

1. Introduction

- a. Combat Veteran, PTSD suffer, and suicide survivor
- b. I'm a songwriter, an entertainer, and I use music to educate
- c. Educate & Entertain/Outline
 - i. Personal story
 - ii. Symptoms of PTSD
 - iii. PTSD and the brain
 - iv. What not to say
 - v. Solutions
- d. Warn Veterans – no combat talk
- e. Thesis
- f. Let's begin – where does war begin - leave

2. Sparkler – Jason Moon

- a. Keep self, buddies alive, complete mission, dream of home
- b. Un-pause the movie (joke)– New mission is to be home

c. Storage shed story (**5 Minutes**)

- i. While gone stuff in storage
- ii. I get off plane, hot to cold and damp -**HH**
- iii. Sister picks up at Ft. McCoy – wine & beer
- iv. Truck to storage the home rented – **HH**
- v. Spring 2004 unpres rains – flooding
- vi. Unfazed – **HH** mission of living
- vii. Sit back – write song

3. Happy to be Home – Jason Moon

- a. un-pause the movie – new mission be home
- b. symptoms, personal struggles
- c. VA can't sleep – got to mental health
- d. Downward spiral – 6 pack turns into a case, wine to whiskey
- e. Military training to “drive on” – thought I could out maneuver symptoms
- f. Thought I was crazy/alone – **isolated**
- g. Cycle – Symptoms prevent living which causes depression – 4 years

4. The Best of Me – Jason Moon

5. What is PTSD? – I was first diagnosed pamphlet

a. **PTSD is a group of symptoms, such as depression, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, nightmares, hyper vigilance, difficulties with sleep and relationships, etc., that happened to perfectly normal people as a direct result of being in a traumatic situation.**

b. **The fundamental force underlying the symptoms of PTSD is the re-experiencing of the trauma followed by attempts to bury memories and associated feelings.**

c. Let's unpack a more Symptoms for PTSD

1. Re-experiencing symptoms,

2. Hyper arousal symptoms,

3. Avoidance and numbing,

ii. Re-experiencing symptoms:

1. Re-experiencing the traumatic event as if it was happening now.

2. Intrusive experiences such as sight, sound, or smells – External stimuli

3. Intrusive memory, thought, or nightmare – Internal stimuli

4. An external or internal stimuli
triggers a re-experiencing of the traumatic event.

iii. Hyper-arousal symptoms:

1. Combat mode or go mode

2. Black and white thinking

3. Mission orientated

4. Exaggerated startle responses, sleep disturbance.

5. Hyper-vigilance is a state of constant awareness and alertness to ones surroundings you are always on guard, anticipating danger and ready to respond at all times.

6. Veteran is in the combat mode ready for danger – physical reaction

iv. Avoidance and numbing:

1. External avoidance of situations that could trigger the trauma(s). Achieved

through, staying away from people, places, and activities, and **isolation** (External)

2. Internal avoidance of the feelings associated with experiencing achieved through detachment and with Drugs and Alcohol – self-medication (Internal)

d. **Avoidance – external – isolation**

e. **Numbing – internal – self-medication.**

6. Trying to Find My Way Home

a. PTSD – In Immediate fight/flight/freeze.

i. Icy road test

b. How this works.

i. frontal lobe (thinking part)

1. Information enters the senses
referenced against known memories

2. **Hippocampus,**

ii. if threat

1. than activate Lizard brain FFF

2. **amygdala**

- iii. Reaction - a myriad of physical reactions
Adrenaline, cortisol, and norepinephrine
(combat mode/fight, flight, or freeze)

1. Hypothalamus

- iv. **Lizard brain hijacks thinking brain**

c. Thought Exercise – **bear in the woods**

- i. Civilian -Don't return to woods, if return on alert
- ii. Military/Combat knowingly and continual return to woods.
- iii. **Hard-wired** - Continued exposure we become hard-wired, real and physical change to brain. Hard wired.

1.(unaware) Perceived threat skips thinking brain goes right to amygdala – combat mode. Often Vet is unaware

2.(Straight to combat mode) All stress becomes combat stress

d. Recap:

- i. a “trigger” reminds the veteran of the trauma (re-experiencing) can be (internal or external)
- ii. Body reacts by getting ready to for threat - often times bypassing the thinking brain. (Hyper arousal)
- iii. the veteran avoids things that trigger memories and numbs the physical reaction (A&N)

e. How can I control external stimuli, triggers: **isolation?** How can we stop internal stimuli **self-medication?**

i. Isolation and Self-medication

f. Personal story

- i. Symptoms getting worse
- ii. warrior training + couldn't ask help
- iii. Self, buddies, mission
- iv. Fail mission, threat to family
- v. Eliminate the threat
- vi. Spring 2008 Suicide attempt

7. Hold On

- a. 22+1 veterans every day - more dead from suicide than combat (except 2004)
- b. Why? - Lots of answers
 - i. Symptoms of PTSD are debilitating
 - 1. Crazy, out of control, destructive, threat to loved ones – end the pain, eliminate the treat, ultimate avoidance.
 - ii. Military training, can't/don't know how to ask for help.
 - iii. Average troop three deployments
 - iv. Not a shared social experience.
 - 1. 12 % WWII, 8 % Vietnam, OIF/OEF 1% of population has shared experience.
 - v. Lack of understanding of what PTSD is and how it affects veterans –
- c. Bummed out and sad 😊

8. What we do? Repeat Thesis?

- a. Learn to talk to Veterans.
- b. How society views PTSD and the veterans who suffer from it directly effects how veterans react in terms of seeking treatment, suffering shame and guilt, and sometimes, taking their own lives.**
- c. We communicate how we think about PTSD by how we talk about it. Specifically, how we talk to those who suffer from it.**

9. Seven Things not to say to a veteran

1. What happened – trigger memories
2. Know a distant relative – admit ignorance
3. What you would have done – steal honor
4. Glad you made it home ok – reinforces PTSD
not legitimate wound (Invisible wound)
5. Get over it – PTSD is a real physical change
6. Empathies– compare symptoms = compare
cause

7. Offer help unless 100% - veterans only reach out when untenable

10. What do we do?

a. Welcome home!

b. Thank you for your service? Better sacrifice

c. Talk about now - How are you doing?

d. I'm so sorry you've had to go through this
(don't say it will all work out)

e. **Listen!!!!**

f. Learn resources and poc in your area and guide them it.

g. Supper effort - Follow Up

h. If we listen veterans can tell their stories without judgment, share their burden, end **isolation** = stop suicide.

11. Conclusion

a. Repeat - Introduction

b. Trying CD – wrote CD, used all over country

c. CD free to vets - Available for purchase

d. Through non-profit I founded Warrior Songs

e. Donations accepted, appreciated, and tax d