

Bill | Checking Back in

Bill: First name's Bill. MOS was 11 Bravo, Army. I served in 1969 through 1971. I started at Fort Ord, California. I did my basic training there, and then I served a year and a half in Vietnam. My life has changed since I talked to you last. I was a frontline soldier so my job was to be out front shooting people. It was rough. You did whatever you had to do to cope with whatever it is that you need to deal with every day, day in and day out. Sometimes you would drink too much. The other thing is I would always smoke way too much, letting my temper get the best of me. That was when I finally went down to the Denver Vet Center and said, "I need some help."

I've learned to handle a lot of things better than I used to. I used to have some serious anger issues, not that they don't still exist, but I handled them differently now. I got three kids through college. All of them are doing very well. I operated three different businesses, which turned out to be very good for me. I have actually gotten control of the anger issues that I had for quite some time. I still see a psychologist about once a month, and I see a psychiatrist about every three months. You are able to say things to them that you don't say to anybody ever. We delved deeply into a lot of bad situations that happened and gory things that I saw, and when I saw them, and heartbreaking stuff that hurt me a lot. It's just getting that stuff out helps.

Walking is as much for me as it is for my dog. He keeps me on my toes. It's when I have time to clear things from my mind. I feel better when I'm out there, especially if I'm walking around lakes, I can hear the ducks. I can literally hear the fish and the water and everything just seems to calm me down. I still have some anger issues, but I handle them now. I don't need to be right every time, first time. I just let other people do what they're going to do. The VA has put me in a program of just keeping myself going and keeping myself on my feet and moving. All those times that I've spent with them have helped me make peace with just about everybody and everything. It's interesting. I mean, you don't realize it's going to help you, but it does, so it was a whole new life for me.



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