

WORKING WITH PTSD:

A Guide For Employees



What is PTSD?

3.6% of U.S. adults experienced posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the past year¹. PTSD stems from a strong stress response that lasts for more than one month and significantly interferes with daily life². Stress responses can come from many traumatic events including an accident, assault, or natural disaster – to name a few. After a traumatic event, and usually within three months, a person might experience:

- Recurring upsetting memories or bad dreams, flashbacks, and intrusive or involuntary thoughts.
- Avoidance of certain places, objects, or people that are reminders of the traumatic event.
- Feeling numb, guilty, worried, or depressed and having difficulty remembering the traumatic event.
- Hypervigilance, such as being on guard or intensely startled, trouble sleeping, or outbursts of anger.

**Developing PTSD
is not a sign of
personal
weakness or
failure. It's a
health condition
just like any other.**

How PTSD Can Impact Your Workday³

While working with PTSD may have challenges, people who live with PTSD can do quite well at work and be productive team members. Learning to manage PTSD can help people develop or enhance important skills⁴, such as:

- Flexible thinking
- Relational skills
- Renewed sense of meaning or purpose
- Leadership abilities such as courage and resilience⁵

Some days may be harder than others, but with a supportive workplace, people with PTSD can have successful careers.

Need to know more about PTSD in the workplace? Visit [StigmaFree.nami.org/EmployeePTSDInfo](https://stigmafree.nami.org/EmployeePTSDInfo) to find more practical tools to manage PTSD at work and steps you can take to seek help.

Call or text the free NAMI HelpLine at 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) for more resources for working with PTSD.

¹<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>

²<https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-conditions/posttraumatic-stress-disorder/>

³<https://askjan.org/disabilities/Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder-PTSD.cfm>

⁴<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/1215-4.cfm>

⁵<https://cptdsdfoundation.org/2022/10/18/cptsd-in-the-workplace-can-trauma-survivors-be-good-leaders/>

