

Demystifying PTSD in Information Security

Joe Slowik



SALTED HASH- TOP SECURITY NEWS

By [Steve Ragan](#), Senior Staff Writer, CSO | FEB 8, 2018 12:58 PM PT

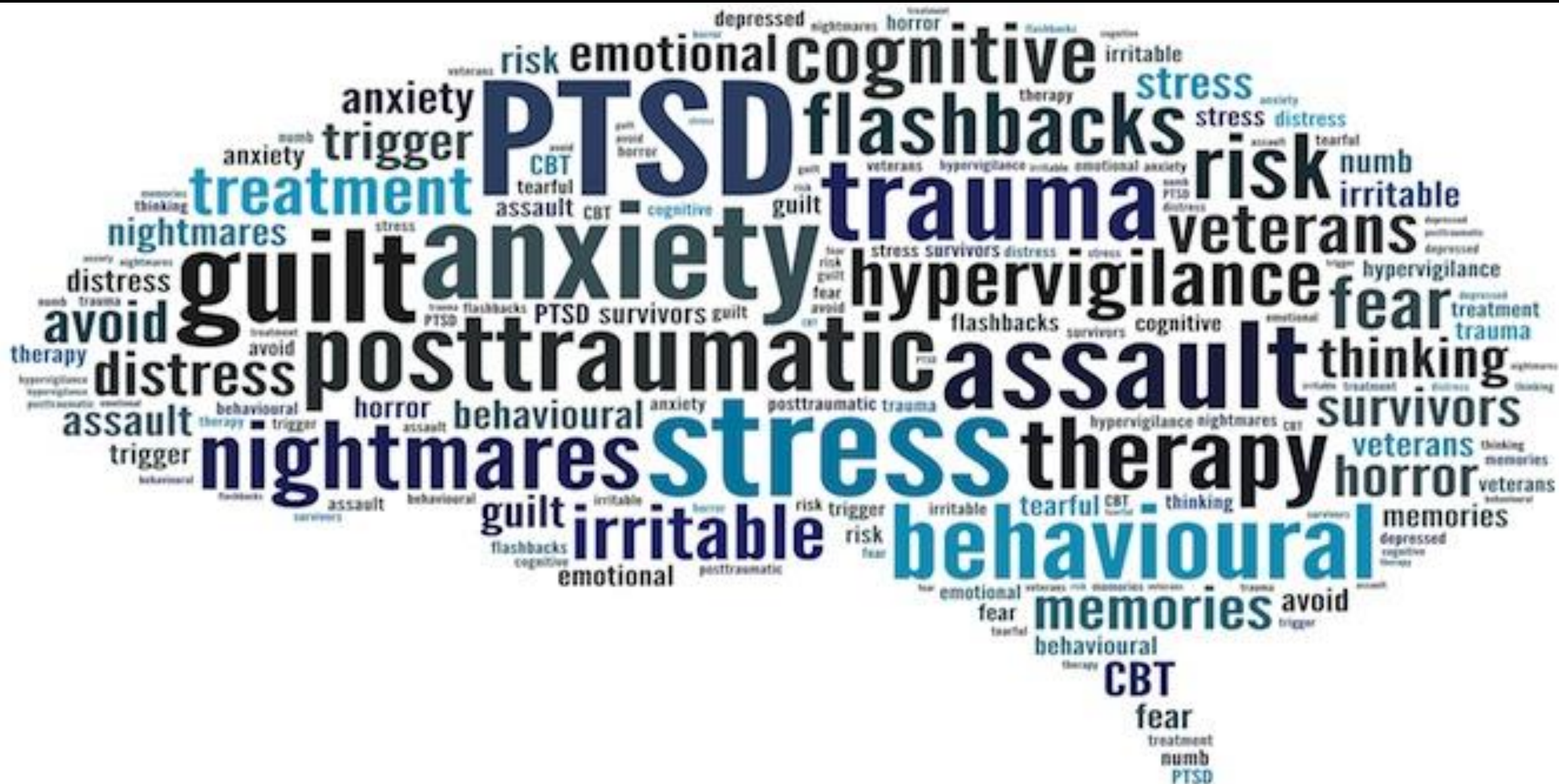
About

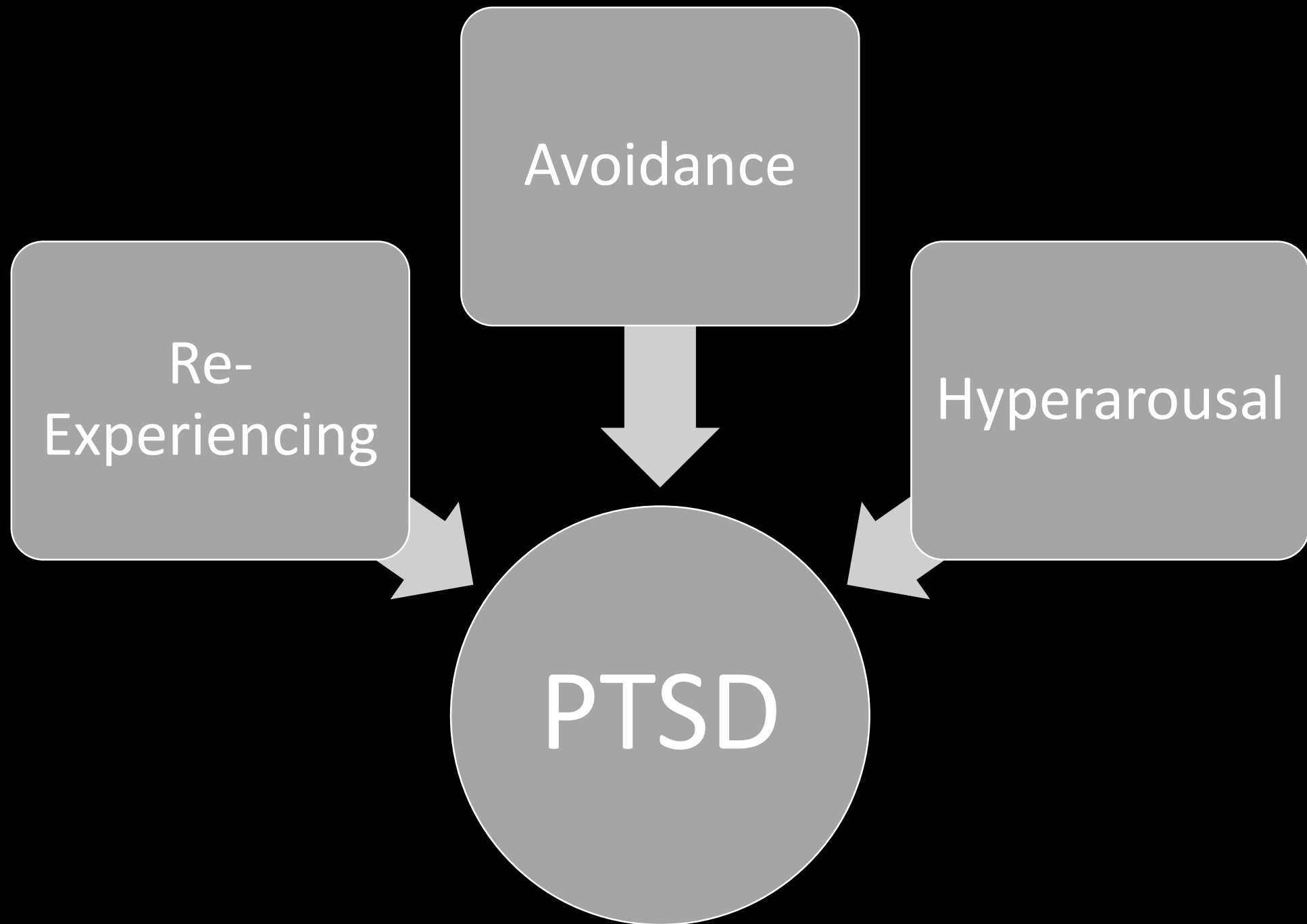
Fundamental security insight to help you minimize risk and protect your organization

