



The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

June 2022

June is PTSD Awareness Month

PTSD Can Look like a Lot of Different Things

June is PTSD Awareness Month. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), PTSD is an anxiety problem that develops in some people after extremely traumatic events, such as combat, crime, an accident, or natural disaster.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, it is natural to feel afraid during and after a traumatic situation. Fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to help defend against danger or to avoid it. This “fight-or-flight” response is a typical reaction meant to protect a person from harm. Nearly everyone will experience a range of reactions after trauma, yet most people recover from initial symptoms naturally. Those who continue to experience problems may be diagnosed with PTSD.

A psychiatrist or psychologist with experience helping people with mental illnesses can diagnose PTSD.

To be diagnosed with PTSD, an adult must have all of the following for at least 1 month:

- At least one re-experiencing symptom: flashbacks, bad dreams, frightening thoughts
- At least one avoidance symptom: staying away from places, events or objects that are reminders of the event; avoiding thoughts or feelings related to the event
- At least two arousal and reactivity symptoms: being easily startled, feeling on edge, difficulty sleeping, angry outbursts
- At least two cognition and mood symptoms: trouble remembering key features of the event, negative thoughts about self or the world, distorted feelings like guilt or blame, loss of interest in enjoyable activities

Symptoms in very young children (less than 6 years old), may include:

- Newly wetting the bed
- Being unable to talk
- Acting out the scary event
- Being unusually clingy

There are many treatment options for PTSD. If you suspect you or someone you love has PTSD, talk to your doctor. You can also check NIMH's [Help for Mental Illnesses page](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd).

Source <https://www.apa.org/topics/ptsd>

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

How to Stay Mindful on Vacation

Taking a break is very important to our health and wellbeing. One of the best ways to relax and recharge is taking a trip. Whether this is a day trip, a weekend away, or an extended vacation, it is crucial to nourish our bodies and clear our minds by taking time for ourselves. As many of us are gearing up to take summer vacations, here are a couple of tips to get the most out of your trip.

- Prior to your departure, ask yourself, “what am I looking to gain from this experience?” Are you looking to immerse yourself in a new culture? Are you looking to reconnect with yourself or with family and friends? Are you looking to try something new and adventurous? Plan your itinerary around your overall intention for your trip.
- Unplug from technology. It can be tempting to pull out your phone or camera to snap a picture of every cool thing we see when we are exploring a new place. Even though it is nice to have memories to look back on, try to take a moment to be fully present in these moments. Focus your attention on your senses. What do you see? What sounds and smells are present?
- Express gratitude. Take a few deep breaths and remember how special it is to take time for ourselves, explore new surroundings, immerse ourselves in new experiences, and unwind from our busy lives.

For more information on practicing mindfulness while on vacation, visit [Mindful.org](https://www.mindful.org/tips-bringing-mindfulness-next-vacation/) for additional details.

Source <https://www.mindful.org/tips-bringing-mindfulness-next-vacation/>



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Men's Health Month

Don't Skip your Preventive Care

It's time to focus on creating a positive attitude around men's health, especially when it comes to preventive care. Men often skip routine healthcare visits out of fear of looking weak. A study from the [Cleveland Clinic](#) showed that 40 percent of men only go to the doctor when they're having a serious health issue. Skipping yearly physicals and checkups could be the difference between catching health issues early or when it's too late.

Whatever age you are, it's vital that you're visiting with your healthcare provider. We've listed [several health issues](#) men should be concerned about at each stage of life.

Preventive Care in your 20s and 30s

- Learn your BMI, blood pressure, and cholesterol.
- Discuss any anxiety, depression, or mental health conditions you may be dealing with.
- Focusing on sexual health, including sexually transmitted infection testing.
- Learn the signs of testicular cancer and begin being screened.

Preventive Care in your 40s

- Continued focus on maintaining good blood pressure and cholesterol levels.
- Starting at age 45, colon cancer screening becomes routine.
- If you're overweight, it's important to screen for diabetes.

