

Support is here for you

Travis: My name's Travis. I was with the Army National Guard here in Washington State. I'm a 68 Whiskey, which is an Army Medic. When I signed up, when I enlisted, I wanted to be able to serve. I wanted to serve in a way that would help benefit as many people as possible. So, in my case, I was going to Mosul, Iraq.

You get your mission. You get to your SP. You get in your vehicle. You sit there. You roll outside the wire. At that point in time, you are kind of heightened, everything is heightened. Sensory, the whole nine yards. You're listening for everything. You're just kind of always on edge to try to perceive the worst. If you don't expect it, you become complacent. And that's when things really bad do happen.

In the ER, everything is so high-speed you don't really have time to think about what's actually happening, the emotional concept of thinking. You're always doing the more physical aspect of thinking. This has to happen right now. This has to happen right now. It's so rapid, so quick that the impact is quite interesting cause it's like having a massive adrenaline rush for so quick, and afterwards you stop and think about what actually just happened.

When I was overseas, I started having insomnia. I didn't get a lot of sleep in general. I didn't get the luxury of sleep in general. So, I had to start getting medicated to sleep, and I brought that home with me. I was either really happy or really sad and not really understanding what was going on, just generically frustrated at life in general.

No one really respects what actually is going through our mind, what I'm taking in in that very circumstance. And then you get frustrated and people around you are like, why is this guy frustrated? At first, it was kind of interesting cause you don't think you need help or, part of you knows you need help, but the other part of you doesn't want to admit it. You try to say, "Hey, I need help," but then you don't really tell them what's wrong.

My wife has always been supportive of me trying to better myself in any way, shape or form. And she'll catch something that she thinks is off and she wants to sit down and discuss it. At first, I didn't, I would just disagree with her. "No, there's nothing wrong. I don't need it. No." And then it got to the point where it was really impacting her. She went to her parents' house for a while. She was like, "You just need to figure out what you need to do." I kind of fell in a slump and started drinking and started trying to just not really care.

One day I was at a local bar and I was just drinking. I was just talking about the situation and what's going on and my life in general to some random stranger. And he recommended that I go see this gentleman that I'm seeing now. And so, I looked him up and I gave him a call and he thought I was referred by VA. I found out later on that he's actually a VA Counselor. And when I explained that this random guy told me to give you a call, it was quite an interesting coincidence.

So, I've been taught to consider details and look at my own actions and perceive things instead of just reacting to things. It's so easy just to become frustrated. But instead of becoming frustrated, recognize, hey why is this annoying me?



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You don't always have to be worried and scared and afraid. And people do care. Care enough to give you the opportunity and the time to actually fix the injury essentially. Whether it's an emotional injury or physical injury, people want to help you. I've seen a lot of Soldiers kind of struggle with it. At first, you never want to talk about it with anybody else, but the more you become open with it, the more other people find that they can get help as well as the more help you get yourself.



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