

Taking care of yourself with VA support

Keith: I'm Keith. Retired Sergeant Major. I've served in the Regular Army and the Regular Army National Guard.

My training injury didn't actually happen in the military. Me and my wife went to a club and some kind of fight broke out, and somehow or another I got knocked out, knocked unconscious.

And so, it was traumatic for me. It took a year for me to actually start shaking out of it. I went through depression. I couldn't focus. I couldn't drive. I just stayed in a daze. As far as doing my work, I couldn't stay on one topic for any length of time. My immediate Supervisor, she said, "Well, we need to get you into the hospital and look to see what's going on."

I was put on 30 days convalescent leave from being knocked out unconscious. I never knew this, just being knocked out could be so traumatic.

As I rose through the ranks, recovered and that got past, I would always have instances where I'd think that my memory wasn't as well. Just some things just drop off the map here.

Before the accident, I could remember things more, recollect things. And so, we adapt and overcome. So, I would use programs, the calendars and stuff like that to help remind me of maybe some simple things, really.

When we put all the records together and I had someone view on my way out, which is very important, during my separation physical, you would not believe that the things that happened years ago that are in your records are reoccurring.

I am visiting to the VA. I did all the appointments. I had about 10 or 12 appointments with them to do the research and check me out.

I love the Military. And I love my family. And when I go back to the roots of this, it was based on that decision to come into the Military to make a better life, support my country, and get an education. And when you think about all those things, then what about you and life after retirement? And so, I owed it to my family to actually get myself checked out to make sure that I was healthy, and if not, I was pursuing ways to become healthy or healthier, to continue life with them and enjoy my family.

It's just like taking care of your weapon, your equipment. You are your equipment, and you have to take care of that.



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