

Being vulnerable allowed me to get help

Yasmeen: My name is Yasmeen, I served in the United States Navy 2005 to 2011. I came in as an Aviation Boatswain's Mate. We were doing workups to get the ship to go out on deployment. One of my friends was on the flight deck and he got his head taken off by an F/A-18. It's unbelievable to see one of your friends just lying there. There's so much commotion, there's so much emotions going on. It's a horrible feeling, but you know you can't really harbor on it too much. You have to go out there and still do your job. Not having that time to grieve and actually getting in touch with your feelings is kind of hard because you hold it all in. Then it's like at some point, all that emotion and stuff just builds up in you and erupts and it comes out, and it don't come out sometimes the right way, and it just tears you to pieces sometimes.

I didn't smile, I didn't laugh, I didn't show no emotion. I was just like numb. Just didn't care. I didn't trust nobody. I was secluded. I would literally be in a dark space, just darkness. I didn't want no light around me, I just felt like I was hopeless. Then I am dealing with the kids, I don't have too much to really take care of them. I had to send my kids up to New York because I didn't want them suffering with me. That is when I just sat there and I was just thinking about everything and it just came so much for me that I tried to hurt myself. I knew I had to, you know, take that step forward to make a change.

I was told about the VA, I was talking to two Psychs, that were very awesome, they brought me out of my shell. The incident that I saw we actually kind of relieved it to a point where I can actually talk about it without getting so emotional and to let me know that it wasn't my fault that, , things happen and that it is alright to grieve, just let my feelings flow and just slowly but surely, she started bringing me back to me.

My son, he has been with me through the process. He was three when I went into the service so he knew the difference between one upbeat mommy to dad, she don't like to talk, she just looks mean and she just looks cranky all day. So now it's back to oh mom – hugs and kisses and stuff. We are back to that. They started helping me think about not for nothing, go to school. I was like you know what, why not, I like learning. I just started applying for school and I have been in school, I am about to graduate soon.

That kind of helped just being around different people and not to mention there is a lot of Veterans in my school. That is where I really hang out with, the Veterans. Just hearing their stories, just hearing what they went through, just hearing that they are trying to go to school, just to get their minds off of things, it is a great thing, great experience.

What do they say, a closed mouth don't get fed? You have to say something because nobody truly knows what is going with you, with you, and if you don't let them into your world, they can't help you. So sometimes you gotta, I guess you be that vulnerable person and actually let somebody help you.



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