

# Occupational PTSD Guide for Remote Warriors

## *Navigating Work When They Don't Understand*

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### 1. Understanding Occupational PTSD

PTSD developed through prolonged exposure to high-stress operational roles - often without traditional combat exposure. It's often under-recognized and mischaracterized.

Common Triggers in Civilian Work:

- - Micromanagement or surveillance-style oversight
- - Loud environments or interruptions
- - Moral disconnect between personal values and employer culture
- - Being misunderstood or dismissed by leadership
- - Task switching or unpredictability without warning

### 2. Typical Challenges in the Workplace

- 'Just get over it' mentality from coworkers or supervisors
- No visible injuries, but very real symptoms
- Communication style differences causing friction
- Constant pressure to prove yourself or mask symptoms

### 3. What You Can Do

#### A. Disclosure and Boundaries

You're not obligated to disclose your diagnosis. But if you choose to, focus on impact, not labels.

Example: "I sometimes need short breaks to manage focus during high-stimulus tasks - it helps me stay productive."

Set clear communication boundaries: "Email is the best way for me to follow up - I process written info more reliably."

#### B. Coping Strategies at Work

- - Use noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, or fidget tools
- - Set digital reminders for breathing exercises or breaks
- - Use a reset script: "I'm stepping away for 5 minutes to reset - I'll be back shortly."
- - Create a transition ritual before/after work to buffer stress

#### 4. When You Have a Boss Who Doesn't Get It

Don't argue diagnosis - advocate for your needs. Focus on the accommodation, not the origin.

Use phrases like:

- - "I work best when..."
- - "To stay on track, I need..."
- - "When X happens, I tend to shut down. Here's what works instead..."

Know your rights under the ADA: PTSD is a covered condition. You're allowed reasonable accommodations.

Example Accommodations:

- - Flexible breaks
- - Modified start times
- - Noise mitigation
- - Communication in writing

#### 5. If You're on the Edge

You are not weak. You are injured.

If symptoms are making work feel impossible:

- - Talk to your VA rep or therapist about vocational rehab
- - Consider temporary leave, FMLA, or VA-supported employment programs
- - Connect with a veteran mentor or RW peer support - you are not alone

#### 6. Tools and Resources

- - RW's VA Provider Quick Guide (PDF)
- - Sample Accommodation Request Letter
- - PTSD-Friendly Resume and Cover Letter Templates
- - Links to Veteran Vocational Services
- - Self-Regulation Tools (Apps, Worksheets, Exercises)

#### Final Message: You Deserve a Place Where You Can Thrive

You survived war by wire. You've carried weight most can't fathom. Needing accommodations or support doesn't make you less - it makes you strategic. If you're not in a place that respects that, you're allowed to outgrow it.

RW is here. You're not alone.