

Discovering ways to communicate and open up

Brenda: My name is Brenda. My husband is a former Veteran, Combat Unit. We met actually in Bradleys when he was in high school. Shortly thereafter, got married and had one of our three children. He was in the National Guard at that time.

The issue I had with him being away was just being by myself with my children; not knowing where he was, whether he was safe or not, not being able to talk to him all the time which is something I did, we spent most of our time together. He's my best friend as well as my spouse.

Him coming home was very strange. He was kind of standoffish and not as talkative as he was before. It was more apparent, the anger that was there and me as a civilian just assumed that it's because of things he's seen and he's seen his friends die right in front of him because of whether be an insurgent or an IED.

It is very important to know the whole aspect of their deployment; what they go through. It's good for them to be able to have somebody to talk to about what they've seen and how they coped with it. He sees a therapist for depression that he suffers and I think it makes it easier for him to talk to me about stuff he's having issues with.

He's a lot more calm, open to talk, shows more emotion whereas before he was very closed off and didn't feel that he could cry because he was a man and didn't really talk about it a whole lot. He actually talks to my kids about his depression and doesn't hold anything back as far as that. We're a lot closer and we consider ourselves to be each other's support that if there needs to be something to talk about, we can just sit and do that. We go out almost every weekend and do something, just us, so that we have that time.

The best thing you can do is be open to experiences that they may have had while deployed; be there for them to sit and chat, and help them if they need to get that help. Direct them in the right direction.



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