Preventive Care in your 50s

- Once you're over the age of 50, the CDC recommends getting a Shingles vaccine.
- Early prostate screenings begin at 55

Preventive Care in your 60s and Beyond

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Talk to your doctor about your risks.
- Ensure you're getting your yearly flu vaccine. The immune system begins to weaken as you age.
- Finding safe and age-appropriate ways to exercise.

Keep the conversation open about health issues you may be facing. Individuals with male family members can help support and empower them to visit their healthcare provider regularly. The best way to be strong is by keeping your body healthy – physically and mentally.

Source <https://www.healthline.com/health/mens-health/ultimate-preventative-care-guide-for-men>

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach.

Here for you as life happens



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RECIPE : Green Goddess Chickpea Salad

2 Servings

Ingredients

Dressing

- 1 avocado, peeled and pitted
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs, such as tarragon, sorrel, mint, parsley and/or cilantro
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- ½ teaspoon salt

Salad

- 3 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 1 cup sliced cucumber
- 1 (15 ounce) can chickpeas, rinsed
- ¼ cup diced, low fat Swiss cheese
- 6 cherry tomatoes, halved if desired

Directions

To Prepare Dressing

1. Place avocado, buttermilk, herbs, vinegar and salt in a food blender
2. Puree until smooth

To Prepare Salad

1. Place lettuce and cucumber in a bowl
2. Add ¼ cup of dressing
3. Top with chickpeas, cheese, and tomatoes
4. Refrigerate the extra dressing for up to 3 days

Nutrition

Serving Size: 2 ¾ cups

Per Serving: 304 calories; protein 21.7g; carbohydrates 39.8g; dietary fiber 11.9g; sugars 10.1g; fat 7.5g; saturated fat 1.7g; cholesterol 12mg; vitamin a iu 6774.1IU; vitamin c 14mg; folate 180.9mcg; calcium 420mg; iron 2.5mg; magnesium 71.8mg; potassium 641.4mg; sodium 465mg.

Source: <https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/258450/green-goddess-salad-with-chickpeas/>

Balanced Living

June 2022



Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can develop after someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. PTSD might be more common than you realize. According to the National Center for PTSD, 50% of women and 60% of men will experience trauma at some point during their lives, and about 8 million adults develop PTSD each year. However, not everyone who lives through a trauma develops PTSD.

How PTSD Develops

Often people associate PTSD with military combat experience, but there are many other events that can lead to the condition. These include: childhood abuse, sexual violence, physical assault, an accident, or natural disaster.

Other stressful situations could potentially lead to someone developing PTSD, such as the loss of a loved one or working in a profession that exposes someone to traumatic situations, such as a police officer, first responder, or healthcare worker. What do all of these situations have in common? They trigger a stress response in the person's brain, leading to the release of certain hormones. Some people have a more difficult time than others returning to their baseline level of functioning, and instead, they remain in a state of constant stress.

Signs and Symptoms

It is normal to feel a range of emotions after living through a traumatic event, and most people need some time to adjust and cope with what has happened. However, for those who develop PTSD, they start to experience significant symptoms that interfere with daily functioning, which last for more than one month.

Typically, the condition is apparent within three months of the traumatic event. By being aware of the signs and symptoms of PTSD, you could ensure you get yourself or loved ones the necessary help rather than suffering in silence. Some common symptoms include:

- Intrusive memories or flashbacks of the event, avoidant behaviors, negative cognitive changes, emotional decline, difficulty sleeping and concentrating, aggressive behavior and lack of self-care.

