

## Anything's Possible

**Greg:** First deployment was in Iraq. Spent some time in south Baghdad, got shot at very regularly. It was pretty normal at that point to drink, but you combine some of the trauma, losing people and that fear, that constant anxiety. And I think that's when it really turned, for me, dark. I didn't know how to deal with feelings. So I would drink.

So Greg, I was in the army. MOS was 74 Delta and years served was 2004 to 2013. Senior year in high school, I was at just an event for a football game and there was one of those blow up climbing walls. And I was like, "Oh, let me try this out." And it was an army recruiter and we just started talking, and next thing I know I was done at MEPS signing paperwork. My mom and dad were not very happy about that decision, but it turned out to be one of the best decisions I ever made.

So I got out in 2013. It was hard at first. I got divorced. Drinking was a huge part of that. And so all of this anxiety and all of this stuff was just building inside of me. And it took my current partner to be like, "Hey, you have a problem and you need some help." And for whatever reason, I heard it for the first time and was like, okay. It was just like, "Hey, there's a thing called AA, go to this and you can get some help there." And I did, and my life is so much different now. It wasn't easy. You got to do some work and it's all working on yourself. So PTSD, anxiety and depression being diagnosed.

Yeah, so I've done a lot of cognitive behavioral therapy. A lot of it is recognizing and having a lot more self-awareness. Anger's been a huge thing of mine. It's not like a blood pressure thing, but it's just like I can feel like my heart start to go a little faster and having enough awareness to know, "Hey, it's okay." Talking with therapists, talking with my partner, talking with people in recovery, that has really helped me understand that you're allowed to feel these things. It was no longer this big black cloud that was hanging over me. It was something that I can say that yes, this happened, but I'm a better person because of it now.

Therapy has really showed me how to deal with problems. When drinking became such a big deal for me, it was kind of out of the blue. I didn't have the warning signs. And so when I got sober, my sponsor, we were sitting down talking about what I wanted, and I wouldn't have written down the things that I have right now today, almost four years in, because I didn't think any of this would be possible.

Life happens. That's one thing that I've learned being sober is, no matter what, life happens. It's just do I want to deal with it in a bad drinking/drugging way? Or do I want to deal with it with the tools that were laid at my feet that I choose to pick up? I got tired of not living. So it's like what do I do? And to be able to sit down and to talk to someone about that, that saved me.



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