

## When you're hurt the mission is now you

**Julian:** I'm from Modesto, CA United States Marine Corps. I was deployed in Marjah, Afghanistan in 2010. My wife's a saint. We got married in 2008, so, we're newlyweds, and we were banking on being in the military for 20 years. I mean I already advanced five ranks in my first enlistment. Then my son was born in May and then we left in June and I got hurt in July.

There was talk during the patrol about IEDs and we had gotten briefed before that they were putting IEDs in the trees, so that they angle out and just take out your face. I wasn't even looking at the ground [makes explosion sound] and I was just thought to be looking down and I remember the light from the energy of the blast enveloping me.

In September 2010 I'm in San Diego, I get my left leg. October I get my right leg. It was pretty much, you know, the first 12 months of rehab were dark, man. You know what I mean? They were really dark. I went from 100% being independent, top of my game, meanest I've ever been, fastest I've ever been, to asking for help from my wife to take me off the toilet. Asking her to help roll me over. How do you still be a partner with missing half your body? Where are her boundaries on how much is healthy helping and how much is babying?

We ended up discovering that we both needed to go to counseling. Separately as well as together and give it all we got. You're not the only one that gets hurt, you know what I mean? You're not the only one that loses their legs. She lost her legs too that day. And it left an imprint on her. We gave in all this effort, man, and I think now we're stronger than ever.

Looking back now there were indicators for me that I was depressed. I had lack of hope. I was able to identify all of those through counseling. It was so hard to push, man. I remember being so demotivated to "I can't even mow my grass." And slowly I mean, I'd get into it. I can carry my son in about a full year of being an amputee in prosthetics. I attribute all that to pure support. Hanging out with buddies who were a little ahead of me. Watching them, asking them questions.

There is help out there, you know. I know for guys that are from my generation of war, you know, the VA has OEF, OIF Case Managers and those Case Managers are better than Google for that kind of stuff.

It's a team effort in every regard. So when you get hurt, the mission is no longer counter-terrorism. The mission's you and your rehab. You know B.A.M.C.I.S., you know S.M.E.A.C., you know how to make a mission, you know how to give orders, and you know how to receive orders. So give yourself an order. Draft up a mission. Where are you going to go? Create a training model for your life.



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