Prevention

Not everyone who experiences or witnesses a traumatic event will develop PTSD. By being knowledgeable about the condition and seeking support, you can help reduce your risk of it developing. Here are some protective tools to help you manage and cope with stressful situations:

- Reach out to family and friends for support. Do not try to manage your emotions alone.
- Seek professional counseling for additional support. A counselor can help you process the stressful situation and strengthen your coping tools.
- Take time to sit with your thoughts and feelings, which can help with the healing process. Try journaling or meditation. Consider what you can learn or take away from the stressful experience, such as becoming a more resilient person or a reminder to not take life for granted.
- Focus on incorporating healthy coping methods into your daily life, such as connecting with others, getting plenty of sleep, eating healthy foods, and overall self-care.

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If you've ever worked for most of a morning or afternoon and not gotten much accomplished, you may have wondered where the time went.

"But an effective manager knows exactly where his or her time goes," says Marc Corsini, president of the Corsini Consulting Group in Birmingham, AL. "And anyone can become more effective at managing time. It's a matter of pinpointing how you spend your day, overcoming time-wasting hurdles and concentrating on making the most of the time you have."

Mr. Corsini offers the following suggestions about how to get more done each day.

Time matters

- Try to accomplish as much as you can in the shortest amount of time. "Work expands to fill the time available for its completion," says Mr. Corsini. "So instead of setting aside a day to write a report, give yourself a morning or afternoon. Chances are you'll knock it out in the time you allow."
- Prioritize. You only have enough time in your day to do the important things. "A day consists of three kinds of activities: Have to do, need to do and nice to do," says Mr. Corsini. "Forget the nice to dos. Start with the have to dos and work your way down. Spend your first hour at work on your most important activity for the day, then pick the next most important and so on."
- Focus on outcomes, not activities. "Nobody cares how hard you're working," says Mr. Corsini. "They only care about what you're accomplishing."
- Be a planner. Set aside the last 15 minutes of each business day to evaluate what you have done that day and plan to do the next. Establish and prioritize your objectives, to dos and appointments for the coming day. "Avoid the 'planning paradox' of failing to plan because it takes time," says Mr. Corsini. "And be sure to focus on short- and long-term planning."
- Plan a weekly vacation. "Most people are the most productive right before they go on a vacation. They have a sense of urgency. They delegate. They focus. They work on the most important projects and forget the other stuff," says Mr. Corsini. "Pick one day a week and act like you're about to go on vacation for a month. You'll be surprised how much you'll accomplish."
- Minimize phone tag. To do so, focus on making calls when you're most likely to reach people. Develop additional contacts within an organization. Get to know your contacts' assistants. Leave careful, creative messages defining exactly what you need and your time frame. Establish regular "in-office" hours so people know when they can reach you.
- Make appointments with yourself. When you have an important project you need to finish, schedule time on your calendar to complete it.
- Leave an hour early. "Having less time to get things done forces you to work only on the really important tasks," says Mr. Corsini. "By reducing the amount of time you have, you force yourself to focus on results."
- Look out for time robbers. People can -- and do -- rob you of your time. "Robbers include co-workers, friends, vendors and some customers," says Mr. Corsini. "Avoid, neglect and manage those who rob you of your time when you're at work."
- Give yourself some slack. Schedule slack time in your day so you can handle unexpected activities and issues.
- Develop a sense of priority. "The best cure for procrastination is to develop a strong sense of urgency," says Mr. Corsini.

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Whether there is merit to the old “Opposites attract” bromide that suggests vastly different people often find good chemistry as a couple remains open to debate. But good chemistry goes only so far for couples with stark differences in how they approach money and their financial lives, for unless they can find financial common ground in some key areas, those divergences could lead to strife or worse, the kind of escalating money problems that can sour a solid relationship.

Couples with divergent financial approaches are more common than you might expect, says Financial Planning Association® (FPA®) member Sean M. Pearson, a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional in Conshohocken, Pa. “It’s understandable, and frankly predictable, that couples often have divergent financial personalities. Consider a typical couple: They have a few children, who all develop a blend of the two parents’ sensibilities, plus their own spin they pick up along the way. Some families are open about family finances, but many are not. Children pick up some clues from their families, but it’s often a patchwork of lessons. Those financial preferences continue to form until adulthood, as they figure out how to pay for education and start their career. Eventually adults pair off and start the process of blending all of that background with someone else, who has their own unique financial journey and preferences.”

