

## His brother's death was the tipping point

**Tim:** My wife is a science teacher and would go to workshops and courses and be gone for the week and she would come back and I would be a total mess. And at first, she was like, "Don't you trust me?" And I'm like, "I don't know what's going on, I'm just..." The anxiety was just too much to bear.

The tipping point came with a phone call Thanksgiving of 2008. I answered the phone and a guy said, "Tim Doble?" and I said, "Yeah," and he said, "Do you know a Ron Doble?" I said, "Yeah, that's my brother." "Well, I'm so and so from the Schooner Bar. We haven't seen him in the last two or three days and so we went to check, he lived up above the bar and we found him dead." He had been an alcoholic and a Veteran, but he wasn't going to get help and I thought I should go to at least be with my brother's body, but the thought of being with this body that had been decomposing for two or three days, I couldn't. I was really struggling. Here it was 40 years later, and that damn war still had a hold on me.

A week later, we went, my wife and I went to do Toys for Tots and they didn't need us right then, so she said, "Let's go, how about if we go over the VA?" And I talked about a plaque I wanted to buy for the Corpsmen who worked on me when I was wounded and send it to 'em for Christmas. So, we got to the VA and my wife said after we got the plaque, "How about we just go over to the mental health office and talk to some folks?" And that was the beginning of coming back.

People were so kind, and I talked to a psychologist who said, "We have a therapy called prolonged exposure that we've had really good success with. It might take you from like 12 to 17 sessions, but it'll help. We know it will." And at that point, I was ready and I just thought, "12 to 17 sessions. Wow, that's not forever. There's the end, the end." The folks at the VA helped me to understand that I wasn't in control of everything that went around me in Vietnam and that bad things happen to good people, even when you do everything right; really bad things can happen. They helped me to learn that it's okay to think about these things and to remember these things and I have my life back. And so, that's what this therapy can do for people. You can get your life back. I'm not a therapist, but I know that it works. We don't talk in terms of cure, we talk in terms of recovery and it's a journey and it's a path and making this the smallest part of your life that we can, but we wouldn't want to really forget it. We don't want to forget our comrades who died; that would be a total dishonor to them.

There's isn't anybody who goes through drug treatment, alcohol treatment, who wouldn't want there to be a beginning and an end. I certainly did when I started this and I left P.E. thinking, "I got it now." And then, I didn't have it, so then I was back again, and I felt like a failure at first. But I understand it's a process and it's becoming a smaller part of my life, so I can tell people, "Go, here's hope."



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