

A Blank Canvas

Dan: A theremin is an electric instrument. I just like the sounds it makes. I've always been drawn to music, and I have music everywhere I go. My name's Dan, and I was in the navy, served on the USS Independence from '94 to '97 as an undesignated airman. I grew up on a Navajo reservation. Navajos joining Navy would be something strange. I got through it okay. I would say I was treated differently because of the color of my skin. I hid my sexuality because it was during the don't ask, don't tell time. I couldn't do anything about it. I dealt with the discrimination by drinking a lot. It ended up coming back to bite me. I was able to overcome it. The most useful and helpful thing I would say was the VA.

They began making me go to AA meetings for a couple of months. And afterwards, I found my own support group with friends that I found in the Navy, just talking with my friends, and finding alternatives to work through my problems and work things that were just in my mind. I do believe in always helping another person out. One veteran I used to know, he liked music. So, when his PTSD would react, I would just play him some music that he liked and that settles him down.

Being a Pisces, I've always been drawn to music. I love musical instruments. It's a healthy way to relax. I also do painting. Most of my paintings are acrylic, tempera, finger paint, oil, even crayons sometimes. And it gets rid of anxieties that might have built up. That's my focus, keep yourself busy and keep yourself in a happy place.

I think it's important because it's a healthy outlet for veterans and something they can seek. I would say, go for it. Everybody needs a shoulder to lean on.



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