Common Divides: Sound Familiar?

A couple’s divergent financial preferences tend to manifest in several key fundamental areas — areas where finding common ground can be critical to overall financial health. Among them:

Priorities. One person might prefer to focus their saving and spending to fulfill their bucket list sooner rather than later, for example, while the other wants to prioritize saving for retirement, covering future healthcare expenses and leaving the bucket list for later in life. Or perhaps one person prefers to spend money on an extravagant wedding, while the other wants a simpler, less expensive wedding so the couple can save more toward eventually purchasing a home. Neither is necessarily right or wrong, their priorities merely differ.

Investment mindset. Some people are more comfortable than others taking on additional risk in how they invest their money and allocate their investment assets in order to access greater growth potential — what’s known as risk tolerance. The level of risk tolerance can diverge widely within a couple, where one is significantly more conservative in their investment and asset allocation approach than the other, based on their respective experiences, priorities, etc. Here again, it’s not necessarily a matter of one person’s approach being “right” and the other’s wrong, but rather that they find a joint approach to investing and asset allocation that works for both, and that’s appropriate to their circumstances, goals, etc.

Spender vs. saver. It’s a cliché that rings true for many couples: one person takes a live-for-today (and some might say reckless) approach with their money, spending most of what they earn from week to week and month to month, while the other prefers to set aside a portion of what they earn to fulfill longer-term goals like saving for a major purchase or expense (home, car, college education, etc.) or building a nest egg for retirement.

Debt. Some people are accustomed to, and comfortable with, carrying large credit card balances from month to month. Others are adamant about paying their entire credit card balance each month. A person’s record for paying down (or failing to pay down) debt in a timely fashion impacts his or her credit score, which in turn affects a couple’s ability to jointly obtain a line of credit or loan, as well as the terms tied to that line of credit or loan.

Following a budget/spending plan. Keeping a detailed accounting of household income and expenses, and following a formal household budget or spending plan, appeals to some people for the financial structure it provides. Others choose to manage their money more informally.

Division of financial duties. “In many cases, one person makes almost all a couple’s financial decisions,” observes FPA member Rand K. Spero, CFP®, who heads Street Smart Financial in Lexington, Mass. “A majority of people don’t view [handling household finances and money decisions] as a fifty-fifty proposition.” When those duties fall mainly on one person, and the couple’s lines of communication about their finances aren’t open, the other person can end up largely in the dark about their financial situation.

When (or whether) to retire. One person may be ready to retire sooner than their partner. Or, one person may plan to retire at some point while the other intends to keep working indefinitely.

Finding Common Ground

Chances are, you and your partner diverge in at least one, and perhaps several of these areas. If that's the case, it's time to seek some common ground, before your differences become divisive or destructive to your relationship and to your financial well-being. Here are some suggestions from personal finance experts from FPA to help you bridge the divide.

