

Finding a fresh start with help from VA

John: I served with Bravo company 367th combat engineer battalion. I had a fiancé right when I got back and ended up getting married. I had know her for awhile before but I think that with my deployment you know I became a little bit of a different person and you know maybe just had a different view on life and maybe what we had in common before we didn't necessarily have in common after, but we never really took the time I think get to know each other again which is I think something you almost have to do. So unfortunately we got married, that didn't work out and so I think it was right after that time you know that everything just compiled up if you will in terms of just maybe some anxieties and everything.

It was around the summer time and there must have been a commercial or something about fireworks or something and of course the noise they decided to play on the radio was the whistling sound which is very similar to an incoming. You know it obviously was just background noise, but heard that noise, the hairs on my neck stood up and I was getting ready to jump into a corner. After the fact I almost had to laugh it off you know. Luckily there wasn't anybody around to see, but just a little embarrassing, but also a little piece of reality which made me realize that yeah I am definitely not adjusted and there is still something up here that I have been trained to do or how to react and that was still in there.

When I decided to go back to college and try and finish up my schooling. I went to go check in with one of the main buildings and I remember seeing what it was a couple of wires that were running along the front steps of this main building to a garbage bag. I mean instantly it is like I am looking around like wondering where are these wires coming from, what is this plastic bag? I meant that is the exact definition of what we were trying to avoid or take care of. I went into the building immediately to the whatever front desk and was like there is a couple wires going to a bag out there has anybody checked that out? The guy was like out is just some of a card reader for book sales or something like that.

On the VA side of things they helped me out a lot with the schooling when I guess to go back to that when I did decide to go back to college the VA was there and I did utilize obvious those resources which was great, that helped take a lot off of the maybe the financial side and just also just mentally figuring out okay I do have some other options for my future in terms of a career after you know the military. Look for whatever help and get whatever you can, I mean both on you in terms of education. I mean that is, it is one of the reasons why, or one of the benefits that are there because we joined. I mean it obviously shouldn't be like the main reason but I mean the VA is there to help both on the education side and obviously on the mental health side. It s not a bad thing to talk to others and to get that support that you need because we're human there is only so much that each of us is only meant to bear on our shoulders alone. So that is why have each other so whether it is friends, family, or a VA support counselor. I mean for me it was faith as well as family and friends that really truly helped get me through and you know we are still not, obviously it is not like everything is cured or better all at once, but it gets you on that path and that is a start.



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