

**3RD ANNUAL
VA MENTAL HEALTH
SUMMIT
2022**

**PRESENTED BY
MARK GODWIN, LCSW
on behalf of the Northern Arizona
VA Healthcare System**

**WHAT IS
PTSD?**

WHAT DOES PTSD MEAN?

PTSD stands for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Post



After

Traumatic



Bodily Injury/Mental Shock

Stress



Tension or Anxiety

Disorder



Disturbance of the Body/Mind

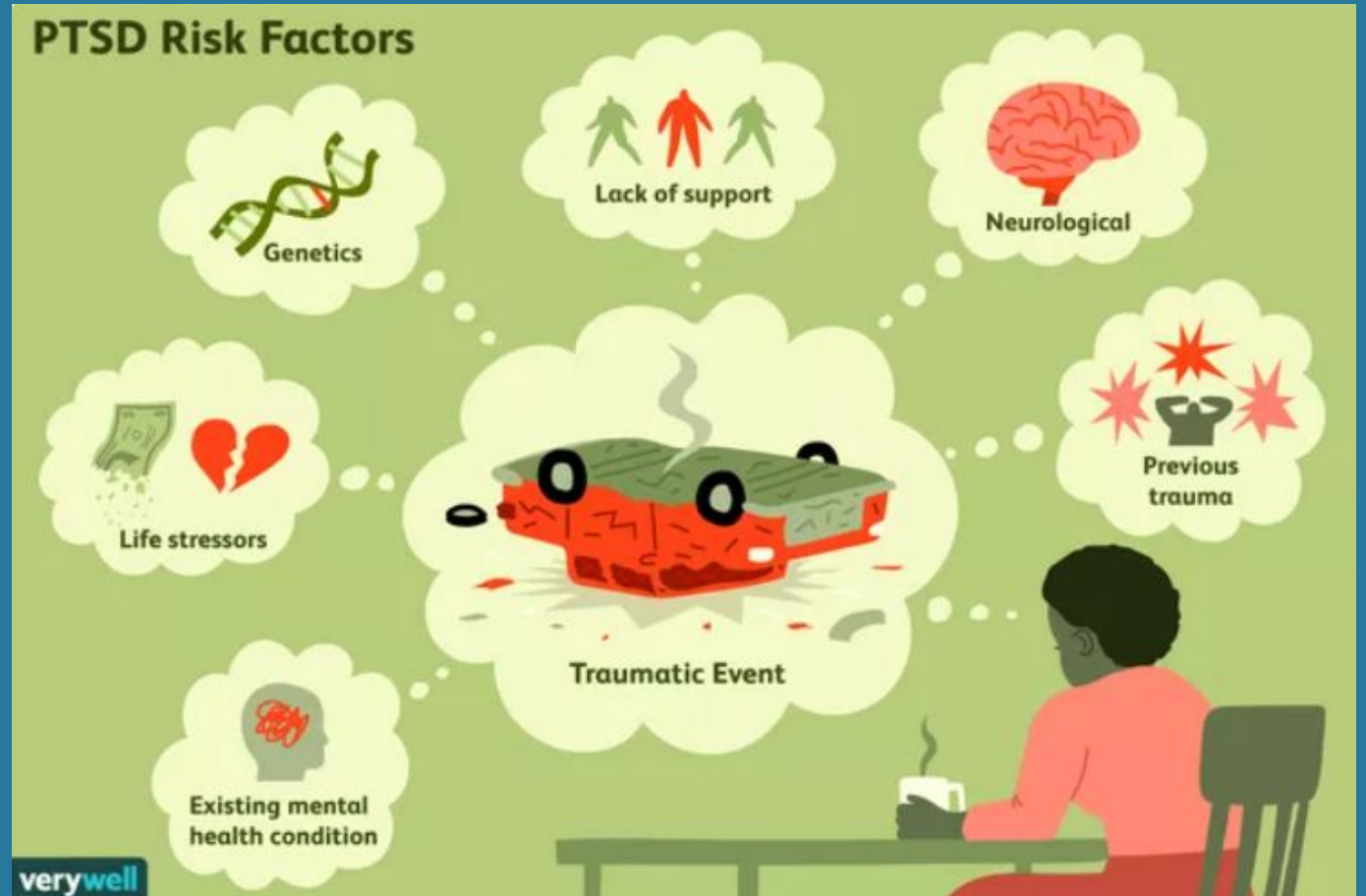
PTSD = A disturbance of the body and mind that manifests as chronic tension/anxiety *after* bodily injury and/or mental shock has occurred.

