so helpful as if we are triggered while we're with you, you can understand how to help. Also if you recommend tv shows or books etc, then knowing what will trigger me or others will make sure you won't ever accidentally trigger us.

If I ever have an episode while I'm with you, then I'll need help to bring myself back round. So finding out our grounding techniques is so useful and you can help us implement them.

### **Slide 6 - What are some ways friends can support you with PTSD? Continued**

When I'm having a flashback some useful things to know are

- Stay calm and speak softly.
- Try and remind us that we're safe and this is where you use the grounding techniques.
- Ask if you can touch us before you do as some people need touch to be grounded while others CANNOT be touched!
- Once I'm back, I have a lot of adrenaline so distraction is key. Whether that be listening to rock music, going for a drive, a walk, anything to get rid of that adrenaline.
- After I am completely drained and exhausted so doing something easygoing like watching a movie etc is a good way to comfort me.

Everyone is different so make sure you talk to the person you're trying to help.

### **Slide 7 - Resources to find out more!**

Mind - About PTSD

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd-and-complex-ptsd/about-ptsd/>

YoungMinds - PTSD

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/mental-health-conditions/ptsd>

PTSD UK

<https://www.ptsduk.org/>

### **Slide 8 - About the author**

Hi I'm Bethany (@life\_behind\_my\_smile), I'm 19, my pronouns are she/her and I'm from the UK. I'm doing Law and Sociology A Levels and enjoy spending time with my dogs, reading and listening to music. Thank you for reading my awareness post about PTSD :)

Photo of Bethany on the slide. She is a white girl with shoulder length blonde hair and brown eyes. She is wearing a blue raincoat with a mustard yellow lining, a pink backpack, and mushroom earrings. She has a nasal feeding tube with flowery tape on. There are trees with green leaves on in the background

### **Slide 9 - Get Involved!**

We would love to get as many people involved in creating these resources as possible! If you are a young person living with chronic illness, mental health condition, disability, or long term health condition, and would be interested in making a similar resource based on your experiences, we would love to hear from you!

You can email us at [thelunaprojectuk@gmail.com](mailto:thelunaprojectuk@gmail.com) or find us on social media @thelunaprojectuk.

### **Find out more**

You can find more information about the work we do, our resources and opportunities to get involved on our website: <https://www.thelunaproject.org.uk/>

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