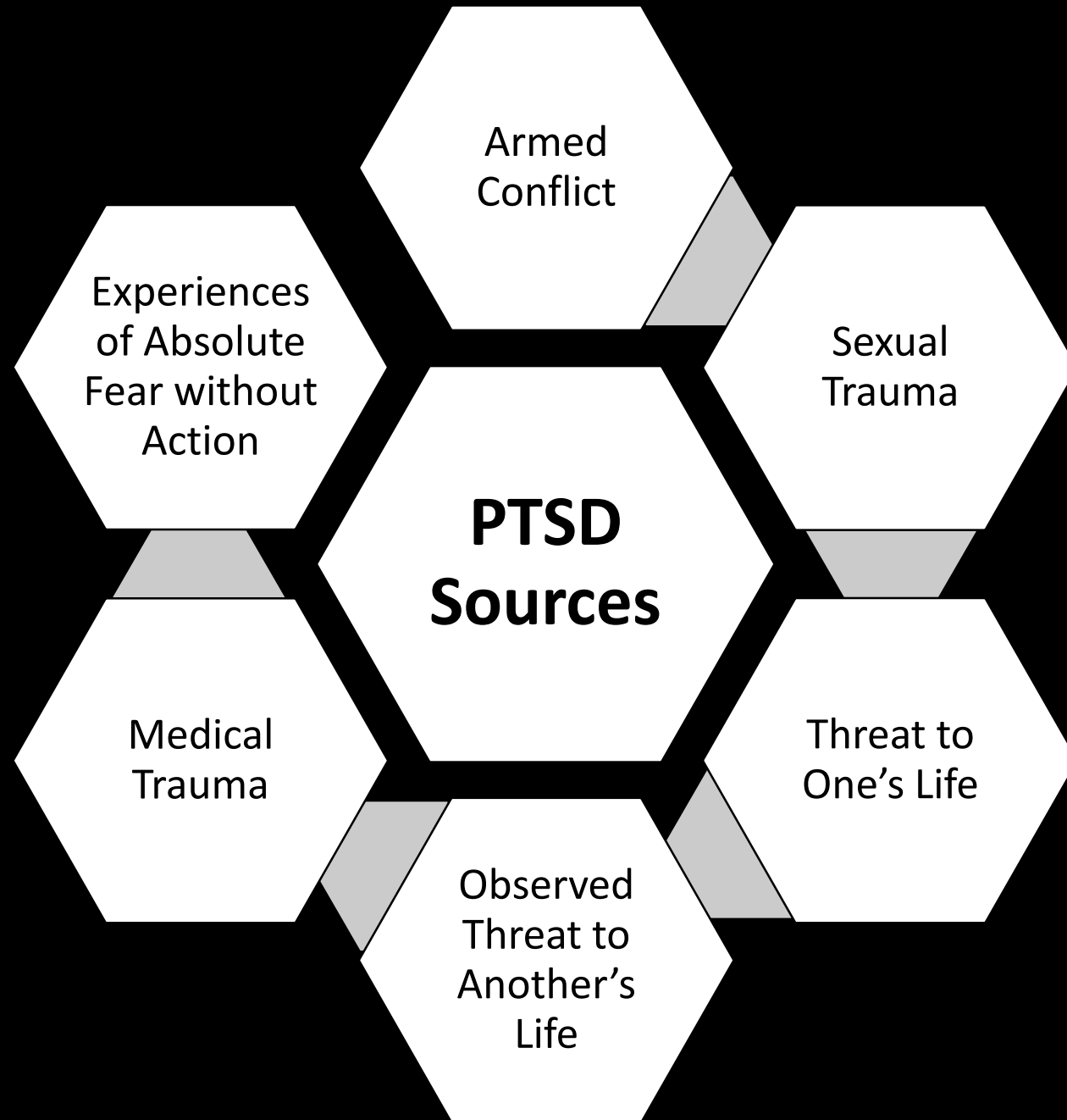
OPINION

The Importance of Discerning Between Job Burnout and PTSD

On February 6, an article was published on CSO Online that attempted to detail a previously unheard-of phenomenon called “Cybersecurity PTSD”. It is important for us to discuss the key differences between PTSD and burnout in order for us to avoid making light of a serious psychological disorder.







ALL GENERALIZATIONS



ARE STUPID

My Story









12.04.2009













IMPOSSIBLE KNOWLEDGE

BEYOND PTSD

Written by Jeff Severns Guntzel
Illustrated by Andy Warner







- ***Wife Left Me***
- ***Family Gone***
- ***Sea-Duty Status
Revoked***
- ***Everything I Valued -
Gone***



NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER SAN DIEGO

BOB WILSON NAVAL HOSPITAL





DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Providence Regional Office
380 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

April 18, 2014

In Reply Refer To: [REDACTED]

Claim number: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Joseph Frank Slowik,

Thank you for your service to our country. This letter provides an early estimate of your Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits to assist you with your financial planning following your discharge from active duty.

Overview

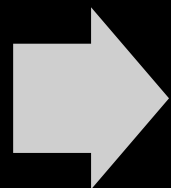
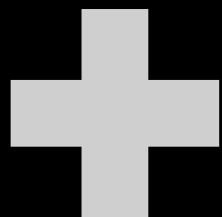
Your military Service Department requested a disability assessment from VA because you were found unfit for continued military service. We provided the attached proposed VA Rating Decision to your Service Department.

This is a disability determination under the Disability Evaluation System (DES) Program, a joint initiative between the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) in the case of this service member, who has been referred to a Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) as unfit for continued military





***What Can
We
Learn?***



***Why
Security?***



Identify Place in
Society

Prove Ability to
Others

Establish Self
Worth

Infosec
is
Empowering



Need for
Validation

Ability to
Contribute

Satisfy Personal
and
Organizational
Needs

Semi-Common Misconceptions

“S/he Needs to Disengage”

- No, Need Engagement
- Sense of Worth + Need is Important
- Having job/mission provides goals, tasks

“I Want to Give Him/Her Space”

- Yes – To a Point
- Avoidance is Common, Critical Symptom and Debilitating Impact – “Space” Contributes
- Contributes to lack of self-worth, shame

“Don’t Work So Hard”

- Sometimes – Professional Goals are All We have Left
- Appreciate Situation, Devise Means to Secure Organization and Individual Well-Being

