**What is traumatic stress By Patrick Anderson**

It is important to know that P.T.S., or **Post Traumatic Stress**, is a natural response to a traumatic event, and **anyone, at any age**, can be affected by that stress. If you have ever cried over the passing of a relative or a close friend, you have physically manifested a symptom of P.T.S.

Our comments today, are an attempt to reduce the risk that your traumatic stress, whether it is a result of the tragic events in Highland Park or another painful life event, **does not become Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, P.T.S.D.**, a condition where your thoughts and feelings about the trauma are upsetting you or causing problems in your life,

As I looked for relief from my own traumatic stress, a wise Army Chaplain reminded me of St. Peter’s three denials of Christ and the mental and spiritual trauma St. Peter felt. He explained that the risen Lord offered St. Peter the answer to relieving his pain. At a breakfast, on a beach, the Lord offered him three answers, **“Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. Feed my sheep."** That Chaplain explained that focusing on helping other‘s was the best way to exit from the self-centered nature of PTSD.

I heard those same sentiments from Alan J. Lynch, Medal of Honor recipient and Lake County resident. After his return home from war, Mr. Lynch developed a full blown case of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Much of that stress came from survivors guilt. He could not escape the fact that he had survived the battle, without a scratch, and that he, one of many hero’s that day, was chosen to receive the Medal of Honor. He believed that the real hero’s lost their lives that day.

Mr. Lynch described that his survivor’s guilt and his P.T.S.D. began to lessen, and then was overcome, when he **stopped looking inward and turned his energy into helping other veterans**.

So, as we continue to hear from other speakers today, look for this common thread, service to others.