

## Therapy helped this Veteran cope with anxiety

**Sandy:** Hi, I'm Sandy. I was in the Navy from 2008 to 2012. My first duty session was Guam for about a year and a half and then I spent the rest of my career here in San Diego. I was an undesignated seaman in the deck department and after a year I became a Quartermaster.

The last two years I had a very demanding department divisional officer that was very demanding and sexist at times. We thought he favored the guys more than the girls because we were always the ones that got yelled out and the guys could do no wrong.

When I got out I thought I was fine. Things were going good and then all suddenly I just, I was just down all the time and I was like, I need help. I went to my Primary Care Doctor and I mentioned something about having problems adjusting back and she put a referral to mental health and they called me soon and as soon as I got into mental health they set up the appointments for me.

I was diagnosed with depression and general anxiety disorder. Then it took a few years after that to finally get diagnosed with PTSD because I was having nightmares, flashbacks and when I'm on edge and if something like comes up and sneaks up behind me I get scared.

I was hanging out with the wrong people which brought the worst out of me, and I was fighting a lot with my husband. We were arguing more than usual. I was in the kitchen with a knife to my wrist and about to cut my wrist but I couldn't get myself to do it, and I called the crisis line and I told the crisis line that I was thinking about hurting myself and they referred me to the local VA.

So, I went to the VA and checked myself into the Psych Ward. They were a few of the nurses that were taking care of us for the day and one of them just sat and talked to me for a long time and just talking to the nurse about what's on my mind and what I should do helped a lot.

My husband is a Veteran himself and he's been through the VA. He's been out for ten years now. So, he knew what to do, where to turn to for help. I think we did couples therapy for a good four to five months, and it really helped us reconnect to what we were before because we did a lot of damage in the beginning, and the couples therapy helped out a lot.

I would say, talk to somebody, talk to anybody. It doesn't have to be a therapist, just somebody. Somebody that's willing to listen and if it's beyond their reach help that person reach out through the VA for help.



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**MAKE THE  
CONNECTION**