

PTSD and The Holidays

CHRISTMAS

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Christmas should be a time of celebration and forming good memories. To many it's a time of getting together with family, remembering past holidays, and acknowledging God's goodness to us. For some veterans the holidays may be a painful and difficult time. It may be hard for them to "act" like everyone else. This family may want to think of new ways to celebrate or start new family traditions. Some vets won't participate in lighting up the tree or putting up the lights on the family house. They remember times that it was a threat to life to be caught out in the lights, out in the open. Since they feel a need to protect their family from danger, just can't enjoy getting into this type of activity either knowingly or unknowingly. Forming new family traditions might be a good way to accomplish the same mission. Some suggestions are: visit a VA hospital together and give out homemade Christmas cards or candy, or visit a homeless shelter and help serve food. Some war vets do not feel comfortable in a crowd, so why plan going out to a public activity if it brings discontentment and perhaps anger? Perhaps limiting visitors to the house, and instead have a small gathering is an alternative. Some vets do not enjoy having unexpected CO drop in. You are limited in ideas only by your imagination. However you choose to observe the holidays, you are forming memories.

May God be with all of you and your families at this special time and throughout the New Year.

Proverbs 3: 5,6. Trust in the Lord with all thy heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path.

Sincerely Yours,

Steve Janke, Chaplain VSPA

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