Who gets PTSD?



PTSD CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE AS A DIRECT RESULT OF BEING IN A TRAUMATIC SITUATION, SUCH AS COMBAT, A CAR ACCIDENT, AN ASSAULT OR DEALING WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS SUCH AS COVID-19.

What are some of the factors that can contribute to the development of PTSD?



- The *severity* of the trauma
- The *number* of traumas one is exposed to (previous exposure to traumatic events).
- The *support* the person receives before during and after the event.
- The *amount of time* spent in highly stressful situations.



Combat Vet Support Group
Beginning May 9, 2019
This group meets every 2nd/4th Thursday
from: 0900am to 10:30am

Where: Crocker Presbyterian Church
414 North Commercial Street
Crocker, MO 65452

Focus: Provide a supportive environment for Combat Veterans to discuss concerns and gain skills to manage life stressors. Discuss common difficulties in reintegrating into civilian life after deployment.

Call: 573-814-6206
for more information and eligibility.

WWW.VETCENTER.MO.GOV

Logos include: Vietnam War Era Veteran, Desert Storm Veteran, and a circular logo with a globe.

**Why do
some people
get PTSD
and others
don't even
when
subjected to
the same
traumatic
situations?**



There are other factors that also may contribute to the development of PTSD which may help explain why some people get PTSD and others don't (even in the same situation). Some of these include:



- The emotional and/or physical condition of the person at the time of the trauma.
- The suddenness or unexpectedness with which the trauma happened.
- The unique physical and emotional constitution of the person.
- The beliefs and values held by the person prior to (and after) the trauma.
- The perception of imminent danger.

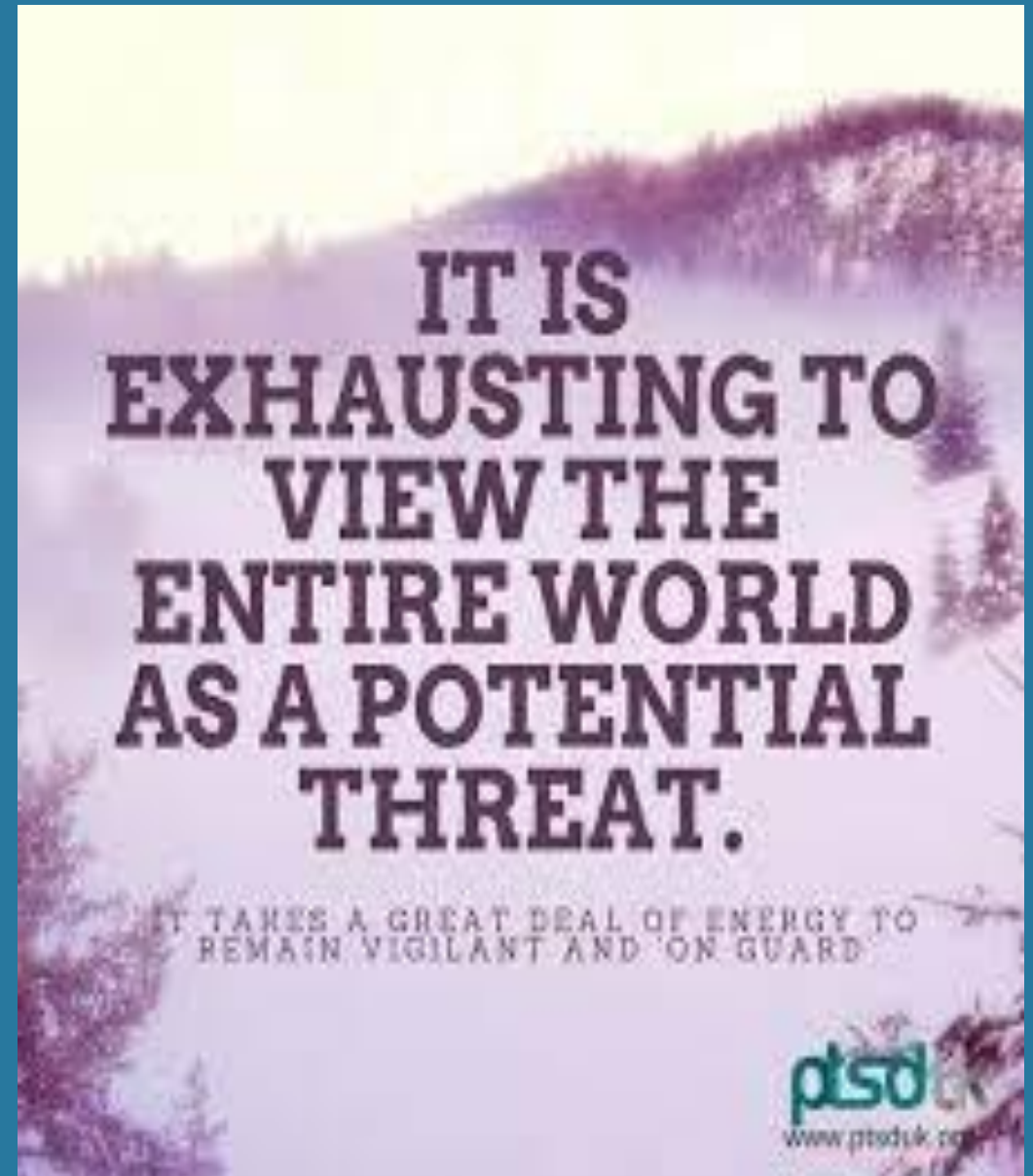
PTSD Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



