

## Finding a new connection through spirituality

**Speaker1:** The sniper had just popped up out of this little hole and he fired, and opened fire. I remember saying “God make it stop.” It didn’t stop, a couple of guys got wounded and I marked that as the day I gave up the God of my childhood. God just didn’t make sense. So for 10 years I didn’t have that support system because there was no church where I felt welcome or felt like I belonged.

**Speaker2:** When I joined the military I was very religious. I felt God gave up on me. One day, after a really bad day I literally cursed God. It was something that I was brought up not to do.

**Speaker3:** I was raised in the parochial school system. I went on to a Jeju Wit college, Jeju Wit training. After Vietnam there was a period there of a number of years that I didn’t do anything.

**Speaker4:** As I was drinking up, I was not going to church. That was the last thing on my mind. My mom would take my boys to church, but of course I wasn’t into it. I was raised in church but I just kind of lingered away from it.

**Speaker5:** That was one of the things that I lost over in Vietnam. I lost my faith in God, I couldn’t understand how he could allow some of the things that I saw.

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**Speaker6:** Spirituality is a very delicate subject when depression and mental illness or whatever mental health because there is that stigma that well you have God you shouldn’t have depression, but I was always talking to my pastor, I have always had a spiritual authority that I submitted to and he encouraged me. He said, “no that is not the case.” You take medicine for cholesterol. You know mental illness is a disease that you can help, don’t feel guilty. You don’t feel guilty for diabetes. You don’t feel guilty for getting the flu, let’s treat this.

**Speaker7:** That is when I started branching out, talking to teachers in church and finding out hey there are vets in church here. One of them is a licensed counselor, very good at it and he sat down and we talk and he offers suggestions and pointers.

**Speaker2:** I started going back to church, I talked with the Bishop of my church and we started working through a few things and he suggested I go see somebody. He was a psychiatrist that went to the same church I did. He was very understanding. He helped bring some religious end of it when brought me some healing I felt.

**Speaker3:** Once I got my head clear on that many, many years ago I got back into my faith and very, very active in my faith.

**Speaker4:** I started reading the daily word every day and that strengthened me and the more I was in church the better I felt.

**Speaker8:** I turned to my church and they helped me with my faith and my belief to also not take danger to my own hand and to begin to change myself for the better.



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**Speaker9:** There's people out there who want to help. There are excellent programs. Try to find a faith based organization, whatever your faith may be and begin to find yourself again but get the help that is needed. It is there for you.

**Speaker10:** Developing a sense of trust and a sense of faith in the universe, in a higher power, in God, and whatever word works for whoever you are, I am not religious in a sense that a lot of people would recognize but I think that my spirituality was absolutely crucial to my recovery.



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