**Note from the Editor: “Entering A Season of S.A.D.”**



**http://clipart-library.com/img1/1521526.jpg**

**Weather: A S.A.D. Season ~**

 …SAD: “When normal stress turns into everyday stress or sadness, this is a sign that help may be needed.” The American Psychiatric Foundation may be helpful resource. So, what’s all this talk able being sad or S.A.D? Entering S.A.D. refers to the term “Seasonal Affective Disorder.” Signs may include, but not limited to:

* Feeling listless, sad or down most of the day, nearly every day
* Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
* Having low energy and feeling sluggish
* Having problems with sleeping too much
* Experiencing carbohydrate cravings, overeating and weight gain
* Having difficulty concentrating
* Feeling hopeless, worthless or guilty
* Having thoughts of not wanting to live

 NAAV wanted to highlight this seasonal effect knowing how easy it is to fall prey to depression, hopelessness, stress, and anxiety during this time. This is an awareness feature as well as an opportunity to let you know you’re not alone. The winter (Christmas), holiday (New Year) season can be met with a light heart and joyful experiences. Learn to laugh more, sit with a friend and reminisce about the good old days, go for a walk and look at beautiful lights, but try not to choose to be alone. No matter the challenge, tis the season to be jolly. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. Isaiah 9:6*  (KJV); This child came to bring “joy to the world.” May you and yours feel the warmth and peace of this season. Our prayer for you is that you won’t be SAD.

**Content: Editor’s Message: Entering into a S.A.D Season**

This Quarter’s Feature ♦ NAAV Scoop ♦ Moments of Meditation and Scripture ♦

S.A.D. Our Season of Change Become a Sponsor Taste of a Testimony

Veteran news: What’s Happening Veteran Highlights EoY- CFC and Closing (Kindness cont…)

-Page: **2-6** -Page: **6-7** - Page**: 8-10**

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.)**

**According to the Mayo Clinic: “**Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons — Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) begins and ends at about the same times every year. If you're like most people with SAD, your symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping your energy and making you feel moody. These symptoms often resolve during the spring and summer months. Less often, SAD causes depression in the spring or early summer and resolves during the fall or winter months.” <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20364651>

S.A.D. isn’t something to just brush off or to deal with alone or talk yourself into “letting it run its course.” Although at times this emotional state will, “run its course,” it is still and affect that can last. Especially during this holiday season when hearts are full of joy and the people around us may seem more-full of joy than we do, our tendency may be to withdraw because we can’t quite seem to pump up the energy to keep up. But that withdrawal might be the force to spiral you deeper into a state of depression. This depressed state can remove you from the joy of this season and the hope of fullness of joy. NAAV understands that many Veterans and their family members may be experiencing what feels like a state of hopelessness. Children are affective and family members’ shutdown only to miss out on a season of change that isn’t meant to last. Reach out to NAAV for help, support, or gentle guidance. May your season be spent fulfilled with love, joy, and happiness. Peace be with you!

Last quarter, we shared the below information during the Suicide Awareness month. This information can be just as valuable and supportive during your season of S.A.D. So, don’t feel alone… Because you are not!

Keep in mind, not only can the seasons affect our mood or emotions, many people are compounded with other distresses. Understanding how we feel, what we feel, and where we can find help in times of various crisis is important to saving lives and families. The following article was posted on NAAV’s website and bares resurfacing:

**The Link Between PTSD and Substance Abuse**

Posted on [November 13, 2023](https://www.naavets.org/the-link-between-ptsd-and-substance-abuse-2/)

 For many veterans, the battle doesn’t end when they return home. The shadows of traumatic events loom large, often manifesting as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). As they grapple with this [mental health challenge](https://www.naavets.org/veterans-mental-health-understanding-the-challenges-and-seeking-help-2/), an alarming trend emerges the undeniable link between PTSD and substance abuse. Understanding this connection is crucial for improving veterans’ mental health and guiding them toward brighter, healthier futures.

**Understanding PTSD: A Veteran’s Battle Beyond the Battlefield**

For many brave veterans, returning home doesn’t always mean finding peace. The weight of their experiences lingers, often manifesting in deep psychological ways. At the forefront of these manifestations is PTSD, a formidable opponent that remains largely unseen.