- **Share your goals and priorities with one another and look for areas where they agree.** “Some financial items are must-haves, and others fall into the nice-to-have category,” notes Pearson. “Once each person has their priorities, they can start the process of deciding how to merge the effort to get to each goal, and which [goal] should come first.” The sooner a couple holds these conversations, the better, adds Spero. “You may realize you have more in common than you thought. And once you find agreement on goals, then you can start to outline steps to reach them.” Also remember the ultimate goal as a couple is to be happy in your relationship and healthy financially. The two often go hand in hand.
- **Be open-minded, non-judgy and willing to compromise with one another.** These are nuanced, often complex and sometimes emotionally charged issues for which there usually is no clear playbook. Your challenge is to find a financial pathway that works for you, your partner and your unique circumstances. The more you can communicate about the issues without letting emotion get the best of you, the better chance you have of finding the right pathway.
- **Give one another some breathing room.** That means “honoring one another’s differing approaches to money,” says Spero, and not nitpicking each other about the minor things, so you can focus on finding common ground with more pressing issues. “Figure out areas where it’s okay to be different. Allow one another to stake out some territory for yourselves, and don’t sweat the smaller stuff, because it can distract you from what’s really important.”
- **Stake out the middle ground.** “When a couple has a ‘saver’ and a ‘spender,’ they can work together by finding strategies that are acceptable to both,” says FPA member Tom Balcom, CFP®, with 1650 Wealth Management in Lauderdale by the Sea, Fla. “For example, by agreeing that fixed expenses, such as a mortgage and retirement savings plans, are ‘required expenses’ and must be addressed before spending money on the ‘fun expenses,’ a couple can simultaneously make each other happy. Communicating on the non-negotiables should occur first before deciding on what is acceptable for the fun expenses.”
- **Automate bill payments, retirement account contributions and the like** so you don't have to constantly make choices and hold conversations around those choices.
- **Divide to conquer.** In cases where one person dominates the financial decision-making and other money-related duties, consider dividing these duties so the other person gets a better handle on their household finances and what it takes to manage them.
- **Involve an objective, expert third party.** There may be issues where a couple can't find commonality on their own. “Sometimes it takes an intermediary to come up with a creative solution that takes into account both sides,” Spero explains. To find a financial planning professional in your area, check out the FPA’s searchable national database at www.PlannerSearch.org.
- **Get a formal, big-picture financial plan.** A formal financial plan developed by a financial professional (with your input) serves as a compass that keeps each of you oriented to the pathway that connects your goals and priorities to your resources.

By recognizing where your financial personas differ and moving to bridge those divides through compromise, financial common ground is well within reach, even if it takes a little help from an expert to find it.

Financial Planning Association (FPA) ©2022

Meal Planning Will Save You Money

Do you wander the grocery store aisles wondering what you might need, or do you use a checklist from a well-thought-out meal plan? The latter can save you money and time, have you eating healthier, and possibly help you lose weight. It's not complicated. Simply write down the meals you want to make over the next week, identify ingredients, and create your list. Try the new approach this week, and then compare your food bill this week to the one from last week. You may be shocked at the savings, and more so with 52 weeks of savings! Meal planning can give you more discipline to eliminate impulse buying of foods you can do without. Hint: Design meals and list ingredients clearly on 3x5 index cards. Each week, choose seven cards and make a grocery list with those ingredients.

Growing Older, Facing Death of Friends and Loved Ones

As we grow older, we experience an increasing rate of loss of family and friends to death. Research shows this experience can contribute significantly to the onset of depression among the elderly, a population that is especially vulnerable to this disease. More elderly today live alone than in the past, and some studies show one out of five have little or no verbal contact with other people for days at a time. But support is available, and guidance for developing a support network is too. Contact the EAP or a professional within your community for help to locate the support you need for someone about whom you have concern, especially if they are feeling grief or are affected by a loss. As you grow older, don't let denial isolate you or keep you away from a support network that can help give you the resilience you need for emotional challenges the passing years can bring.

Match Stress Management Techniques to Symptoms

Identify how your body responds to stress. Then use the stress management techniques most likely to help. Anger management techniques won't help you fall asleep if worry is what's keeping you awake at night. Instead, consider meditation or yoga. Keep a diary to track positive effects of stress management techniques you use, and if a technique works, don't stop using it. Make the stress management technique a regular part of your health practices.

Do You Need a Social Media Break?