WHAT ARE THE FOUR MAIN SYMPTOM GROUPS THAT DEFINE PTSD?

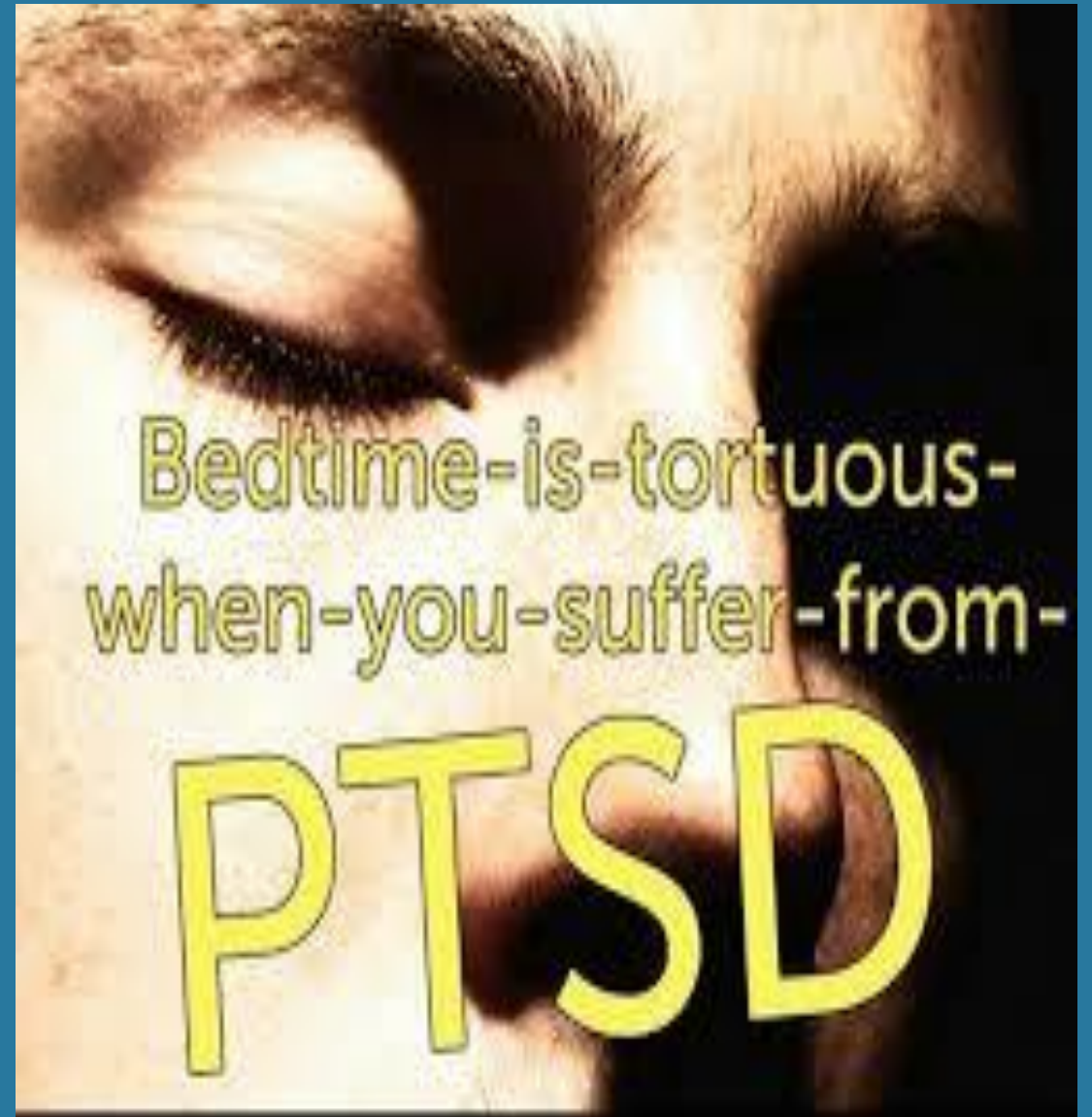
HYPERAROUSAL
OFTEN CHARACTERIZED BY:

