

Mental Health Treatment Options at VA

Speaker 1: The first time I ever reached out for help was to a VA facility. My PTSD was discovered by a psychologist. They talked with me, not at me. The treatment's slowly improving my mental perspective, certain things was less stressful if I follow a procedure that was recommended by healthcare professionals.

Speaker 2: There was one on one therapy involved, there was CBT of course, there was writing therapy. The cognitive behavioral aspect of it led me to understand my triggers, it led me to understand where I had gotten sidetracked and gave me a path through it. Through self-evaluation, through group discussion where I could really bring it out into the open and deal with it for the first time in my entire life.

Speaker 3: The yearlong rehab program that I was in was high intensity as far as when you were going through the alcohol recovery program. When you get in and you get into one of their programs, they really take interest in you and they really are concerned about what you're about to go through. There are people out there that devote their lives to the service of other human beings. All three of my children talk to me now. We talk at least once a week to each other. It means everything in the world to me. I have my family back.

Speaker 4: When I got treatment at Cape Canaveral and was diagnosed with adrenal anxiety disorder, the doctor offered me a couple of different options for treatment. One of the treatments the doctor offered was cognitive behavioral therapy, CBT. Another he offered me was a prescription drug called Lexapro.

Deciding at the time that frequent treatments in person for CBT would be difficult with my job as a commander, I opted to go with the medicine and I was so impressed how two or three months later my wife came up to me and said honey, I've noticed such a difference, and again it happens so slow and I just think I haven't changed. But it's the people around you, the people who are most affected by my mental health were noticing the differences.

Speaker 5: They had got me started on something called EMDR. The main way to do it is they'll hold something up and you'll talk about your troubling past like that soldier that died, and you'll have to follow it with your eye while you're talking it. And it helps regulate your right side and your left side of the brain while you're doing it.

Well it works best for me 'cause I'll just go and people will think I'm crossing my arm and I'm tapping both sides while I'm talking about it. And usually I'm like this and people think I'm just pissed off, but it's how I deal with troubling situations to this day now.

Speaker 6: Group therapy is great because if somebody's thinking a certain way, another person may see another way to problem solve. Just the things that treatment has taught me through the VA and how to handle my anxiety and my fear and understand why I did the things I did. I don't know, the VA, I can't say enough for the treatment that they've offered, in patient as well as the outpatient programs that I'm still in and will continue to be in until I feel comfortable leaving.



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Speaker 4: So, after that first visit once you get a chance to sit down with a therapist you realize all they wanna do is help. They wanna listen to what's going on in your life, they wanna tell you this is not exceptional, this happens to a lot of people. And they wanna offer you solutions to help.

Speaker 2: There are legitimate ways to heal and there are people out there who genuinely care and will listen and help you. It's really an awakening experience. So, allow yourself to deal with it.



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