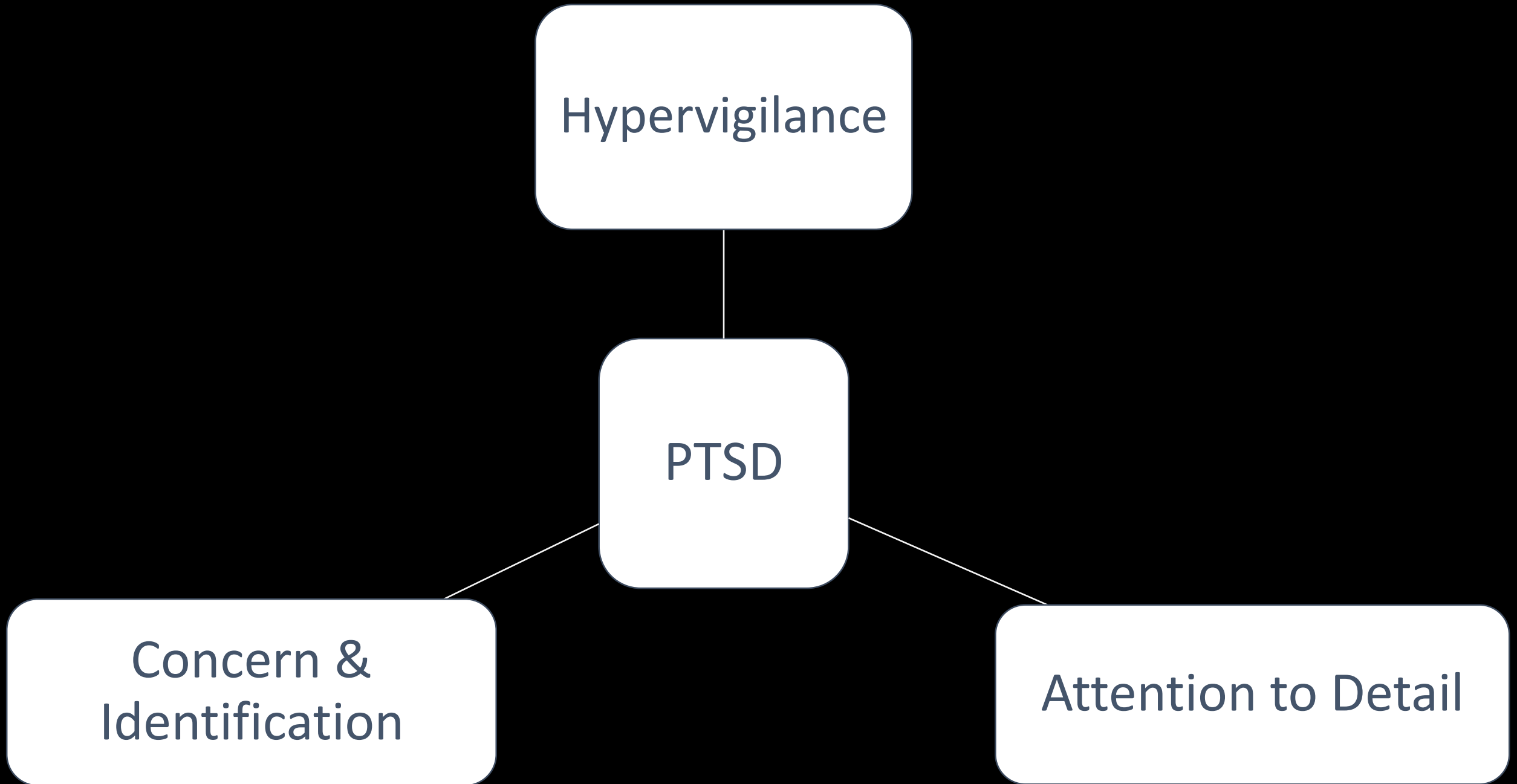
Pity Serves
No One

Hypervigilance

PTSD

Concern &
Identification

Attention to Detail



PTSD Impacts

- Require Monitoring
- Can Inhibit Certain Activity

Develop Compensating and Mitigating Plans

- Symptoms also Impart Positive Qualities
- Uniquely Suited toward Security Work

Empower, Engage, and Support

- Do Not Shun
- Frankly Engage, Recognize and Support
- Incorporate Sufferers into the Organization

Don't Ignore

-

Empower!

