

Connecting with other spouses to understand hers

Chrissy: We were at Walter Reed for almost two years. He went through extensive therapy where I would see him screaming or crying because, and he would be like just push harder, just push harder you know? At first, he couldn't feed himself, I would have to carry him, and he could not do simple things for himself. And it does things to a person, having to go through that, so one time I watched him. He got tired of me being pregnant and just relearning how to walk on my feet and he actually went to get an orange juice, and he got on the floor and he scooted with the orange juice, because he couldn't walk. He couldn't even go to the bathroom by himself so he, but he was determined that he was going to get that orange juice and I wasn't going to have to get it for him.

It was really hard, because my husband was Marine and to be able to take those physical things that he can't do, he was not one to admit at first that he had, almost it was like he would admit he was defeated and he was not ready to admit that. He had mood swings; he would just be miserable. He would not want to get out of bed until four o'clock in the evening. It was bad. He would just wake up, just sit straight up in the bed. Or one day we were walking in the mall, and he just stopped and he had this blank stare on his face, and it happened, maybe three to five seconds, and he just looked at me and I was like what's going on? And the kids are like, "what's wrong with daddy?" And he was like "nothing, I'm fine."

I tried to get very involved with talking with the other spouses. I had other people with other stories so that I could relate that to our relationship, plus we talked to a couple Counselors. I would talk to everybody. I didn't know what to say to him. I've never been in a war or trained or, and I didn't know how, I knew he had a problem and I knew that he was depressed but I knew how I would handle it, but Soldiers coming back from war is so different, and so that Therapist knew how to talk to him and so I found it amazing that they would be able to relate with stories and they understood what he was saying, and I think it was good for him to know, to talk with someone who understood.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

MAKE THE
CONNECTION