

Tip Sheet: Join a Support Group

Sometimes, the people closest to you have difficulty understanding what you are going through. Support groups, which bring together people with similar problems, can be powerful methods for healing.

In a support group, you meet other people in the same situation and can see that you're not alone. It also provides a safe environment in which to share your feelings.

Meeting other people at different stages of recovery can also help you to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel – people do get through their PTSD symptoms and go on to live a happy, fulfilling life.

Finally, sharing with others can help you keep from turning inward, which is good because talking with other people about your problems can put them in perspective.

Here are some resources for finding a support group:

- Ask your family doctor or counselor (if you have one).
- The internet can help you locate a support group in your town or a neighboring one
- Your local hospital or the VA: some hospitals and many VA centers run their own support groups. Talk to someone in the social services department.
- Clearinghouses: these are nonprofit groups that help you link up with the right support group. Look up [www. Mentalhealth.org](http://www.Mentalhealth.org) and click on “resources” and “mental health services locator” to find a listing of various groups by state.
- Your local newspaper: Many newspapers publish calendars of support group meetings in your area.
- Ask a pastoral counselor or chaplain.
- Check out community clinics in your area.