***So What Do
We Do?***

NO Standard HR Playbook, Employee CBT

NO “One-Size-Fits-All” Approach

Nuance is Key – Difference Between
Engaged and Intrusive may be Small

BE EXCELLENT

TO EACH OTHER

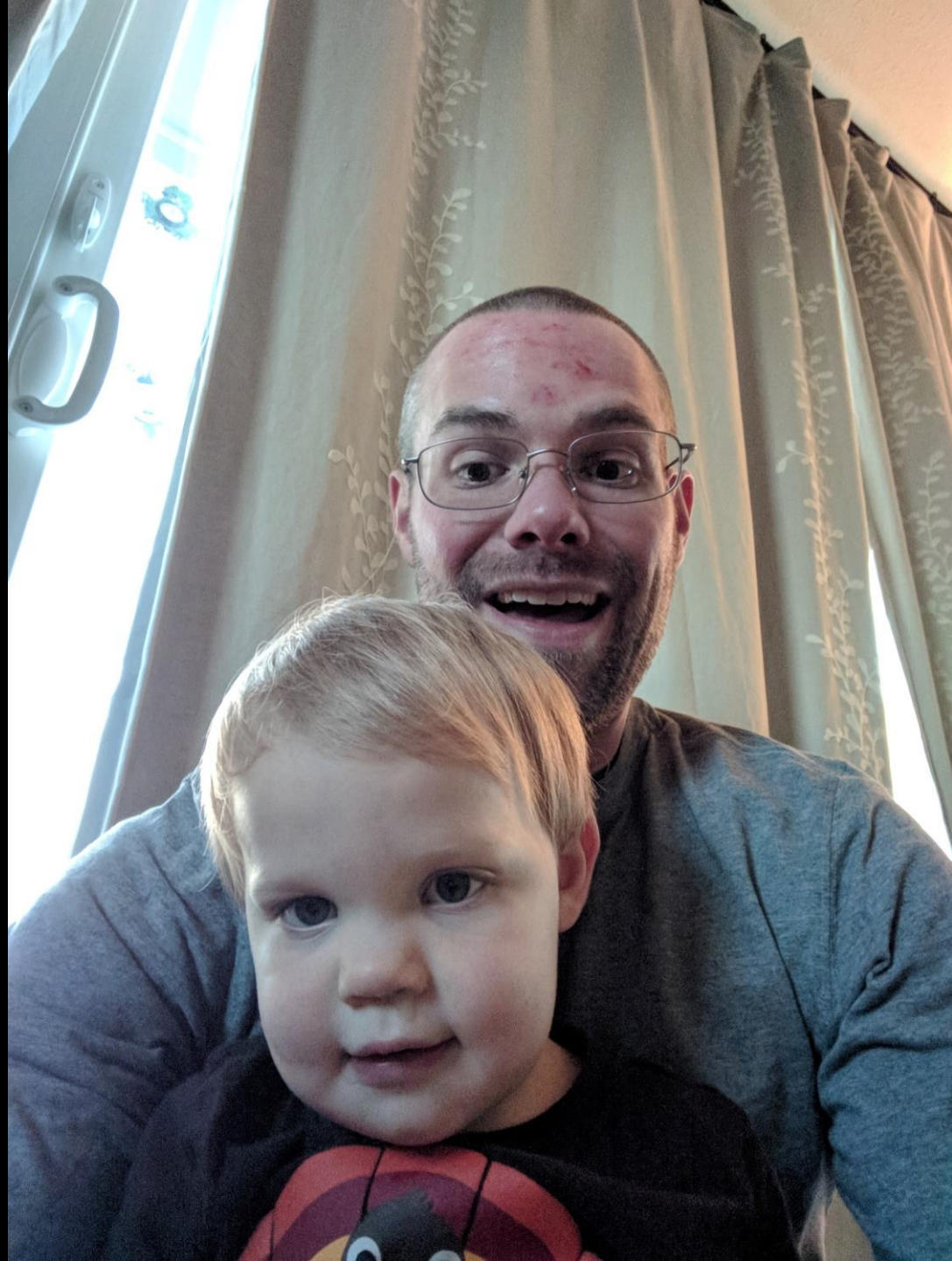


Symptoms & Consequences are Real

BUT – Many of the Results and Coping Mechanisms Produce
Excellent Security Instincts

Don't Shun – ENGAGE

However – Trivializing and Infantilizing Will Lead to Resentment



Dr. Shira Max

Jefferson Edmonds

Robin Spears

Crew of the *USS WAYNE E MEYER*