

Taking steps for a better life

Anthony: My name is Anthony. I was in the United States Army. I drove a truck in South Vietnam in wartime.

Well, at the time I thought it was my duty. My father was a World War II Veteran and I figured it was my time to serve my country.

I got into drugs in Vietnam, and I stayed messed up for a very long time here in the States. Carried a gun, I carried a knife, you know, and I used them. And I hung out with people that were like me.

When the Iraq War started, and they started showing pictures of blown up trucks and Humvees and jeeps and stuff, it brought it all back.

I would come to the end of the road when I had no way of getting any more money and I had nowhere to live and I was mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally bankrupt, I got to the point where I said to myself, "Is this the way you want to live? Is this what you want out of life?"

I went to the VA and sought help. At first it was just for physical help. But then as I got into the psychiatric programs in the VA, I realized that it was more than physical.

A fellow Veteran, I was in a drug program in the VA hospital, he told me, he says, "You know, you got post-traumatic stress." I thought, but I wasn't Infantry, even though I was trained Infantry, I wasn't an Infantryman. He said, "It doesn't matter. You were there. You were under that stress and strain every day. You have it." And I said, "Oh. Maybe I do." And that's when I decided to look into it more. And if it wasn't for the VA, I'd probably be dead now.

Today, I'm happy to say that I'm happy, joyous, and free today. I go to post-traumatic stress relapse prevention groups. I have a Psychiatrist in the VA. I want to help other Veterans. I don't want to see anybody go through what I went through. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Go and get the help that you need.



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