

I have a new mission now

Antonio “TJ”: In the service, the thing we were, we had purpose. We got up in the morning, we had a mission, even if the mission was going to the motor pool, it was a mission that we had.

Jodie: When you go into the service you go into boot camp, you’re surrounded by people who are on the same mission as you. So, when you transition out of service you’re alone in that you don’t have mentors and you don’t have colleagues or peers.

Sam: Once you lose that, you know camaraderie or family, or you know kind of having that purpose. In a broad aspect that’s what affected me the most.

David: I didn’t let it be known to anybody at any time that I was a Vietnam Veteran and for certain I didn’t talk about the fact that I wore a green beret in South East Asia. So that was a lot of, if you will holding in.

Priscilla: I think it is a feeling of inadequacy. You are the tip of the spear. You are you know the 1% of America and when you go from being in that top 1% to being just the average Joe I think a lot of people struggle with that.

Marie: I don’t want to be sitting there, I don’t want to deal with this, that, or the other thing of the job because nothing can compare to being a SAW gunner in the middle of combat. I mean it just...there is nothing that can compare to that I think in the civilian world.

Jack: I started drinking more, my health started kind of deteriorating which then put me into this downward spiral of you know I then felt anxious about what I could do. I felt like I wasn’t as strong as I was before. I felt like I was changing for the worse.

Kionte: Is where depression kind of kicked in a little bit more for me, where I felt a little not myself. Every morning I would wake up, like wow I am still alive. It is like trying to find that purpose for me.

Jack: I was hitting a critical point to where I was hiding too much. Something almost was going to, something had to give.

Linda: At that moment I realized I needed to get help. I am tired of this and I chose to get help.

Marie: I went to a clinic that was right around the street from an apartment where I lived. They said they have counseling sessions here I’ll go here. I met with them and talked a little bit.

Sam: I think it was just talking about what you were going through and then hearing what they had to say, kind of from the third party that really has no idea about your life or who you really are. I think that’s what helped the most and still does.

Jodie: The growth and the therapy were simultaneous but coming upon my new purpose that was by being more my authentic self and allowing myself to not harbor my thoughts and my feelings and to be more open.



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Kionte: I started to get into like Paralympic camp so that got me out of the room, it kind of started that mindset or that slight change of to where I can still do something with my life. Going to these Paralympic camps I enjoyed being around people and the camaraderie and people found me inspirational and I kind of enjoyed that I was inspiring people.

David: For the younger Vets there's a great life out there with nothing but good things. Anything you want to do you can do. There's a lot of help out there whether you go for additional training, go to a University. You know whether you go learn how to write better or put out fires better or help people as a cop there are a lot of ways you can do that.

Linda: I have a mission and my mission now is very different from the mission while I was active duty. My mission is to save lives of Veterans and so I went back to school, got my psychiatric nurse practitioner and now actually I work at the VA seeking those Veterans that need help.

Priscilla: Connecting with other Veterans really helped me to find that my life's work basically. It feels me with such a passion that I realize this is what I am meant to do. I am meant to share my story with other Veterans and help them connect with one another so that in the end we can be leaders in our communities, we can build each other up.



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