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## Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: Over or Under Diagnosed?

By Kinsley Brown

Many people experience something traumatic in their lives, but never tell anybody about it. That may seem like the best way to deal with it, but trying to deal with the problem alone may cause the development of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. My grandfather suffered from PTSD after returning home from World War II. At night, my mom said he would wake up screaming at the top of his lungs. He was experiencing a flashback of the war in his dreams. "He would never talk about the war when he got back. Not even to my mother" (Brown). According to the mental health experts on NIMH.gov, "Approximately 7.7 Million Americans suffer from PTSD" (NIMH). It is a very serious disorder that may develop in a person's mind for many different reasons. Some of the main factors that cause PTSD may be returning home from a war, witnessing someone being murdered, being a victim of rape, and sometimes even losing a family member. The effects of PTSD are also very serious if not treated. These effects can be either physical or psychological.

The number one most common reason why a person develops PTSD is returning home from war. A war veteran has seen a lot of violence that Americans are not used to seeing every day. For example, living in a life or death situation every day would be very stressful. Also, fighting in the war and having to watch a fellow soldier die right in front of their eyes would be very depressing.

The second reason a person may develop PTSD is having been raped in the past. "Most people who have been raped don't tell anybody about the event until they get older" says Lynn Dougherty, a doctor specializing in child abuse. Having to always wonder and be afraid it may happen again may lead the victim to develop PTSD.

The third main reason is losing a close family member. Being close to someone for a long time and suddenly losing them could cause psychological problems in a person's life. When someone loses a close family member, they keep their feelings to themselves. That can be a leading factor of PTSD. There have been many reports of people developing PTSD following the loss of somebody they loved.

There are many different effects of PTSD. A person may not develop PTSD immediately after the tragic event they experienced. They could develop the disorder years after. A war veteran may experience trouble sleeping, or be easily disturbed by loud noises. A rape victim could also experience trouble sleeping. Rape victims might also have trouble being around men or women, depending on what sex raped them. Last, but not least, a person who has lost a close family member may experience trouble going to family events, or being around the family during the holidays.

There are many causes and effects of PTSD. War, being a victim of rape, and losing a family member are only a few examples of why a person might develop the disorder. There is no medication that cures PTSD. The only remedy for the disorder is psychological. This is a disease that only the person suffering from it can cure for themselves. PTSD is a serious disorder that is overlooked by many people. There should be more studies on this to get people the help they need.

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