Could you stand to be away from all your social media apps for a week? You may reap positive mental health benefits that include less anxiety and depression and increased mental well-being. That's what 154 research participants experienced after abstaining from social media of any kind for seven days. Participants were randomly chosen, but each previously used social media an average of eight hours a day. How much time do you spend on social media? Another study identified 46 harms from social media use, most being some psychological harm or impact. The point of taking a week's break isn't quitting altogether but gaining awareness of the impact and the benefits that can come from moderation. Source: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/> [social media break] and <https://www.uts.edu.au/> [search "dark side social media"]

Effective Communication In the Workplace

Workplace communication problems are common, but almost no one blames themselves when they occur. Instead, we point to the other guy, who dropped the ball, didn't speak up, or didn't do something else. Understanding your role in fixing workplace communication issues before they happen is key to dramatically reducing them. It starts with understanding what's called the "communication loop." First described by mathematician Claude Shannon in 1948, the communication loop is a model for effective communication. There are eight phases: 1) a person deciding to communicate, 2) writing a message they want to convey, 3) configuring the message, 4) choosing the channel to send the message (e.g., email, text), 5) the receiver getting the message, 6) the receiver decoding what was sent, 7) the receiver understanding the message, and 8) the receiver sending feedback to the sender that the message was received. Within the loop are many risks of interference and communication breakdown. When communicating, keep these steps in mind. Anticipate what can go wrong. For example, you email a colleague on vacation who has not set up an away message. You hear nothing back. Now you're frustrated and don't know how to interpret a lack of response or feedback. The communication loop is broken, so you phone, and a voice recording explains the absence on vacation. A critical part of effective workplace communication is taking personal responsibility for your messages, both received and sent, and being proactive in pursuit of the feedback—closing the loop. Monitor your communications to keep the ball rolling, and you'll experience more workplace success, fewer headaches, and less frustration related to communication breakdown.

Source:

<https://expertprogrammanagement.com/2019/04/the-communication-process/>

Conduct a Flash Meeting

Can you conduct productive meetings on short notice? Yes. Here's how: 1) Announce the meeting, its start and end time, and its purpose. 2) Encourage members to call others "late" who are not on time or "off task" with any digression off the topic. 3) Give a minute for group members to focus on the topic in mind. 4) Divide the allotted time between group members. And have a time-keeper, plus a scribe for notes. 5) Start and end at the time promised. (Educating staff about flash meetings will make boundaries more easily accepted and the meetings more efficient.)

Summer Safety: Prevent Head Injuries This Summer

As you head outdoors to recreate, follow safety rules and precautions. Summer naturally has higher rates of accidents. Head injuries in particular increase in summer. Can you guess the sport with the greatest risk of serious injury? It's horseback riding. It beats motorcycling, skiing, and even football for the rate of serious injuries, especially of the head and chest. Use safety equipment, be properly trained, and ride within your limits. Source:

<https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu> [search: horseback injuries]

Grow Food for Fun and Savings

With the cost of food out of sight, can you possibly save money growing some of your own food? Any small space can help decrease your food bill, but some enthusiasts claim a 10-foot-by-10-foot plot (dirt or pots) can grow \$700 worth of fruits and vegetables over a season! With a bit of plastic (creating what's called a "hoop house"), you can extend the growing season. To give it a try, search for "small space gardening" information. Secondary benefits include teaching children self-reliance, eating healthier, saving money, family togetherness, and fun. Learn more:

www.motherearthnews.com [search: "small space gardening"]

Here for you as life happens ...



Summertime & Your EAP

After a busy school year, your EAP is available all summer long.

The EAP is a confidential, no cost resource to address whatever your summer brings.

School is out and it is time to relax.

Sometimes, summer seems busier than the school year!

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We're here all summer long and ready to assist.

vacation | summer camp | back-to-school | packing for college | budgeting | work | etc.

Not sure which way to turn?

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Call us

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to speak with an Intake Counselor.

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employees and their household
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avoiding, you can speak with an
attorney.**



**For a financial issue you've been
ignoring, you can speak with a
financial professional.**



**To arrange for childcare or elder
care resources, an Intake
Counselor can help locate services.**

Have a Safe and Happy Summer!

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