

Her father saw the signs and recommended help

Debbie: My dad was a fun-loving guy, constantly in trouble and so, he went in the Military to try to get some responsibility I guess, and my mom was totally opposed to it. So, for the first probably six or seven years, there was a lot of not really wanting to move, constant stress. Then, my dad started getting sent on these deployments and he would come back different every time. And so, he got gradually more and more angry and we didn't really understand what was going on and after a while, we kind of just chalked it up to that was Dad. He wasn't any fun anymore and he didn't like to go to crowded places, and he was startle really, really, easily. And so, my sister and I really didn't have a lot of fun. We enjoyed moving. We enjoyed traveling. We didn't have a lot of fun kid stuff. Like, we didn't go to amusement parks and we didn't go to waterparks because Dad didn't like those kind of things, so we just didn't go.

My dad eventually talked to some other Veterans. He did not go in and seek any kind of mental health with them because he was already retired for quite a while and he felt like it really wasn't open to him. However, when he saw Jim start having trouble, then, you know, he was very supportive. He said, you know, "You need to make a difference for my grandchildren, and you need to take the steps that I wasn't strong enough to take." And so, my take on it is that it's not about courage, it's about being smart; doing the smart thing, not just the brave thing.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

MAKE THE
CONNECTION