

# PTSD: HELP FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

If someone close to you has experienced a traumatic event, it can be hard to know how to support them. There are several ways you can help your loved one, strengthen your relationship, and take care of yourself too.

## FOR YOU



- Take care of your own health.
- Continue doing the things you enjoy and find relaxing:
  - Spend time with family and friends
  - Exercise
  - Read a book
  - Spend time in nature
  - Meditate
- Be realistic about how much you can do.
- Talk about what you're going through with your own support network.
- Consider seeing a counselor or therapist.

## FOR YOUR LOVED ONE



- Plan enjoyable activities with friends and family.
- Offer to go to the doctor with them.
- Make a crisis plan – together.
- Check in with them often.
- Be a good listener.

- Contact VA's [Coaching Into Care](#) program for support in getting your loved one into treatment.

## HELP YOUR LOVED ONE THROUGH TREATMENT



- Be patient.
- Offer practical help:
  - Offer to research therapists near them.
  - Call to schedule appointments.
- Let them share at their own pace.
- Keep checking in with them, during and after treatment.
- Remind them that PTSD Treatment Works.

- Read [Understanding PTSD: A Guide for Families and Friends](#) to learn more about PTSD.
- Download the free mobile app [PTSD Family Coach](#) to get tips to help your loved one with PTSD.
- Use the [Caregiver Support Program](#) to access training and tools to help you succeed.
- Visit [AboutFace](#) to hear stories about PTSD and treatment from Veterans and their loved ones.