- **Hypervigilance**
- **Difficulty Concentrating**
- **Panic, fear, anxiety**
- **Anger, rage, irritability**
- **Difficulty Sleeping**
- **Extreme sensitivity to sounds/noises**



***RE-EXPERIENCING
OFTEN
CHARACTERIZED BY:***

- **Nightmares**
- **Re-current or intrusive thoughts about the trauma.**
- **Your body re-acting as though the trauma were occurring again (racing heart beat, sweating etc.)**
- **Your emotional state/mind responding as though the trauma were re-occurring (get me out of here, I want to kill that person)**
- **Flashbacks**



COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

Cognitive Distortions are “the persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations about oneself, others or the world and/or the persistent, distorted cognitions about cause/consequence of events that lead to BLAME oneself or others” that often occur in the context of PTSD.⁵



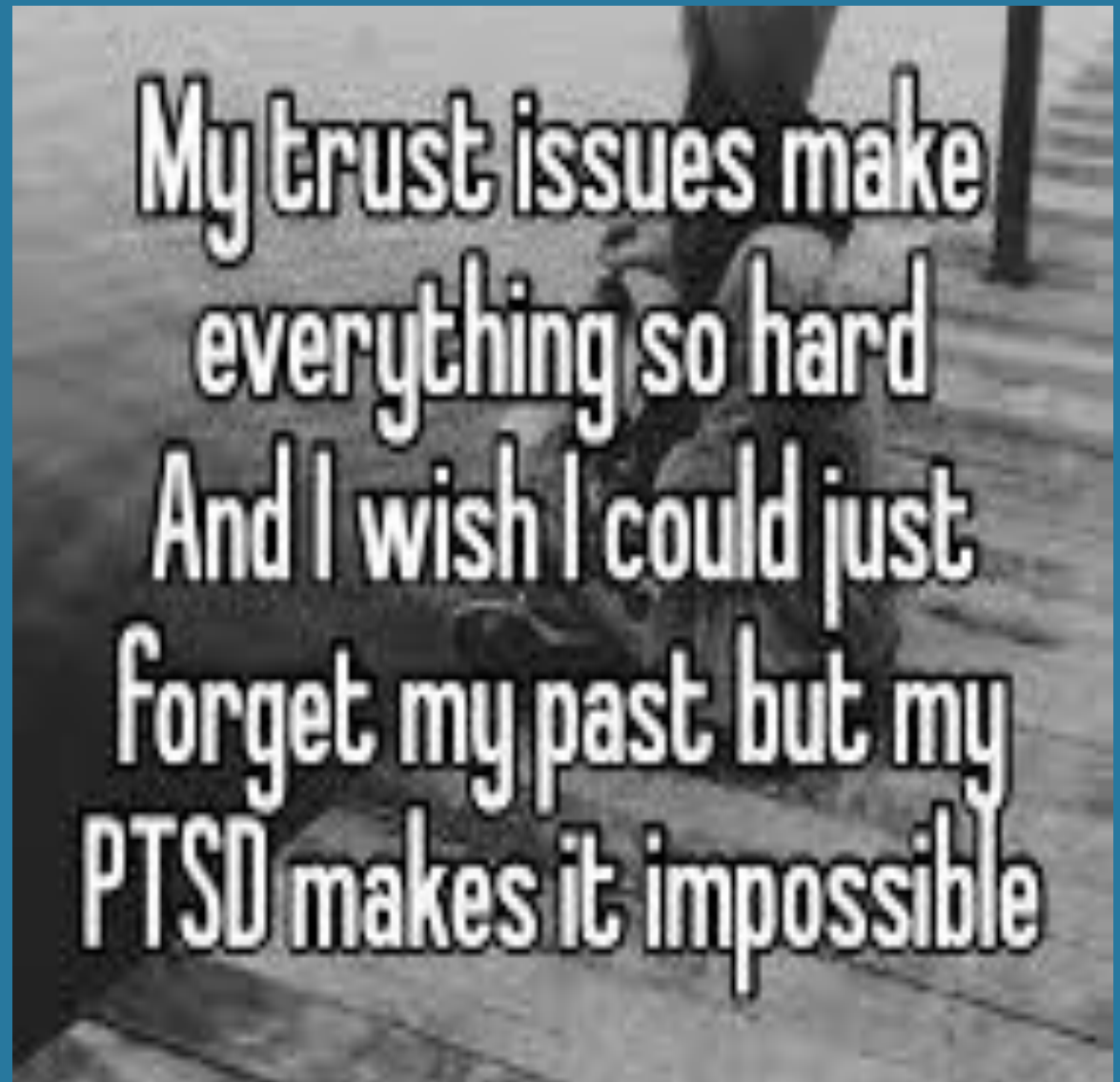
**COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS
ADVERSELY IMPACT OUR
EVERY ACTION AND HELP
KEEP THE PTSD GOING.
SOME AREAS THAT ARE
TYPICALLY IMPACTED
INCLUDE:**

(Trust) Sometimes, who we once trusted we no longer trust.

(Safety) Where we once felt safe we no longer feel safe.

(Esteem) Our self-esteem or esteem for others may diminish especially when we...

(Guilt) Blame ourselves or others for the trauma.



AVOIDANCE
IS OFTEN
CHARACTERIZED BY:



- Emotional Numbing (I don't feel anything when something good or bad happens)
- Avoiding activities, places or people that are reminders (i.e. anyplace with crowds, Muslims, Asians, driving)
- Avoiding thoughts, feelings or conversations about the trauma (including avoiding therapy)
- Inability to remember parts of the trauma
- Loss of interest in activities that you once enjoyed
- Using alcohol or other substances to better tolerate distressful
Hyperarousal or Re-experiencing symptoms

