



## EXAMPLES OF PTSD SYMPTOMS

Source: CDC

- Reliving the event over and over in thought or in play
- Nightmares and sleep problems
- Becoming very upset when something causes memories of the event
- Lack of positive emotions
- Intense ongoing fear or sadness
- Irritability and angry outbursts
- Constantly looking for possible threats, being easily startled
- Acting helpless, hopeless or withdrawn
- Denying that the event happened or feeling numb
- Avoiding places or people associated with the event

## Overcoming the Stigma of PTSD

In 1965, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran Patrick Welch was seriously injured in Vietnam, spending two years in the hospital and experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for 20 years before seeking help. He self-medicated with alcohol, experiencing survivor's guilt that negatively impacted his life.

The additional trauma of losing his daughter caused him to spiral into a lengthy depression. It wasn't until Welch connected with a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America service organization that he discovered a purpose, put him back with like-minded people and, as Welch described, "got his mojo back."

Welch works as a veteran advocate, consultant, speaker and educator and is a senior mentor at Buffalo Veterans Treatment Court.

*"It took 20 years for me to recognize I had an issue and needed to talk to someone," he said.*

According to Welch, stigma is a significant problem for people seeking help for PTSD, particularly combat vets, since seeking help can be viewed as a weakness.

"I tell everybody I have PTSD," he said. "It doesn't mean I'm crazy and I'm not afraid to talk about it."

Welch says the message needed to reach people is that it's ok to get help. "We need to be more vocal and engage friends, relatives and the community in general."

While PTSD is common among veterans, many people can experience PTSD, including children.

According to Jeffrey L. Anker, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine, assistant professor of psychiatry and board member of Mental Health Advocates of WNY, PTSD can occur as a result of a traumatic or life-threatening event, including combat, a car accident or even bullying.

*"Any experience that is like the traumatic experience can invoke panic, anxiety or nightmares." Dr Anker said. "You end up feeling helpless, very frightened with no control as a result of a scar on the brain — it is almost like being branded."*

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About seven or eight out of every 100 people (7-8%) will have PTSD at some point in their lives.

It is likely that you, or someone you know, will suffer from PTSD at some point.

Source: HealthyPlace.com



Youth Mental Health First Aid



Community Mental Health First Aid Training



Mental Health First Aid



Live Well Buffalo Festival 2019



Disability Pride Parade and Festival



Check Out the Local Events in Your Community

To see a full list of events for the month of July, please visit, LetsTalkStigma.org

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“As a result, people tend to be avoidant, whether it is avoiding a person or neighborhood (where incident occurred) and can become very negative about the future, not hopeful and may experience social withdrawal,” he said.

Dr. Anker says that clinical depression often goes along with PTSD. Treatment may include professional therapy, medication to treat symptoms, and exposure and desensitization.

According to the National Center for PTSD, about 7 or 8 out of every 100 people will experience PTSD at some point in their lives with women more likely to develop PTSD than men, and certain genes may make some people more likely to develop PTSD than others.

The National Center for PTSD also states on its website that some people develop PTSD after a friend or family member experiences danger or harm or experience a sudden, unexpected death of a loved one.

Dr. Anker indicates that stigma of having PTSD or another mental illness often prevents people from seeking treatment.

“They may be embarrassed and afraid to assert themselves and may experience withdrawal and avoidance,” he said.

The goal of the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition and Join the Conversation campaign is to stop the stigma of mental illness so more people will seek the help they need.

## Exercise PTSD – Battling Result Expectations

Exercise. This simple word conjures images of extremely fit, athletic young people in very tight-fitting clothing, and this is unfortunately the image that can stop people who are dealing with mental health issues from going to the gym. Thankfully, there is a reliable method that will keep those of us working through PTSD to use exercise on a regular basis because in a word, exercise “works.” We just have to know how to work it.

Fitness marketing campaigns generally equate fitness with the iconic physique. Unfortunately, that physical image is not available to everyone. Genetic body types dictate more of our potential physicality than some of us would like to admit. I am not implying that only a select few can build muscle, lose body fat, and look better. Nor am I saying that people who look the part don’t work hard for it; to achieve the iconic look a person has to work very hard, regardless of genetics. I am saying that going for the iconic physique as a primary result expectation is doomed to failure for most of us, and unfortunately this is the major selling point for the fitness industry.

The key to exercise motivation lies in understanding “result expectations.” The result expectation is the reason why a person engages in an exercise program in the first place. If I’m a competitive bodybuilder, my result expectation from exercise is to increase muscle mass and reduce excess body fat. If I’m a golfer, my result expectations from exercise involve greater rotational flexibility throughout my core and shoulders.

The list goes on, with each different result expectation, or reason to exercise, having its own exercise prescription. Enhanced mental health is a very powerful and realistic result expectation from exercise, and there are specific ways to structure the exercise program for mental health.

A proper prescription of “health and fitness training and discipline” (exercise) for mental health will alleviate the negative symptoms of PTSD like depression, anxiety, panic, and disassociation. Additionally, the neurochemical shift achieved through physical exercise (increase in dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine) enhances critical cognitive functions like concentration, problem-solving skills, interpersonal communication, and creativity. These cognitive factors allow a person to more fully engage in progressive, healing PTSD treatment protocol like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, EMDR, etc. So, with proper exercise we have the double effect of reducing psychic pain and discomfort, while at the same time fueling our ability to engage in therapy and truly get well.

