

I never realized that I needed help, too

Rebecca: But we'd never sat down and talked about it. What's hard about being a spouse of a veteran. I never thought that that was something I needed to do, because I am the one who supports him. I never realized that I needed help too. If I am going to be able to support him to my fullest, I need to be able to understand myself and how I am dealing with it as well. How can I help him if I don't understand him, if I get frustrated by him. Why are you being mean to me? Why are we fighting about this little thing? So if I just understand a bit better.

I found that the first time I sat down in one of those groups' sessions, it almost made me want to cry and I didn't even expect it. Not even because of what I was saying. I just explained who I was and that I was a spouse of a veteran. It was very simple, but that was the most I had ever come out and shared with people who have also been through the same thing. So it was like this massive relief to be able to feel understood, and when I heard those people speaking it was like looking in the mirror. A lot of people felt the same way. A lot of people, after the sessions would discuss how it was and how it made them feel and what they got out of it. Most people felt like it was looking in the mirror.

Of course it was amazing for me, but the most amazing thing that came out of it was, I think for Brian, because he didn't think that he needed to come out and talk about his feelings for the umpteenth time. He had already talked about everything a billion times. He had gone to psychologists, counselors, doctors, you name it, he has talked to everyone, he has told his story a billion times, and it has all helped him, but he just didn't get why he needed to sit down with people once again. Tell his story again. I said to him, "If you talk about it, about your experiences, then it might help other people." That was true, but I secretly knew that it was actually going to help him.



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