

Remembering 9/11 and the Effects of Trauma and PTSD

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It is impossible to forget the images and sounds witnessed the morning of September 11, 2001. The images will likely stay with us for years to come.

Many of us are able to continue on in our normal everyday lives and every now and then take a moment to reflect on the terror that occurred that day but for some, images, sounds and remembrances of 9/11 impact them every day and at times can actually become debilitating. This can affect their work, their relationships and overall well-being.

For many of the survivors, witnesses and emergency personnel, trauma is an expected and unfortunate result of the severity of what they experienced. What many tend to forget is the impact that these events had on the people who were at home watching TV, listening to news reports, or reading newspaper and magazine articles. In a sense, our entire nation participated in the events of 9/11.

Today, we are exposed to traumatic events via more media channels than ever before. This can create the same traumatic responses in viewers as those who were present at the event. The trauma response experienced will vary in intensity from person to person of course, but some may actually experience a true **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**.

At the [Optimum Performance Institute](#) and its [Roanne Program for young adults with Borderline traits and Borderline Personality Disorder \(BPD\)](#), we draw upon the latest neurobiologic research and understanding of trauma, traumatic attachment and the impact of trauma on the body.

These Trauma responses may present as recurrent flashbacks in the mind of someone who has been affected by what was seen. They may experience obsessional thinking about the events, as well as fears and avoidance of going to certain places, hypervigilance to sounds such as sirens, planes and alarms and fears of flying or being in tall buildings. This reaction can impact our sleep habits, appetite, relationships and of course our mood and overall general sense of well-being.

Those experiencing a trauma response live in a heightened state of anxiety. This can become intensified around the anniversary of September 11th when there is a tendency for the media to replay videos, images and interviews that can retrigger the trauma response.

It's important to seek or get help for those suffering from the effects of PTSD.

With our OPI Living programs, we utilize Cognitive Therapy, Exposure therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and medication as part of our treatment package for young adults with PTSD. When [PTSD is a co-occurring condition](#) accompanying a diagnosis of Borderline Traits or BPD, the immersion phase at Roanne is ideal because of the intense focus on DBT and Mindfulness techniques. Both OPI and Roanne program participants with PTSD draw invaluable help from Individual psychotherapy and participation in our support groups. Peer support also plays an important role as well.

This type of trauma response affects thousands throughout our nation. It's imperative that we provide adequate support to survivors, witnesses and heroes, as well as to the average person who has witnessed and experienced the event from their own home.