The good news is that PTSD can be treated with a few different tools. Although your memories will not go away, you can learn to better respond and deal with them when they arise.

A few forms of psychotherapy commonly used to treat PTSD are:
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Exposure therapy
- Psychodynamic therapy
- Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing.

Some medication options include:
- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIS)
- Sedatives
- Anti-anxiety medicine

Although there are many ways to treat PTSD with psychotherapy, prolonged exposure (PE) therapy has been shown to be the best as of yet. It is important to note that not any given form of therapy will work for everyone, so it is important to talk to your counselor or psychologist to find out which is best for you.

COUPLES & FAMILIES
Suffering from PTSD can often stress a relationship and family. People with PTSD may withdraw from others or be irritable and angry. It can be helpful to include family or others in the therapy process to better help the person.

Resources
UofL Center for Mental Health Disparities: www.mentalhealthdisparities.org
Mental Health America: www.mentalhealthamerica.net
National Institute of Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov
National Center for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: (802) 296-5132
National Center for Victims of Crime: www.ncvc.org

References
Symptoms of Traumatic Stress

WHAT IS PTSD?
Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a disorder that describes the issues faced by many people after they experience or witness a traumatic event.

WHAT CAUSES PTSD?
PTSD can be triggered by a lot of different experiences. Although PTSD is typically linked to military combat events, it can also be caused by many other, more common, experiences that can include:

- House fires
- Physical and sexual assault
- Car accidents.
- Natural disasters
- Acts of terrorism
- Violent crimes

You do not need to experience an event directly in order to have symptoms of PTSD. Witnessing a traumatic event or hearing of a traumatic event that happened to a loved one can cause feelings of fear, helplessness and horror that can also lead to PTSD.

People with PTSD often also suffer from depression, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

WHO CAN GET PTSD?
Anyone who has been exposed to traumatic events that cause a serious fear for their life or the lives of others is at risk to develop PTSD. People typically affected include: survivors of violent acts and disasters, emergency responders to traumatic events, people who experience the sudden death of a loved one, anyone who has been abused, neglected children, and combat veterans.

On average, Black and Hispanic people are more likely to have PTSD and are also less likely to get help for it. Although Whites have higher rates of trauma, Black and Hispanic individuals are more likely to have experienced abuse in the home and witnessed domestic violence. Black men, Asian Americans, and Hispanic women are also more likely to experience trauma related to war (Roberts et al., 2011).

WHAT ARE PTSD SYMPTOMS?
PTSD has three major types of symptoms:

1. Re-experiencing the trauma – these symptoms include:
   - Re-occurring thoughts or nightmares about the event.
   - Having flashback or feeling like the traumatic event is happening again.
   - Having intense emotional and physical (sweaty palms, racing heartbeat) reactions to things that remind you of what happened.

2. Avoidance and emotional distress symptoms include:
   - Trying not to think or talk about the event.
   - Avoiding places or people that remind you of the trauma.
   - Forgetting important parts of the traumatic event.

3. Feeling on edge or worried about danger – these symptoms include:
   - Trouble sleeping.
   - Being scared easily.
   - Angry outbursts.
   - Always being on the lookout for dangerous situations.

It is important to note that not everyone who has a traumatic experience develops PTSD. Many people who are traumatized recover on their own. But if symptoms last for more than a few weeks, professional help may be needed.

If you or anyone you know shows signs of these symptoms after a traumatic event, contact a counselor or a psychologist as only a professional can diagnose PTSD.