

After legal challenges, they found support

Brent: When I got out, I had a hell of a time assimilating back into civilian society. The day after I got... the night after I got back, I went out, got liquored up and got arrested for drunk driving.

Mary Ann: I got into a fight with my boyfriend and the police were called and I was a Detention Officer in one county, and I went to jail in the next county.

Harlan: First you lose this, then you get in trouble with the law, then you lose that and you get in trouble again. I had never been arrested until I was 57 years old.

Patrick: I got laid off from work and went to selling drugs, got caught, got an indictment, went to federal prison.

Travis: Me and my ex-wife were having extreme problems and we were going to get a divorce. We were outside yelling. My anger level, it was just through the roof at that time. So, about maybe half an hour later the police come.

Mary Ann: I was assigned to Dr. Beaufort. So, I saw her about every month and she kept telling me, "You need to go to substance abuse treatment. I need you to do this." So, once I got out of jail, the next day I went and sat in front of that doctor and said sign me up because it's time for me to go.

Travis: I had to go to counseling once a week for however long they say, which ended up being about maybe eight or nine months, almost a year. That really helped me; it forced me to deal with my anger issues that I had.

Patrick: When I was locked up in federal prison, they had some Veteran reps that came in and was like, "Hey you know, it's changed. Things have changed. You're a Veteran. Give it a chance."

Richard: He said, man look, this is for Veterans. They're concerned about that fact that you're a Veteran and so that's how I got treated and got on the right path, when I came out of prison.

Travis: What I learned through counseling was, I mean, there's a lot of different techniques. The tools to deal with the anger issues and that was really important. And I feel like that's probably the best thing that's happened to me since I've been injured, was actually getting forced to go through that counseling and dealing with the issues.

Mary Ann: The tools that I used to cope with being in recovery, definitely paying attention to the triggers that are there, knowing when I feel that feeling coming what I need to do to avoid using. It's just with the counseling, with the medication it helps.



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Harlan: One doctor was your basically case manager and he talked to me and he says, “You know Harlon, I think there’s some things you need to get evaluated.” And that I don’t need to be ashamed of what happened to me in my lifetime but, this can be a stepping stone. He was one of the guys that put me on the road back to health.

Mary Ann: Today is better because I cope better with things. I cope better with life.

Patrick: The difference between when I first came out of Vietnam and where I am today is I know how to manage it.

Brent: There’s no shame in asking for help. I learned that there are people out there that want to help us, we’re not alone. I talk to Veterans every day that were in the same place I was a few years ago.

Patrick: No matter what happens in life, situations come up. There’s going to be all kinds of situations but the main thing it is that you’re a Veteran, you volunteered to fight for this country and there’s programs that’s fighting for you.



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