**Defining PTSD**

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, commonly known as PTSD, is a trauma and stress-related disorder that can arise after experiencing significant traumatic events. For veterans, these events are frequently related to combat but can also be attributed to other stressors faced during service.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms**

The [symptoms of PTSD](https://www.naavets.org/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-symptoms/) can be both diverse and distressing. They typically include:

* **Flashbacks:** Vivid and often sudden reliving of traumatic events.
* **Nightmares:** Disturbing dreams related to the traumatic experience.
* **Severe Anxiety:** A constant state of heightened alertness or fear, often unrelated to present situations.
* **Feeling On Edge:** A constant feeling of tension or expecting danger, even in safe environments.

**The Emotional Toll on Veterans**

The trauma doesn’t merely manifest as flashbacks or nightmares; it goes beyond these tangible symptoms. Many veterans with PTSD describe feeling perpetually “on edge,” struggling with trust and battling feelings of isolation. The emotional toll can impact daily life, relationships, and even their perception of self-worth.

Recognizing and addressing PTSD is essential for veterans’ mental health. We first offer the support and treatment they rightfully deserve by understanding its depth and impact.

**Substance Abuse: A Temporary Escape From Reality**

While coping with the invisible wounds of war, many veterans find themselves entangled with substance abuse, seeking a transient refuge from the haunting realities of their experiences. This precarious endeavor amplifies existing troubles and crafts new ones, ultimately leading to a dangerous downward spiral.

**Defining Substance Abuse**

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. It is the excessive, maladaptive, or addictive use of such substances for mood-altering purposes, leading to detrimental consequences on physical and mental well-being.

\*Please take the first step, if you or someone you know is in a crisis. Text: 988- 1.

**… And this we know~** Hope is alive. Although the road might not be easy, there is a path leading to the light of life. Proverbs 3:5-6 reads – ***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your path straight”*** (KJV). If you need more support or understanding in this area please contact NAAV at info@naavets.org, or go to the NAAV website ([www.naavets.org](http://www.naavets.org)) under the **“Spiritual Wellness Tab”** for more information.

Veteran News: What’s Happening –

**… Did you know:**

**VA Benefits for Spouses, Dependents, Survivors, and Family Caregivers**

Posted on [November 27, 2023](https://www.naavets.org/va-benefits-for-spouses-dependents-survivors-and-family-caregivers/)

Website: <https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/>

As the spouse or dependent child of a Veteran or service member, you may qualify for certain benefits, like health care, life insurance, or money to help pay for school or training. As the survivor of a Veteran or service member, you may qualify for added benefits, including help with burial costs and survivor compensation.

If you’re caring for a Veteran, you may also be eligible for support to help you better care for the Veteran–and for yourself. Find out which benefits you may qualify for and how to access them.
Department of Veterans Websites:

<https://www.va.gov/>

Call for questions: 1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411)
White House VA Hotline: 1-855-948-2311

Find a VA Forms: <https://www.va.gov/find-forms/>

Type of Benefits: <https://www.va.gov/?next=%2Fmy-va%2F>

The NAAV Scoop for Veterans: Become a Sponsor

Buzzing around the holly bush… 

<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/cartoon-bee-icon-set-flying-on-1824044459>

Become a **NAAV Sponsor or Partner** in support of our nation’s Service men and women and Veterans and their caregivers and family members most in need of emergency aid with a yearly donation of $10,000 or more. You will get exclusive NAAV communications so you can keep track of the progress we make together. You will also get with a gift of $20,000 or more NAAV Annual Report. Monthly partners can receive free career coaching and not have to navigate life’s challenges on your own, and our **Career Coach** is in your corner to help with resume building, job search and interviewing techniques. Take ownership of your career! For more information, call (202) 465-3296 or email: **info@naavets.org**. To donate now visit [**www.naavets.org**](http://www.naavets.org)click on **DONATE TODAY.** Thank you.

**End of year resource facts: “Why you matter”**

* Between October-December. 2023, NAAV has received about **300 requests for assistance.**
* The emails and telephone calls include providing financial, referrals and resources to help with veterans claims and benefits, emergency assistance programs to help veterans such as rental, mortgage, utilities, food, transportation, homelessness, housing, legal assistance, caregiver assistance, and home improvement to name a few.