There is not enough room in this short article to fully outline how to structure exercise for mental health, and this concept and implementation may need further clarification. Please contact us with any questions or concerns about the content of this article. We would love to help you get locked into using exercise as a regular part of your efforts to get well and stay well!

– Dan Mitchell (dan@bodytomind.rehab)

WELCOME TO OUR  
NEWEST MEMBERS



## PETER & ELIZABETH TOWER FOUNDATION



Community Services  
FOR EVERY1

## Spotlight: A Q&A with The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation

The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation is a family foundation that supports and collaborates with nonprofit organizations and community partners that share our mission of helping children, adolescents, and young people affected by intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health issues, and substance use disorders. The Foundation's work is focused in Western New York and Eastern Massachusetts, areas that are important to the Tower family.

We recently spoke with **Chuck Colston, Tower Foundation Program Officer**, who shared his perspective on the efforts of the Coalition.

### Q: Why did the Tower Foundation choose to fund The Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition?

First, the project aligns perfectly with the Foundation's goal of eliminating stigma related to mental illness. We don't get many applications that focus primarily on the issue of stigma. Secondly, we were quite impressed with the Coalition's commitment to normalize the conversation about mental health by raising community awareness. By sitting at many of the early meetings, it became clear to us that the group was gaining momentum.

### Q: What has the response been from the community?

Join the Conversation has been well received by the community. I've heard

other grant partners and colleagues refer to the campaign. The Foundation is very pleased with the campaign. Just last month, we featured the campaign in our Annual Highlights.

### Q: How does this campaign align with other community initiatives your Foundation supports?

This campaign fits into our Community Change portfolio. Community Change grants often involve collaborative work intended to effect community-wide and/or systems-level change. This type of work requires multiple partners working together to achieve a common goal.



BAKER VICTORY  
SERVICES

## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ERIE COUNTY ANTI-STIGMA COALITION

Does your organization, church, temple, or community group want to combine forces with our organization? Do you individually want to engage with us to stop the stigma of mental illness? Please consider becoming a member of our Coalition by completing our membership form at [letstalkstigma.org/support/pledge](http://letstalkstigma.org/support/pledge).

It is going to take a massive community effort to move the needle on stigma, please become a part of the solution. Questions? Please contact Max Donatelli, Chairperson, at [maxjoydonatelli@gmail.com](mailto:maxjoydonatelli@gmail.com).

# Patrick P. Lee Foundation and Bring Change to Mind Launch PSA to Increase Number of Mental Health Professionals in the U.S.

Leading mental health and education advocacy organizations [Bring Change to Mind](#) and the [Patrick P. Lee Foundation](#) have released a new advocacy and awareness campaign, *Between The Lines*. This campaign aims to increase the number of psychiatrists, psychologists, and behavioral health practitioners serving the growing needs of diverse communities throughout the United States.

While one in five Americans affected by mental illness may be reaching out to their primary care physicians for help, with not enough mental health professionals available, two-thirds of physicians have reported difficulty in referring patients for further mental health treatment – twice the number for any other specialty. In fact, 56% of Americans with mental illness have no access to treatment, with zero psychiatrists in more than half of U.S. counties. Youth mental health is particularly ill-supported with the report indicating that 76% of youths with serious depression receive no or insufficient treatment.

The goal of *Between the Lines* is to encourage college students who are in health, science, and/or education tracks to choose career paths that serve the growing mental health needs in the U.S. The campaign will spotlight individuals who have dedicated their careers to save, and better the lives of others; provide awareness around the breadth of professions in the field; connect students to associations serving these specialists; and share resources that can help with educational

opportunities, scholarships, and loan repayment. Through targeted digital media placement promotion, the campaign aims to reach millions of college students and increase the number of mental health professionals.

“When Bring Change to Mind approached us about a collaboration to address the critical shortage of mental health professionals, we were very interested,” said Jane Mogavero, Executive Director of the Patrick P. Lee Foundation. “One of the Lee Foundation’s top priorities is to support a strong, well-trained mental health workforce.

This campaign is a natural extension of our mental health scholarship program and allows us to communicate directly with college students, who may aspire to a career in mental health. By adding just one mental health professional to the workforce, hundreds of patients and their families will benefit. There is great opportunity for dedicated individuals to impact their communities in a substantial way.”

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The Patrick P. Lee Foundation is a funder of the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition.

For more details, and to view the campaign, please visit: [mentalhealthjobs.org](http://mentalhealthjobs.org)

This campaign was developed by the [Lee Foundation](#) and [Bring Change To Mind](#) with support from [Water Cooler Group](#), [The Mighty](#), [Active Minds](#) and [Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.](#)

ERIE COUNTY  
**ANTI-STIGMA**  
COALITION

Join the Conversation

## Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition Founding Members:

BryLin Behavioral Health System • Children’s Mental Health Coalition of Western New York, Inc. • Community Partners of Western New York • Compeer • Crisis Services of Erie County • Erie County Department of Mental Health • Erie County Office for People with Disabilities • Fellows Action Network • Fuerst Consulting Corporation • Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County The Mental Health Advocates of WNY • Millennium Collaborative Care Patrick P. Lee Foundation Preventionfocus, Inc. Telesco Creative Group • The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation