

Veterans staying active

Rick: Going from being in a very structured military environment to completely unstructured was one of the hardest transitions I'd ever made in my life. I started to seek some help. There was one on one therapy involved. There was CBT. There was writing therapy. And many things have transpired since that time that have made me really functional now. Being out amongst the trees and in the flowing water, it's transformative.

Lucinda: I sought help through the VA. I was diagnosed with PTSD, and I started a group for seeking safety. I'm starting to feel more. My passion for things has come back. Physical fitness for me is just spiritually, mentally — I go to the top of the mountain sometimes and I just look around at all the beautiful scenery here, and I just know that there is something bigger out there and that, that he's got my back too.

Ruth: I met an incredible psychiatrist, and he said, "We can help you find a good quality of life." And they did. The best therapy of all was getting outside, walking, hiking, fishing. They're all happy, happy feelings for me. Just the idea of finding who I am and letting myself grow.

Jeffrey: The Vet Center, they got me started on something called EMDR. I found out through my therapist that anything that works both sides of your brain, like gymnastics and dance, and I've been recently taking hip-hop lessons to keep active and learning. And it has, it has helped a lot. If you can find programs that get you out there, like recreational therapy is out there, I think because they incorporate your entire family in that process, do it. Those help so much. I think that a lot of people should do more social stuff with other people because then that helps you feel better about yourself going and being with other people as well.

Phyllis: My PTSD was discovered by therapists at the VA Medical Center. My avenue of tranquility vacation is art. I have found that art touches everyone. It speaks in volume beyond words. It touched the very core of self-healing.

Bryan: Since I've gotten the treatment, it's really helped me set myself up into a life to where I can get through things. It was a tool for me, like being out on a snowmobile. That's an adrenaline rush in itself and it's a natural high. It's its own medication for me.

Tony: I went for help at the Vet Center, and then I went through CBT, which is cognitive behavioral therapy. I'm not the same person. I'm more open to new experiences. I think nature is the natural antidepressant. There's some spiritual component to it that brings you closer to happiness.



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