



What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex – PTSD?



Trauma affects us all in different ways

Just because you have experienced trauma doesn't mean you will have PTSD or C-PTSD. What's important is to consider how your experiences have affected you and what support you might need.

Everyone is different





You might be described as having PTSD if after (post) a traumatic event you are affected in one of the following ways:

- Re-experiencing the event through flashbacks and/or nightmares
- Feeling jumpy or on edge – this is sometimes called hyper-arousal
- Avoiding places or people
- Difficulties concentrating
- Difficulties sleeping
- Feeling irritable or angry



Complex PTSD

This is a relatively new term used to describe people who have more complex responses to traumatic events, particularly those who have experienced recurring or longer term trauma, for example developmentally throughout childhood or repeatedly as an adult such as domestic violence, war, sex trafficking or slavery.



As well as the difficulties experienced with PTSD, people with C-PTSD also experience the following:

- Difficulties with relationships – difficulties trusting, forming and maintaining positive relationships
- Difficulties managing emotions – may experience intense emotions or disconnection and numbness
- Negative sense of self – feel worthless or ashamed, lack self confidence, feel worthless guilt and shame.



PSTD and C-PTSD are not your fault

- These are natural responses ,often survival responses, to traumatic events
- The difficulties you experience are your brain and bodies attempts to try to protect you
- Healing is possible even if it takes time



It's also important to remember that trauma can affect people in lots of other ways too. There are lots of overlapping difficulties following the experience of trauma, including low mood, anxiety, difficulties with alcohol and substances, hearing voices or delusional beliefs.

What is important to understand is what has happened to you, how is this continuing to affect you and what help and support would be most useful to help your healing and recovery.