

Tim found the help he needed to get his life back

Tim: I was in the United States Army. I was a PFC when I left and I served in OIF from '05 to '06. I was 24, I had a kid, and I was newly married and I felt like it was the right time to try to man up and doing something good with my life.

When I came home things had changed. Things had changed in my relationship with my wife. I was not the same person. I felt like I didn't fit in anymore. It was like they wanted us to have a light switch. You go over there, you're supposed to be this one person, and then when you step off the plane you're supposed to turn that light switch off and be the person you were before you left. It was nearly impossible.

There were times when you're just driving down the road and all of the sudden you see something in the broken up patch of road and then, it does send you back. It puts you right back in the Humvee and everything else. You wake up with nightmares. Sometimes you couldn't even sleep. Loud noises would scare you. You know, the thoughts were running rampant and it got the best of me at times.

When I came home everybody was a stranger. I could not talk to many people. I secluded myself for nearly a year where I never went out of the house, I never dealt with anything, and I tried to stay away. My family would tell me constantly that I needed help. I spent several times in the hospital with suicidal attempts and stuff like that. It just took one day for me to say, "You know what, I need the help and I'm tired of living like this."

I had started going to the VA before and then as things started going downhill for me I decided at that time that I didn't want to go anymore. That was when I got into that year of depression and when I decided to pull myself out, I went to the VA and I said "I want help and I want help in any avenue I can get it." We ran a lot of tests, we tried to figure out exactly what was going on with me and we enrolled into a very important program, the DBT program, and it has helped me tremendously.

They give us the tools to actually combat the feelings we have. I have been in it since November. Since November I have basically done a 180. You know, that's the coolest thing about this group. When you're in there, if another Veteran is talking about something, nine times out of ten the other Veterans in the room are shaking their head like they know what they're going through.

There's a bond there. We will always be brothers or sisters, but there's a bond there especially when you're going through the low times as well, knowing somebody is there with you. That's the greatest feeling in the world. To know that you're not alone, that they're not alone. You're all in this together.



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