

Healing and acceptance after MST

Anna: My name's Anna. I served in the Air Force from 2012 to 2015 and I was stationed in Louisiana at Barksdale Air Force Base. I started dating this guy. I was getting out usually, and he was about my age and he was an NCO. At first, he was typical, super nice, super sweet, did everything any girl wanted you to do, and then he got really manipulative and really jealous and he had assaulted me a couple times during the relationship. Two weeks after we broke up, he saw me out at the bar talking to another guy and then he ended up at the end of the night coming to my apartment and ended up raping me. And then he kinda acted like it was something I deserved, and I didn't let myself process it, I pushed it down.

I spent a lot of time alone, kinda just watching TV. I'd stay up all night because I couldn't sleep. I cried a lot and kind of tried... I was in my head a lot and blaming myself. Then I was talking with my mom and she had mentioned something about going to the VA and getting health, mental health care through them. I saw someone up in the PTSD clinic at the VA in Ann Arbor, and she was really awesome. She had me do a lot of different homework assignments, and one of the big one's was a thought log. So if I was having like a thought like "This was my fault," like "I let him do this or I spoke to him so I must have let him believe that it was Okay." And then I'd have to break it down and say what kind of evidence and what thoughts really support this feeling. And then you have to go on the opposite side and what's not in support of this feeling. Being like "Okay, well it wasn't my fault."

Being with the Counselor, she's definitely helped me work through certain trust issues or certain intimacy issues. I started dating someone and we're still together, and it's trying to process it on my own without bringing him into it. That was really difficult, to try and not let it ruin my relationship. We got engaged over the weekend so that was awesome to know that like he's even seen a big change and that he's seen an improvement in myself and kind of like the way I handle things and handle us.

Getting back into a healthy relationship with yourself, with someone, and with your family. I think that's something that's just so important and I don't think enough people do it, but I'm happy I did, because it's improved a lot of emotional and mental, even physical things for me. Even if you don't want to report something like this, it's necessary to your health, it really is. Even your physical health, because the stress of it can just destroy you and talking to someone really, really, really helped.



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