

Published based on [Labs Could Help War Veterans Cope With PTSD](#)

# **Labs Could Help War Veterans Cope With PTSD**

Struggling with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a great deal of war veterans suffer psychological wounds that require time to heal. In the United States, approximately 255,000 veterans were undergoing treatment for PTSD in 2006, and the figures increased to over 400,000 by 2010. While the soldiers today stationed in Iraq are anticipated to come back by the end of 2011, approximately 40,000 veterans more could need treatment for PTSD. Psychotherapy, cognitive processing therapy and also experimental treatments such as acupuncture, yoga and meditation are commonly utilized to help these courageous women and men return to normalcy.

### Ian Lord's battle against PTSD

As documented in a ChicagoTribune.com report, dogs have been found to help vets plagued by PTSD contend with psychological scars successfully. Dogs educated to sense PTSD signs and symptoms and take action will help these vets leave behind violent memories. A successful example of this new technique of treatment is the story of Air Force pilot Ian Lord and Jonas, an Australian Shepherd. Ian Lord is still dealing with a traumatic experience in Afghanistan, Iraq as well as the neighboring countries. He still experiences mental aftershocks when he hears the sounds of a helicopter or bullets. After his return, he was identified as having PTSD after having a mental breakdown at a simulation training course.

Lord was afterwards discharged from the military honorably. Ian Lord then met Jonas, an upbeat Australian Shepherd, through his wife. Jonas was employed as his PTSD dog when the couple noticed that he responded each time Lord displayed indications of PTSD. Each time Ian became troubled, disheartened or had trouble sleeping, Jonas would always race to him and start licking and cuddling him. This two year old canine is swift to respond to almost any distress exhibited by Ian which is helping the war veteran recover from PTSD much faster as compared to the conventional techniques. After four years of active service, Lord is now working part time and planning to register for graduate school.

### How Jonas helped

Jonas keeps Ian distracted from the aftershocks of the war and influences him to go out more frequently. Ian Lord has realized this change in him and quite often likes to spend time with Jonas playing retrieve or taking him for a walk. People are frequently amazed to discover that Jonas is a PTSD service dog. Playful breeds such as the Australian Shepherd in addition to Labrador Retriever are perfect to keep war veterans distracted from upsetting memories, and they devote their focus to making their masters feel great. In exchange vets shower them with love and the occasional [labrador gift](#). An additional exercise PTSD service dogs are conditioned to perform is referred to as backing. The dog follows the veteran and allows him to feel more safe by walking directly behind him.

### New studies underway

Studies to ascertain the proficiency of this therapy have been tackled by quite a few groups to offer far better solutions to PTSD patients. A study that includes organizations from Florida and Colorado is planning to include 200 canines in the program and test the results after pairing each dog with a war veteran. The study will also include training each canine based on the specified needs of the veteran.

You can also find this article published on [Labs Could Help War Veterans Cope With PTSD](#), and on the tag pages [Australian](#), [psychological scars](#), [return to normalcy](#), [Time](#), [traumatic stress disorder](#), [veteran](#).