

A Veteran's treatment helps the whole family

Terri: My name is Terri, and I served in the United States Navy from 1992 to 1993. I was an airman, so I was stationed in North Island. It was a really good learning experience, but unfortunately I did get hurt. I was actually working on a helicopter and I fell off and hurt my back and my jaw. I had a lot of physical therapy for months and months and still I didn't really recover from that. My back got worse, it started causing a lot of pain which started leading to a lot of depression. I didn't seek help until 1997, and that was through a friend of mine who was going to the VA. She said, you know, "You're not getting out of bed, you really need to get some help." So I went to...that was the Long Beach VA where I first started seeing a psychologist, and that was really helpful.

I don't think I wanted to be told that I had a psychiatric condition because I don't think anybody wants, you know, sort of that stigma still out there. You know, I didn't want any employee or employer to know, you know, that I would have to go to the VA for mental health or I had to leave work because I had an appointment. So that was, you know, one thing that my psychologist helped me get through too, to kind of get me help through that stigma.

There are people out there, no matter what your title is or how much money you make that do have mental health conditions. It helps you deal with that your real problems are, and it helps you deal with your family in, you know, ways to kind of explain what's going on with you so that they understand that, you know, sometimes when you yell at them it's not them, you know. So I thought that, you know, that's really important to, you know, get out there and find out what's really going on, so that—like I said it doesn't always...it helps the whole family, not just yourself, which I felt to be very important.



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