

New stressors can bring back old memories

Mike: My family was great, I had a really fantastic support system. But there's always going to be a little bit of a schism there because they're going through their own ordeal while you're away, and you're going through, obviously, what you're going through while you're there.

And so the separation can create a little bit of tension there. There were definitely times, you know, where I would say to a family member, "Hey, you're just not hearing what I'm saying," or they might say that same thing to me, because they had something big going on back at home here, but that's all kind of nebulous, when you're lying in Iraq over there.

But I'll tell you, there's things that happen after you get back to... family-wise, that... I've been home from Al-Taqaddum. We got home in the fall of 2009 and during both my tours during my entire enlistment, my father was a real big influence in my life, a huge support system for me. And he just recently passed away after a pretty difficult stint with some cardiac issues. And I find now that things about Iraq are paralleling my feelings about what happened there.

And so I think that there's subsequent things that can happen, even after you get back, even after you get out, that these past bad feelings about things that happened, other life instances can trigger those bad feelings again.



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