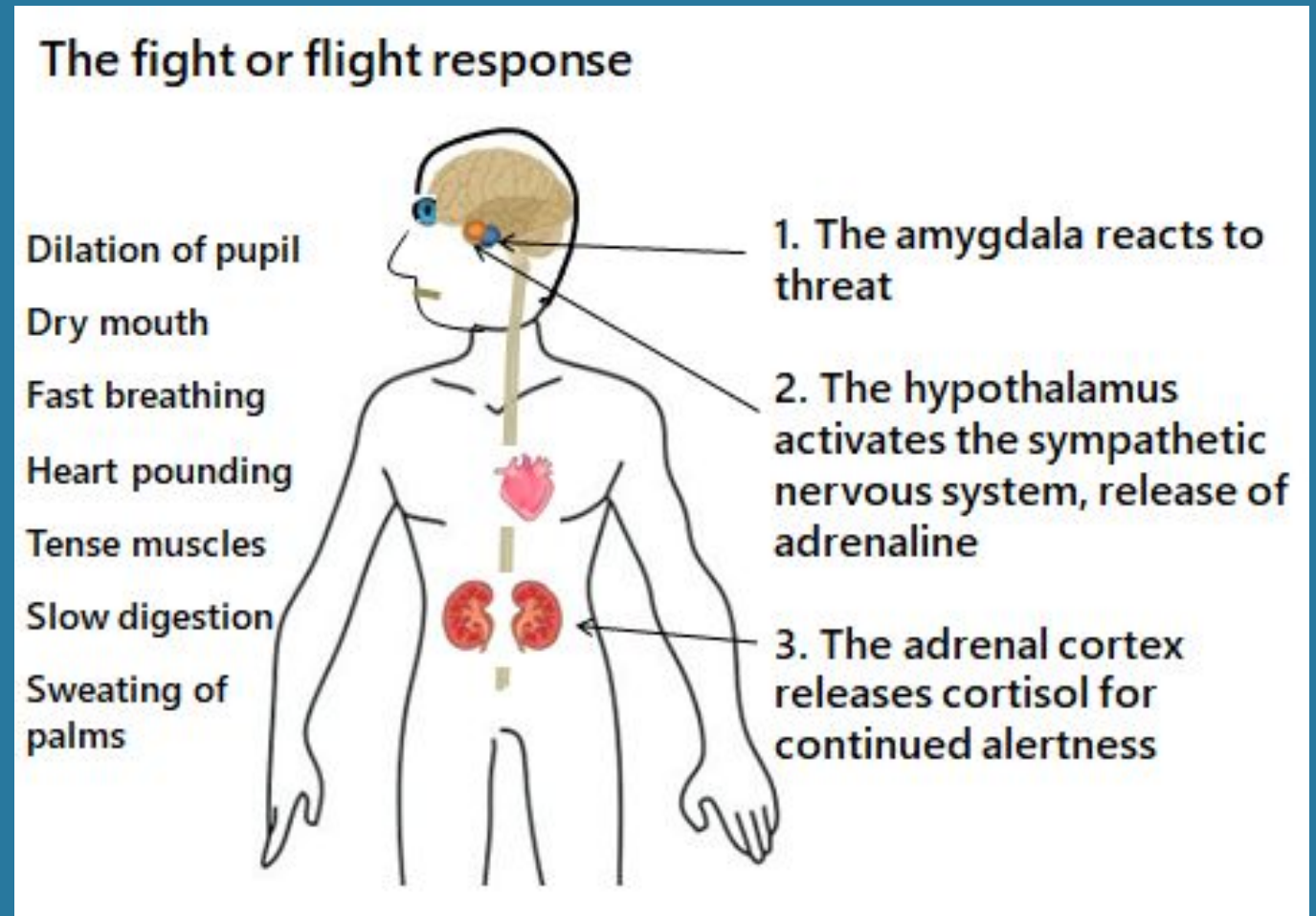
What are the biological components of PTSD?

All living creatures are hardwired to respond to threats to their survival with the Flight, Fight or Freeze response.



- **The Antelope tends to run (Flight)**
- **The Lion usually attacks (Fights)**
- **The Opossum rolls over and plays dead (Freeze)**

The Flight, Fight or Freeze Response is caused by the nervous system pumping either adrenaline or nor-adrenaline into the body after it senses something dangerous is nearby. It is a natural response to anything the body has been conditioned to sense as being dangerous.



If the body experiences something dangerous that is overwhelming or extreme enough, the trauma may damage the nervous system and if there is not sufficient time afterwards to process the information and/or heal, its signals can get crossed and later begin to erroneously trigger the flight, fight or freeze response when there is no danger present.



In other words: *PTSD is when your body continues to respond to (non-threatening) situations with a **FLIGHT, FIGHT OR FREEZE** response AFTER the threatening situation is over.*

**PRESCOTT VA AND FLAGSTAFF
PCT (PTSD) CLINICAL TEAM
CONTACT INFORMATION...**

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Elizabeth Johnson Psy.D.

Must be Referred By Messrs Garcia or Godwin or
Your VA Nurse/Primary Care Physician



**WITH VA OFFICES IN
THE CHINLE AND
KAYENTA IHS
HOSPITALS**

SELECTED REFERENCES

- 1. Albuquerque Veterans Hospital Military Trauma Treatment Program (MTTP) (2012-2019). Various informational materials compiled by members of the MTTP (thank you MTTP!).**
- 2. American Psychiatric Association, (June 2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, pg 272.**
- 3. All supporting pictures were downloaded from Google Images.**