

Resources for a healthy and vital life

Shane: My name's Shane. I was in the Navy for nine and a half years, from '96 or '97 to '06. I was in the Gulf when the USS Cole was bombed. That was interesting and kind of scary. The hardest part about it was we didn't know what we were going to do. Nobody knew exactly what we were—we didn't know if we were going to be steaming South to go assist, if we were going to stay on patrol up North in case something else happened. Nobody knew anything, nobody knew if there was going to be another attack. All I remember is just being a lot more stressed.

Before I got out, the last two boats the Fife and the Ingraham were up here out of Everett so I actually got to spend all my off time with my old friends and with my family and stuff, which was great. It was different. It was just, like, a lot of people hadn't changed any. A lot of people were all the same and I really felt like I had actually gone through significant change in who I was. After I left the Ingraham I had a couple years of shore duty over in Bangor working on submarines at the maintenance facility. That's when you're supposed to be able to have plenty of time off and relax, and yet I was miserable inside and I couldn't figure out why.

I really kind of started looking back over the entire time I was in the Navy and I realized that, that's when I actually went and finally got some help for some depression issues that I think I had been dealing with since—probably since day one that I just never realized. I had an anxiety attack, kind of broke down a little bit, and ended up going into the Naval hospital over in Bremerton and started talking with some of the Psychiatrists and stuff there. At one point, I decided that my own drinking was getting out of control and I went through the VA's alcohol treatment program. It was an outpatient program but that was really good and that was mostly—there was some one-on-one with a Counselor but that was mostly group sessions which were great. Groups like that are really an amazing resource.

I don't see a Psychiatrist all the time, but when I do, I give her a call, set up an appointment when I need to. Right now I've been seeing her again for a little while. Other than that I stay on my meds I get those just through the VA, through my regular doctor. I'm trying to make some changes, I'm trying to make some positive changes for myself and this is definitely part of that process. I highly advise anybody who, for any reason whether it's, you know, depression, alcohol, PTSD, it doesn't matter. Whatever it is, there's a group out there for it and there's probably a Veteran's group out there for it. If you can sit down in a room with other Veterans I guarantee you at least one person in that room has been through the same thing or damn close to it that you've been through, and they'll understand, and they'll listen.



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