



# STRENGTH OF A WARRIOR

## PTSD Symptoms

### **Negative changes in beliefs:**

- You may no longer have religious or spiritual faith.
- You may not have positive or loving feelings toward other people and may stay away from relationships.
- You may think the world is completely dangerous and no one can be trusted.

### **Avoiding reminders of the trauma:**

- You may not want to talk about the event(s) or be around people or places that remind you of the event(s).
- You also may feel emotionally numb, detached from friends and family, and lose interest in activities.
- You may avoid crowds because they feel dangerous.

### **Repeatedly thinking about the trauma:**

- You may find that thoughts about the trauma come to mind even when you don't want them to.
- You might also have nightmares or flashbacks about the trauma or may become upset when something reminds you of the event.

### **Being constantly alert or on guard:**

- You may be easily startled or angered, irritable or anxious, and preoccupied with staying safe.
- You may want to have your back to a wall in a restaurant or waiting room.
- A loud noise can startle you easily.
- If someone bumps into you, you might fly into a rage.
- You may also find it hard to concentrate or sleep or have physical problems, like constipation, rapid breathing, muscle tension, rapid heart rate, chronic pain, headaches, stomach pain, diarrhea, tightness or burning in the chest, muscle cramps, or low back pain.

**Problems in daily living:**

- You may start having problems functioning in your job, at school, or in social situations.
- You may drink, use drugs, or smoke too much.
- You may drive aggressively.
- You may neglect your health.

**Guilt and shame:**

- You may feel guilty that you did not do more to prevent the trauma.
- You may feel ashamed because during the trauma you acted in ways that you would not otherwise have done.
- You may feel responsible for what happened.
- You may feel guilty because others were injured or killed and you survived.

**Anger and irritability:**

- You may yell and scream at your partner or spouse.
- You may have less patience with your children.
- You may overreact to very small misunderstandings.
- Anger can make you feel irritated and cause you to be easily set off.