



Be Courteous With Fireworks Around Veterans

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We celebrate on Independence on July 4, but for the very same people who protect our freedom, it can be a difficult day to deal with. For many veterans with PTSD, the sound of fireworks brings back terrifying memories of combat.

Dr. Sudip Bose, a PTSD Expert and Iraq War Veteran, said, "You hear the sound of fireworks and for you that amygdala may transport you to memories of summer barbeques, warm wind, and joyous memories, whereas for the soldier with PTSD, there's a dark side and that amygdala can transport you to memories of the battlefield."

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can come from any traumatic event in a person's life. Officials say the majority of people who suffer from PTSD are soldiers and war veterans.

"For post traumatic stress disorder, you can't see it, you know when you look at a brain scan or even you look at the brain in general, you can't see PTSD and that's what makes it tricky and hard to diagnose is there's not a test for it and there's not a scan for it," said Bose.

Kevin Rhoades, a United States Marine Corps veteran, says that the sound of fireworks is hard for him to deal with. But, he is not the only one, many veterans with PTSD are triggered by the loud popping sound. That's why an organization called "Military with PTSD" created yard signs to ask the public to "Please be courteous with fireworks" this July 4.

"Late at night, whenever you get woken up at two or three o'clock in the morning, it brings back your memories. That's my whole point with having the sign is to get people aware. The men and women who have fought over there in Afghanistan, Iraq and any other conflict that we have had, it brings back those memories so I want everyone to be aware of it," said Rhodes.

Rhodes, along with three other veterans in Andrews, have the sign posted in their front yards as a reminder for people to be more aware this Fourth of July.

"I'm not against having fun, actually on the Forth of July, I'm going to pop my own fireworks, but you know hey, be courteous where you're at, it is against the law to do it in the city limits and just be safe and do within accordance to the law," said Rhodes.

To order a sign for a veteran with PTSD, you can go online to www.militarywithptsd.org.

http://www.texomashomepage.com/story/d/story/be-courteous-with-fireworks-around-veterans/20514/YDrBWYfSK0i2i_EcDywdQA