

Opening Up | LGBTQ+ Veterans

Tim: When you're in the Marine Corps, your sexuality is not what defines you. How good of a Marine you are is what defines you. The thought was tearing me in half that I was being someone to these brothers of mine, but inside I was someone else.

Antonio (T.J.): My whole existence as a gay man has been espionage. It was something that I just didn't want to deal with.

Cynthia: The damage that the society does to us is all on the inside. The part that was hard for me, especially hard for me, was not getting any recognition, not being seen.

Becca: I remember when they first asked, "Are you straight, lesbian, bi?" I'm like, "Oh, I'm bi." And then I panicked. And I thought, "Oh, what have I done?" And I realized that it was okay. They're like, "You're fine." It was like a huge sense of relief.

Antonio (T.J.): I mean, immediately things got better. I feel purposeful.

Cynthia: Is there hope in the world for transgendered people? Of course, there is. You can find sympathetic and supportive professionals in the VA system.

Becca: Being able to be open and honest with my care provider, it's a good feeling to know that you're accepted.

Tim: Be honest with yourself and be honest with the people who love you and who will stand by you because you're most likely going to lose very little and you're going to gain a lot.



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