

**PTSD '2'** is designed and intended for the spouses and families of the veteran who returns home a changed person, one that his/her family does not recognize. It is envisioned to bring awareness to the existence of Secondary PTSD and to recognize the symptoms associated with it.

Negative feelings may be associated with Secondary PTSD affecting the lives of the entire family.

- PTSD '2' is solely a "peer to peer support group
- PTSD '2' is not counseling or treatment; rather, it is intended to bring awareness, understanding, and support to the attendees.

Maybe you have had success with a certain tone of voice, a shared special thought, maybe just a smile to cross that first mile?

Give yourself permission to be less than perfect for a while.

Ability is what you are capable of doing • Motivation determines what you do • Attitude determines how well you do it.

~ Lou Holtz

***If you feel that a peer support group is not for you but feel that you need help, please do not hesitate to seek professional mental health assistance.***

**Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255**

**Supported by:**



***A special thank you to Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 47, Riverside, CA. for the printing of the PTSD '2' brochure.***

***Together Always***

***If you are interested in learning more about the PTSD '2' Program contact us at: [ptsd2@avva.org](mailto:ptsd2@avva.org)***

***Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.***

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***A Peer Support Group for  
Family & Friends***



***PTSD '2'***

***We can relate to others who are in a similar situation, because ~ we care!***

***Peer support occurs when people provide knowledge, experience and emotional, social, and practical support to each other.***



***Together Always***

**Secondary PTSD** is not a disorder which is recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (as of the fifth edition). However, if you live or have lived with someone who suffers from PTSD, you may notice yourself beginning to "**mirror**" some of their behaviors. Contact us; we have experienced Secondary PTSD.

In order for us to understand Secondary PTSD, we have to understand PTSD first.

### ***PTSD Definition***

PTSD is a disorder that develops in some people who have seen or lived through a shocking, scary, or dangerous event.

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 healthy 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. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened even when they are not in danger.

~ National Institute of Mental Health

We will never be able to fully understand what our loved one has been through or may be going through, but we know that having PTSD can be a scary and difficult time.

We understand that having PTSD does not mean "crazy."

***We also understand that having Secondary PTSD does not mean going "crazy."***

Caregiving may be one of the greatest gifts we have to give a loved one, but it can also be one of the most demanding.

When you're devoting yourself to the care of an elderly, chronically ill, or disabled family member, you can start to feel isolated, exhausted, and overwhelmed.

***As caregivers, we want to help.***

*Like PTSD, seeking help for secondary PTSD is trying to solve a problem, not a sign of weakness.*

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that may be accompanied by a change in attitude from positive and caring to negative and unconcerned.

***You May Become a Caregiver - If:***

- You are constantly watching for people or circumstances that might "set him/her off."
- You try to make sure everything stays calm - that nothing upsets your loved one.
- You are walking on eggshells.



***Do you...***

- Have no one to comfort you when you feel bad?
- Handle all the household chores yourself?
- Feel like you have to make all the decisions?
- Go to bed – worn out?

***If so, please contact us at [ptsd2@avva.org](mailto:ptsd2@avva.org)***