**100% Message received**:
*“I am a combat veteran, married with 8 children. I am 100% disabled and
struggling mentally and physically. From December 2022 until July 2023
my family and I were homeless. Right after hurricane IAN we experienced
hardship that we are trying very hard to pull ourselves out of. Our
credit took a major hit, we lived in our truck for 2 weeks at a rest
stop and then found a church to help us until we could find a place to
live permanently. We finally found a homeowner that was willing to work
with us with our poor credit due to losing my apartment, car and late
credit cards, and behind bills, food, basic daily life necessities all
while waiting on SSI and the caregiver support program on top of
countless appointments. Now In order to get this home we had to pay
extra, sign the lease early with a down payment and then 1k a month for
5 more months. We are barely staying afloat; our house is empty and we
struggle to keep food in the fridge but we aren’t sleeping on the
floor and we have a roof over our head. So, if you can find it in your
heart to help us in anyway, we would be forever grateful. We are blessed
to be here and have made it this far. But in all honesty, I am exhausted
mentally and physically and I know my wife is too, she’s such an
incredible women she holds it all together, my disabilities, appts, the
kids, school, cooking, cleaning. I don’t know how she does it but I
know that as hard as this is I am asking for help to ease the pressure
off me and allow me to breathe a sigh of relief making sure my wife
can’t relax with our worry even for a moment. Thank you for your time.”*

* + Your help is **urgently needed** as NAAV seeks to provide resources to the many Veterans reaching out. Your donation of any amount can go a long way. Will you please consider making your contribution to NAAV this year and beyond for those who served and are still serving in the U.S. Armed Forces nationwide. **Thank you so much!**
* **Become a NAAV Sponsor or Partner**
* **Show your support by using this link to give NAAV your best rating:**

<https://g.page/r/CT-qGmv5up2WEB0/review>

* **Reminder:** The National Association of American Veterans, Inc. **(NAAV) is now on Goggle First Page and is receiving more new visitors to its website at** [**www.naavets.org**](http://www.naavets.org/). In addition, we also have support from our sponsors at Thrivent Financial, Bob's Discount Furniture Store Foundation, Fort Myer Thrift Store, TechAnax of Virginia, as well as NAAV valued Supporters and Partners represented nationwide over the past twenty years.

NAAV would like to thank all our supporters, sponsors, and partners who fully appreciate how important it is to help our nation's military families. Your support has allowed us to maintain a rhythm of much-needed help for those who have done so much for all of us.

We know you understand that military families are accustomed to adapting to the unexpected, whether dealing with short-notice deployment's, moving to a new posting, transiting to civilian life, homelessness, or adjusting to a disabling injury yet despite their resiliency, many military families are facing significant financial struggles at home that have the potential of derailing their hopes for a brighter tomorrow or happy new year. ***Help us keep spirits lifted***.



Moments of Meditation & Prayer~

Posted on [December 6, 2023](https://www.naavets.org/lord-teach-us-to-pray-4/)

The prayers of the Bible are truly a gift of God, and we can learn much from them.

The prayers of the Bible can help us talk to God as well as support and encourage us in our daily walk with Him. “Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of his disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.’ So, He (Jesus) said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil.’” **(Luke 11:1-4)**

“And when you pray, you should not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is*in the secret *place*; will reward you openly. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” **(Matthew 6:5-6, 14)**

When Jesus taught his disciples about prayer it was a departure for the Jewish culture of the time. The disciples learned through the Lord’s Prayer that God is good, merciful, compassionate, and that He would not forsake them. And even today if we pursue Him for help and guidance in our everyday needs, He is always with us. Jesus taught his disciples in Matthew’s account to take no thought for our lives but to **seek first the kingdom of God** and all these things will be added (water, bread, clothing and shelter).

**Scriptural Verses~**

* “So, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.
* Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them,* and you will have *them*.’” **(Mark 11:22-24)**
* “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” **(John 15:16)**
* “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is*at Hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” **(Philippians 4:4-7)**
* **Closing verse from Psalm 9** - God has already done great things for us as evident in the Christmas song: Joy to the world, the Lord has come. Let earth receive her King!”

*"I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds, I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High." (Psalm 9:1-2)*

**All scripture is taken from the King James Version (KJV). The above entries were posted by contributor Constance A. Burns, NAAV. For more prayers and scripture, please visit NAAV website, Spiritual Wellness tab at** [**http://naavets.org**](http://naavets.org)**. Blessings!**

**Warm honey…**

We may be coming to an end of this year, as winter sets in and cold brushes our face or tends to shut us down, but let this not remove us from “BE”ing kind to one another…

Your continued donations during our 2023 End-of-Year NAAV Fundraising Campaign will go a long way to provide military families with the support they have earned and urgently need at the present time. To donate today visit [**www.naavets.org**](http://www.naavets.org/) click on DONATE. If you are a federal
employee or retiree, please visit [**www.GIVECFC.ORG**](http://www.givecfc.org/) to donate. NAAV designated CFC number is 85065 "Caring About Those Who Served." Thank
you.



