

Your doctor will help you decide if PE or CPT is right for you.

Prolonged Exposure (PE)

After the trauma, you stopped doing things that reminded you of what happened. Over time, you avoided more and more triggers. PE helps you face those triggers to reduce the power they have over you. In other words, this program helps you face your fears in a safe environment.

PE is delivered in a one-on-one setting. It has two main parts:

- Facing the triggers you have been avoiding in your day to day life
- Talking through the memory of your trauma

Learn more at <http://go.usa.gov/EcqP>

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

Trauma changes how you think about yourself, others and the world. CPT helps you identify and question thoughts related to your trauma. It focuses particular attention on thoughts related to trust, safety, self-esteem, power, control and intimacy.

CPT can be delivered in one-on-one or group sessions. It has two main parts:

- Becoming aware of thoughts related to your trauma that keep you stuck
- Learning new skills to question and change those thoughts

Learn more at <http://go.usa.gov/Ec3C>

We are here to help!

Getting better is hard work, but you are a Veteran. You are used to working hard.

Thousands of VA providers are specially trained to deliver these proven techniques – including one at your local VA!

Find out more about these programs:

- Ask your doctor (bring this pamphlet with you to your next appointment)
- If you don't already have a doctor, find one at: <http://go.usa.gov/E3ud>



www.pstd.va.gov

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Less Anxiety,
More *Life*



Programs for
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
(PTSD) that *work*



VA | Defining
HEALTH CARE | **EXCELLENCE**
in the 21st Century

PTSD doesn't have to control your life.

What they say about war and other traumatic experiences is true: **it changes you.** But it doesn't have to keep you from living your life.

There are *effective* programs for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The programs are:

- Prolonged Exposure (PE)
- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)

These programs have been shown to help Veterans with all types of trauma, including:

- Combat
- Childhood trauma
- Sexual assault

PE and CPT can't erase the memory of your trauma, but they can help you do the things you love again. Studies show the programs help Veterans:

- Have less anxiety
- Function better at work or school
- Have healthy relationships

These programs work!

More than 50 scientific studies have shown that PE and CPT work!

For every 100 Veterans who start prolonged exposure (PE):

-  70 will have a noticeable improvement in PTSD symptoms
-  30 will not have a noticeable improvement in PTSD symptoms

For every 100 Veterans who start cognitive processing therapy (CPT):

-  67 will have a noticeable improvement in PTSD symptoms
-  33 will not have a noticeable improvement in PTSD symptoms



Schnurr P, et al. (2007). Cognitive behavioral therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder in women: a randomized controlled trial. *JAMA*, 297(8), 820-830.

Forbes D, et al. (2012). A multisite randomized controlled effectiveness trial of cognitive processing therapy for military-related posttraumatic stress disorder. *J Anxiety Disord*, 26(3), 442-452.

These programs can work for you too!



“For me, the end goal was to try to reduce some of the stress I was having in my life because of PTSD and combat trauma, and I think we achieved that. I’m not saying some days aren’t better than others, because I do have some triggers I have to work through, but I feel like I’m in a better place than where I started. I can be a productive citizen, and be a loving wife, a good worker and I hope a good photographer and a good step-mom to my husband’s kids.”

– Stacy L. Pearsall, US Air Force Veteran

Hear more from Stacy at
<http://go.usa.gov/EqSh>



“PE is...it’s hard. It unlocks the ugly stuff. But it’s in there and it’s eating at you anyway, so you have to. It’s better to just purge it in your therapist’s office. Honestly, it felt like a weight off my shoulders. It’s hard, but nothing worthwhile is ever easy.”

– Sarah C. Humphries, US Army Captain

Hear more from Sarah at
<http://go.usa.gov/EqhG>

Hear more testimonials at
ptsd.va.gov/aboutface



Q & A

Q: I’ve already tried treatment for PTSD. How is this different?

A: These programs target the core symptoms of PTSD. They teach you to manage your symptoms, but they also help you get to the root of the problem. As a result, they reduce anxiety and anger better than other treatments. This is true even for Veterans who have already completed other PTSD treatments. They continue to improve!



Q: These programs sound hard. Will I be able to do it?

A: As you know, PTSD is tough. It needs a tough program to knock it out! You will have a caring therapist to guide you through the program. You will always be in control and have the final decision-making power. It may be hard at first, yet most Veterans find it is worth it to get back to living their lives.

Q: Do these programs work for women?

A: Absolutely! In fact, they were first developed for women!