

## Testimony of Daniel Murray

*About: Steve Isaacson – Dedicated Public Servant – Volunteer*

### This is is from Larrissa and Daniel Murray



I met Steve Isaacson about 2 years ago via Facebook. I was at my wits end trying to find help for my husband, a retired Veteran with the U.S Army National Guard. I knew nothing about navigating the VA disability system, and it seemed no one was willing to help us, either. I needed guidance, and that is exactly what I found in Mr. Isaacson.

I have truly never met anyone so willing to help Veterans before, and completely devote his life to Veterans and their families. Mr. Isaacson explained to me what I needed to do to get my husband the proper representation for his disability claim. He stayed with us through every question we had, until the very end. He is very knowledgeable with the VA system and how to get Veterans exactly what they deserve!

Because of the dedication and commitment I have found in Mr. Isaacson, I think of him not only as a mentor, but a friend. I have known him to work tirelessly, many hours a day, doing what he loves- helping a Veteran. For him, my husband and I are incredibly grateful. Mr. Isaacson is certainly a man who is there for the best interest of Veterans, and always will be!

## Understanding PTSD

Ever since people's responses to overwhelming experiences have been systematically explored, researchers have noted that a trauma is stored in somatic memory and expressed as changes in the biological stress response.

Intense emotions at the time of the trauma initiate the long-term conditional responses to reminders of the event, which are associated both with chronic alterations in the physiological stress response and with the amnesias and hypermnesias characteristic of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Continued physiological hyperarousal and altered stress hormone secretion affect the ongoing evaluation of sensory stimuli as well. Although memory is ordinarily an active and constructive process, in PTSD failure of declarative memory may lead to organization of the trauma on a somatosensory level (as visual images or physical sensations) that is relatively impervious to change.

The inability of people with PTSD to integrate traumatic experiences and their tendency, instead, to continuously relive the past are mirrored physiologically and hormonally in the misinterpretation of innocuous stimuli as potential threats.

Animal research suggests that intense emotional memories are processed outside of the hippo-campally mediated memory system and are difficult to extinguish. Cortical activity can inhibit the expression of these subcortically based emotional memories. The effectiveness of this inhibition depends, in part, on physiological arousal and neurohormonal activity. These formulations have implications for both the psychotherapy and the pharmacotherapy of PTSD.

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