

Marriage counseling helped us be more open

Ashley: My name is Ashley and my husband is Julian. He was a sergeant in the Marine Corps. After September 11th he said he just, that's when he knew he wanted to enlist and serve the country. I was really proud, and then I was really scared for him just because we were, I mean, we were pretty heavy into the war. He was fortunate the first I think 2 years, he didn't get deployed. But when we went to Lejeune, he got orders. And I had just found out I was pregnant. It was scary and then it was also like kind of like a bittersweet feeling. We were excited to have our son, but then also, we knew he was deploying, and it was just like you don't know if he's going to come back.

I got a call early in the morning from his lieutenant colonel that he had been injured. His injuries, he wasn't...at the time, they told me he had just lost one leg.

He was really motivated in his physical therapy. He walked. He was up on his legs probably a month after we had got to San Diego. And he wanted to make sure that he was walking by the time his unit came back, I think it was December-January. So, he was up and walking in both prosthetics.

Then after his unit came back, I think when the dust kind of settled, cause we were just like go, go, go. Monday through Friday, 8 to 5 therapy. And then he was slowly kind of trickling down, and I think that's when I started to see him kind of just isolating a little bit. He wasn't as motivated. He just kind of didn't know what to do now.

We had these new roles in the house. Like I was having to pick up more and he wasn't able to do as much as he wanted to. I felt like our communication was just completely kind of just stopped. And he was like okay, let's do this. Marriage counseling. And it was more me that needed it. I think Julian, he's always done like the mentor, the groups with the guys. And so, going through that, we did that for about a year. And it really helped us to like not holding stuff in so much and just being more open and honest with each other.

I'm all about getting to counseling. If you can't do marriage, do like your one on one. So, if your husband or your spouse is just not ready, at least you can go. I felt for me I needed more one on one counseling after our marriage counseling. I just felt like I had more things I needed to work through. And for me just to realize that when he got further in his therapy that he could do a little bit more, for me to let go and be like, okay, it's okay. I think it really helped us. It saved us. I think more so for me. He's always been kind of better at communicating. It just gives you the right tools. It doesn't solve everything, but it just shows you what you can do.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION**