

Professional treatment teaches positive coping

Craig: My name is Craig. I served in the US Navy from the beginning of 68 to the end of 69. I was stationed at San Diego at Miramar Air Station. I did aircraft maintenance, clerical. Our squadron was VF24 which work with the USS Enterprise. Part of being in San Diego with the group that I ran with, liked to smoke pot a lot and it was too heavily penalized around that. So, basically we were kind of black balled and blacklist.

Getting out of the Navy, I got the the third degree from my parents. They wanted me to stay in at least the 4 year minimum, and they kind of felt like I let them down. From that point onwards, my life was kind of in a state of flux and went to college with the GI bill and really didn't find anything too interesting. Probably smoking the pot and not finding myself contributed to feelings of alienation and depression. The classic symptoms of lethargy and listlessness, and maybe overindulging in food or something of that nature.

What led me to go to the VA was probably just it was there and the opportunity was there, and I kind of came to terms with it. That going to see a counselor or whatever to get some feedback was not an embarrassing situation for me at all. Even though, it still was stigmatized somewhat.

Well, I've been going to counseling for some time. One doctor counseled for medication. They feel like it will kind of alleviate the situation and they give you medication. The counseling consisted of group counseling sometimes. It kind of brought back memories of being in the service itself because the comradery, and it was consoling to know that I did have other people who could identify with myself, but then you know a lot of people in the group themselves had specific problems with the criminal justice system or alcohol which I've never really had a problem with.

So, I don't know, I found that individual counseling kind of works best for me. Things that were helpful for me in the individual counseling was probably just knowing that you're the master of your own fate and you do have control and you do have some self-esteem and kind of work through your anger, and so I started exercising a lot and working out and taking a little better care of myself but then I came down with a neurological issue with, they think it's ALS or PLS, and I'm being looked out for on that end, but my depressions come back.

I'm taking Prozac and I just, I have good days and bad days. I certainly don't have the extreme low end of depression, and it's pretty well under control now, my depression. So, I mean I use that simple audiology just to kind of be grateful and kind of feel more in tune with life itself. So, yeah I'm doing better.



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