

AIDS SURVIVOR SYNDROME FACT SHEET

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What is AIDS Survivor Syndrome?

AIDS Survivor Syndrome (ASS) describes the spectrum of sustained trauma survivorship. It's a psychosocial state that manifests in some from living through HIV/AIDS pandemic. Most vulnerable are individuals who became HIV-positive in the 1980s & 1990s, when having HIV was considered a terminal diagnosis.

What signs and symptoms define AIDS Survivor Syndrome?

- Depression
- Lack of Future Orientation
- Panic from Unexpected Older Age
- Suicidality
- Sexual risk-taking
- Self-destructive Behavior
- Substance Abuse
- Social Withdrawal & Isolation
- Persistent Negative Thoughts like Deep Regret and overwhelming Shame
- Survivor's Guilt
- Cognitive Impairment Such as Poor Concentration and Loss of Immediate memory
- Loss of Ability to Enjoy Life or Anhedonia
- Deep Sadness
- Emotional Numbness
- Anxiety & Nervousness
- Irritability or Flashes of Anger
- Difficulty Falling Asleep or Staying Asleep
- Nightmares
- Personality Changes
- Feeling Tense, "On Guard" or Hypervigilance.
- Low Self-Esteem & Self-Worth
- Sense of Hopelessness
- Irritability
- Self-Stigma