

Overcoming Survivor's Guilt

Mike: Why did I come home and these guys didn't? What's special about me? Those are the questions that you ask yourself.

Fred: A man got killed on a mission I was supposed to go on, they talked me out of going on it. And so I was eventually diagnosed with survivor's guilt.

Catrina: I'd always feel like although service is for those people, I don't deserve these resources, I came back. But the VA was really good at saying, "No, those services are for you too."

Fred: And we talked a lot about survivor's guilt. We talked about moral injury, which is something we don't talk about. And in my case, it's 100%.

Catrina: We talked about stress. We talked about de-stressing. We talked about self-care, mindfulness, things that I used to roll my eyes at and think, "Oh, that's for those people." I found myself actively finding ways to make sure that I'm taking care of myself. I think it's normal to feel like you don't need to go, but you probably do need to go.

Mike: It's still there, but I have tools to address it, to really help me control my response to it.

Fred: Don't let the trauma isolate you and build that network of support.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION**