

Support for his spouse helped their family

Jason: I'm Jason, in the Air Force. My current rank is E-6, technical sergeant, soon to put on E-7. I'm looking forward to that. I've been in almost 16 years. It will be 16 in October. Initially, I had only planned on doing four years, but I stayed in. My wife, now my wife, I met her and here we are. Sixteen years later I'm still in.

I went to Qatar, and we staged out of As Sayliyah and that's where I did protective services for the CENTCOM Commander. And we just kind of hopped around all over the place. All over Iraq, some in Afghanistan and then even down the horn of Africa all over the place.

I think with my wife, when she first married me, she had nothing to do with the Air Force, didn't know anything. But she engrossed herself in the world of military, specifically Air Force, and what I did. Maybe my first deployment, she was pregnant with my son. It was different because there was 45 days of training before. And after being in the military for a while she knew enough that if it was going to be 45 days of training before deployment it was going to be something pretty serious.

Anytime one of our guys got hit by an IED or something like that she would hear about it and know right away. I think maybe that's where some of the anxiety started building up with her. Her thinking that I wasn't going to make it back. I think that's when the problems started happening. She started worrying a lot. And she sought a psychiatrist.

It was helpful to know that while I was deployed my wife was seeking help because I couldn't be there for her. I had maybe five or ten minutes a day that I could talk to her on the phone. We had email, but that's not the same. So, knowing that she was talking about it and discussing it with somebody, it made me feel better because she was actually being proactive about the situation and trying to take care of it. It opened up a dialogue, I would say, for us and it allowed us to talk more to each other specifically about what was going on and why she was having the panic attacks.

Just be aware that your family is back home if you're deployed. And there's a potential for some problems to arise just because you're not there. There's a void when you're gone, and they miss you. And they're concerned about you. My son, he went into, he did the handwashing thing. He was nervous about my deployment and me being gone. And he would start washing his hands a lot. And that was one of the main reasons why we sought help for him.

I think you just need to take care of your family and your loved ones, so seek out the help.



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