

# I Want to Change My Life

Mental Health Information for Individuals, Families and Professionals

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## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Test - PTSD DSM Definition

Have you had the following symptoms for at least one month?	No (0)	Yes (1)
<p><b>Exposure:</b> Were you exposed to or threatened with: death, serious injury, or sexual violence in <u>one</u> or more of the following ways?</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly exposed</li> <li>• Witnessed the trauma</li> <li>• Learned that a relative or close friend was exposed to the trauma</li> <li>• Indirectly exposed to details of the trauma, usually in the course of professional duties (e.g., first responders, medics)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Reliving:</b> Do you persistently relive the trauma, in <u>one</u> or more of the following ways?</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwanted and/or upsetting memories</li> <li>• Nightmares</li> <li>• Flashbacks</li> <li>• Emotional distress, anxiety after exposure to traumatic reminders</li> <li>• Physical distress after exposure to traumatic reminders (chest tightness, difficulty breathing, racing heart, tremors, nausea, sweating)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Avoidance:</b> Do you try to avoid reminders of the trauma, in <u>one</u> or more of the following ways?</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you try to avoid distressing thoughts or feelings about the trauma?</li> <li>• Do you try to avoid external reminders of the trauma (people, places, things, conversations)?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Negativity:</b> Do you have negative thoughts or feelings, which began or worsened after the trauma, in <u>two</u> or more of the following ways?</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to recall key features of the trauma</li> <li>• Negative mood</li> <li>• Decreased interest in activities</li> <li>• Feel detached or isolated</li> <li>• Difficulty experiencing positive emotions</li> <li>• Overly negative thoughts about yourself or the world</li> <li>• Exaggerated blame of yourself or others for causing the trauma</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Adrenaline:</b> Are you on heightened alert or easily triggered, which began or worsened after the trauma, in <u>two</u> or more of the following ways?</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypervigilant</li> <li>• Heightened startle response</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating</li> <li>• Difficulty sleeping</li> <li>• Irritable or aggressive</li> <li>• Risky or self-destructive behavior</li> </ul>		

**Your Score:**

If you answered yes to all of the above criteria, you may meet the DSM definition of post-traumatic stress disorder. The criteria make up the acronym ARENA: Avoidance, Reliving, Exposure, Negativity, and Adrenaline. No single test is completely accurate. You should always consult your physician when making decisions about your health.

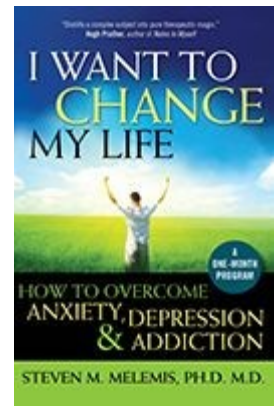
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## References

American Psychiatric Association, *DSM-5 The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. 5 ed*, ed. D. Kupfer: American Psychiatric Association.

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Reference: "I Want to Change My Life" by Dr. S. Melemis.  
[www.IWantToChangeMyLife.org](http://www.IWantToChangeMyLife.org)



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About  
Dr. Steven M. Melemis  
Disclaimer and Policies  
Contact