

Finding strength and support for a spouse

Jacqueline: My name is Jacqueline. My husband is Richard and we've been married for almost 7 years now but known each other since 1991. Well, we got married in 2005. He was deployed to Iraq at that point in time, and in the 7 years we have been separated over half of our marriage I would say.

He came home on R & R for two weeks the first time. Everything was awesome, his orders were kind of extended for a little bit longer, that's how he got to stay over for a total of 19 months. He came back home again for another 2 weeks and our whole situation kind of changed. The whole mood already changed between the two of us, and he was just not the same person that I knew from way back when the fun-loving awesome person. I knew my husband, how he was before, and I knew what the war can do to a person and that's why I decided I was going to fight tooth and nail for my husband no matter what.

I don't exactly know what happened to my husband because we have never really discussed what was going on, it just caused some issues sometimes because I want to be the supportive spouse of course, and he's not ready to tell me and I'm not going to push him. He will get to that point, when he wants to tell me he's going to tell me.

Right after he came back from his deployment in November we had a little bit of a domestic violence issue going on and that's when my husband got diagnosed with PTSD. When all of this happened he had to do the anger management courses, got involved with the VA, had to do the PTSD counseling which he's to this day still doing.

At first, he was not, I want to say too happy about it, having to open up because he was just not ready to tell his story, what's going on but he's getting to the point where he can open up more and more to his counselor and he is finally getting to the point to set him up with group counseling which I hope is going to help him even more being in a group setting, talking to other people as well that are in the same boat. Going out to enjoy the 4th of July fireworks. That's a thing of the past but just to be able to do certain things. Go to a concert, have fun, things like that. For him to have a little bit of better quality of life is my hope and dream for him.

I'm just starting to go through the VA system myself and I only had like three sessions myself so far and it's helping me. To be a wounded warrior wife is not an easy job. It can be very isolating because other people, civilian people I want to say mostly don't understand what we go through. So, having the support of fellow spouse's that are going through the same thing is godsent a lot of times.



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