

After a bout of anger, he realized he needed help

Bill: My names Bill. I'm now retired, but I went to Vietnam in 1970, stayed there 70 through 71, was with the First Calvary Division. I was a field soldier. I was 11 Bravo, so we were everywhere. It was rough so you did whatever you had to do to cope with whatever it is that you need to deal with every day, day in and day out. Sometimes you would drink too much, the other thing is I would always smoke way too much. I used to work 14, 15 hours a day just to keep my mind busy and I went about 25 years doing the same thing over and over and over again. Getting fired from this job, fired from that job, you know getting, letting my temper get the best of me and my wife left me. I mean, things were going downhill fast. We had gone over the deep edge somewhere, didn't know that there was anything wrong. It took a lot of years to finally realize it.

You hear different triggers from different people. I mean, people will tell me, yeah, the helicopter makes me really scared, well to me a helicopter meant they're bringing me something, they're bringing me food, they're bringing me ammunition, they're coming to get me. It was always good. Claustrophobia on the other hand, I still have it. I was a tunnel rat to boot, so I can't take it, big large crowds, I just can't do it. I'm very conscious of exactly where I am in a room, what's around me. I know who's moving, who's not moving. I know everything that's going on around me. It was actually my third company that I had opened, and things have gone pretty good and then something really, really terrible happened. I was really, I wasn't suicidal I was homicidal. I was really, really upset with some people and that was when I finally went down to the Denver Vet Center and said, "I need some help."

First, she started seeing me every week, and then she got me into a psychiatrist to get me some meds and suddenly I was able to sleep, and I was able to think again. She ended up sending me down to the VA, and to the PTSD Clinic which was a 7-week in-hospital program, and that was like night and day for me. It just, it just brought my whole world together. It made me deal with some things that I obviously hadn't dealt with in 25 years and it had come out okay, and knowing that there was so many other guys there that were the same was the biggest thing that there was because now you know you're not the only one.

The big thing is I'm happy with who I am now, where I wasn't, I wasn't happy with who I was. I believe I'm much calmer now, just better, I'm just better, I'm just better, I feel better. I feel good about who I am.



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