<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-vector/bee-kind-funny-inspirational-card-flying-1811623870>

NAAV’s theme for this year 2023 remains: Remember to [Be] Kind Buzz like a bee into your new season ~ Weathering

**We are still announcing the pledge to “Give Happy”:** While you’re buzzing around shopping, having parties, and traveling like “bee” at the end of this summer, please do not forget the 2023 CFC Campaign, which runs from September 1, 2023, thru **January 15, 2024**.



NAAV’s CFC number is 85065 "Caring About Those Who Served."

NAAV has additional testimonies to share on the website at [www.naavets.org](http://www.naavets.org), if you would like to read more. We are also open to hearing from you, our fellow followers, readers, contributors. Volunteers, and prayer warriors on any way NAAV has touched your life or the life of someone you know.

If you have a special gift or talent that you believe could be of benefit to NAAV and our efforts to serve Veterans and their family members, please reach out to NAAV, CEO and President Constance A. Burns at info@naavets.org. Your added support, in the smallest of ways, could mean a magnitude of giftedness to the many men and women in need. Thank you in advance for your thoughts, prayers, and wonderful action and acts of kindness… Keep our theme in your heart even as the buzzing of the bees around you begin to fade, and the wide eye of beautiful sunflowers begin to shut– [BE] Kind.

**An added note from NAAV’s CEO and President~**

*“We believe that our program and services could make an unprecedented impact moving forward by having the potential to reach more than 5,000 disabled Veterans per year through our service and having a program director whose primary appointment would be the overall management and coordination of homeownership activities.”*

In addition, “NAAV will provide funds for mental health, housing and meals for homeless Veterans in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia metropolitan area as well as nationwide. Your donation in *any amount* toward our goal is greatly appreciated. **It all helps!** We look forward to your favorable reply to NAAV as we round out this year in 2023. Thank you in advance for your continued support and professional assistance!”



**Cheerfully we enter into a season of change… *“Let not your heart be troubled”***

Over this past three quarters, as you continue to follow NAAV, share in our successes, and read our stories, we hope will continue to support our mission or decide to become one of the “GIVE HAPPY” givers who allows the kindness of your day guide you to those who haveand still *are giving so much*, we welcome and thank you for your generosity.

 **NAAV Shares: A Testimonial Note~**

A message and testimony of hope during Giving Tuesday: **See Jerome’s note**~

 "Make a Hero's Holiday Season Brighter" **DONATE TODAY!**

Greetings and Happy Holidays from the National Association of American
Veterans, Inc. (NAAV). My name is Constance A. Burns, Founder, President,
and CEO at NAAV. Every December, thousands of veterans escaping
homelessness and their family members spend the holidays at shelters
nationwide.

Several years ago, NAAV began providing yearly support to the Central
Union Mission shelters in the DC metro area providing meals for homeless
veterans. It takes a compassionate heart like yours to ensure that each
man and woman veteran is treated with honor and respect.

Jerome was a homeless veteran helped through the Central Union Mission
in Washington, DC*. "The Mission literally saved my life," says Jerome.
This life-transformation like Jerome's started with a warm meal and safe
shelter that NAAV donation provided to the Mission. There are many dying
every day on the streets because they have lost hope. But because of the
Mission, I know now there is hope for tomorrow."* Your continued prayers
and giving mirrors God's love to change a life.

You may be wondering how you can provide help to veterans like Jerome
spending Christmas alone on the streets. Many homeless veterans are
saying, "I got nobody... It's Christmas and I got nobody."



**…Making spirits bright…**
This Christmas, you can be there for homeless veterans like Jerome and
veterans who need to know they are seen and cared for. Your gift today
can help ensure every homeless veteran have a joyful Christmas with hot
meals, a roof overhead, and a community that loves them.

$50; $100 or more? It all helps. Please know that your kindness makes all the difference for homeless veterans like Jerome, especially at this time of year. See
attached for more information regarding giving to NAAV, Inc. Thank you.

With gratitude,

Constance A. Burns



Wishing you a Merry Christmas, happy, and blessed New Year to come in 2024.

On behalf of NAAV, Inc.

Founder, President, and CEO

Constance A. Burns

Washington, D.C.



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