



Chaplain 's Corner



Some Wonder Why

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No matter where or when you served incountry, if you went to Vietnam, you dealt with many dangers and discomforts. Because of that fact and range of your experience, you were a prime candidate for post traumatic stress disorder (P.T.S.D.). This affects many Vietnam veterans and their families, even twenty-five years later.

Some of us still wonder why? We question authority and find it hard to work for or with people. We want to be alone or find ourselves alienated for others--even in a crowded house. Still others of us have problems with intimate relationships and keep an emotional distance from our wife or children, or we punish ourselves in other ways.

There are many symptoms of P.T.S.D. including depression, anger, sleep disorders, reacting under stress with survival tactics, survivors' guilt, hyper alertness, suicidal thoughts and or flashbacks (vivid recall of events or places in Vietnam or Thailand).

We have learned that there are certain triggers that cause these feelings. Triggers of smells, sounds, certain events, or times of the year, or sights around us bring certain feelings on. For example the smell of urine, gun powder, Asian food, fumes of diesel or jet fuel can send the mind to the past and perhaps to an unpleasant or traumatic experience. It could be the sound of a chopper, a truck a backfire from a car, corn popper, fireworks, or musical oldies. For me, rain or bright lights can bring it back.

Certain events, or dates make us act "strange." Things don't seem to come together. Everything is off the tract, It may be an argument with your wife or just unlocked doors at night, unexpected CO dropping in, being criticized by someone or a family member's delay in carrying out an order. At these times we can't seem to handle the small things. PTSD has many sides and many faces. It is as varied as the experiences of the vet. The V.A. can help to identify it but I think misses the mark in overcoming it.

If you feel I have described you to a tee, then you probably have PT SD to some degree. It is a NORMAL reaction to a life threatening situations. Hey, the next time I go on a tour anywhere it will be to a place like Disneyland. There are many things practical in helping with the healing process. *Romans 8: 28* says: '*For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to My purpose.*' All things are not good but all things can work together *for good*; yes, even Vietnam. If you need help in starting a PTSD claim drop me a line or call. We also offer helpful books and tapes.

Hey guys, "WELCOME HOME!"

"IT IS THE SOLDIER, NOT THE POET, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM OF SPEECH. IT IS THE SOLDIER, NOT THE REPORTER, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM OF PRESS. IT IS THE SOLDIER, NOT THE CAMPUS ORGANIZER, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM TO PROTEST. IT IS THE SOLDIER WHO SERVES BENEATH THE FLAG, WHO SALUTES THE FLAG, AND WHOSE COFFIN IS DRAPPED BY THE FLAG, WHO GIVES THE DEMONSTRATOR THE right To BURN THE FLAG.'
FATHER D.E. O'BRIAN

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