PATHS TO RECOVERY FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

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For more information about the SAGA program to help veterans with PTSD see http://www.sift.net/research/health-and-telemedicine/saga

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MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA: PATHS TO RECOVERY

Hello, I'm Dr. Thornton. Please state your name and what brings you to the group today.

I'm Monica. Medical is forcing me to come here.

They said I have PTSD.

John. I'm on limited duty because of my drinking, so they sent me here.

I'm Vanessa. I have to attend because of the court proceedings, after what happened.
MY HUSBAND WOULD GET DRUNK AND BEAT AND RAPE ME.
YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE STUFF UP.
HOW COULD YOU SAY HE RAPED YOU — YOU'RE MARRIED!
HE'S A DECORATED MARINE...
IF YOU PRESS CHARGES, HE'LL GET KICKED OUT OF THE MARINE CORPS.

MY PREVIOUS C.O. ASSAULTED ME DURING DEPLOYMENT.

"I FEEL LIKE IT'S HAPPENING OVER AND OVER."
They attacked me in my bed.

"The one person I told didn’t believe me."

Son, men don’t get raped.

"I can’t function at work, I can’t make love to my wife, I don’t know what else to do."

Such traumatic experiences can haunt us for a very long time.
Although many people feel as if no one will understand them, many experience similar symptoms.

Anger is a common attempt to maintain control and safety.
AFTER A TRAUMA, SOME PEOPLE FEEL SHAME AND AVOID ENGAGING WITH OTHERS. WHILE AVOIDANCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS MAY PROVIDE TEMPORARY RELIEF, IN THE LONG TERM IT CAN INCREASE SHAME.

DADDY, COME PLAY WITH ME.

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH FLASHBACKS FROM YOUR PAST.

NOW RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU OFTEN WORRY ABOUT TERRIBLE CATASTROPHES WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE.
AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT, MANY PEOPLE MIGHT FEEL STUCK IN THEIR PAST OR WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE.

MINDFULNESS IS NOTICING THE PRESENT MOMENT, REALIZING THAT IN THIS VERY MOMENT YOU ARE SAFE.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO PRACTICE, SUCH AS FOCUSING ON YOUR BREATHING OR NOTICING THE SENSATION IN YOUR FEET, YOUR ARMS, OR YOUR CHEST.

“NOTICE WHERE YOUR FEET ARE AT THIS MOMENT.”

MINDFULNESS CAN HELP REDUCE SOME PTSD SYMPTOMS BY HELPING PEOPLE STAY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT RATHER THAN BE CONTROLLED BY THEIR PAST.

CONNECTING WITH OUR CORE VALUES AND BECOMING OUR OWN KINDS OF SUPERHEROES CAN ALLOW US TO REGAIN OUR SENSE OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE.

GROCERY

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS WORKSHOP
Sometimes people might say something that seems insensitive...

How much longer will you feel this way?

...not because they don't care, but because they don't know how to help.

Recovery does take time.

Setbacks are normal along the way and there is no time limit on recovery.
There are many paths to recovery; you can look for your own way.

Core values

Self compassion

Mindfulness

Recovery takes time, and you can get there.

What would really help me right now is if we talked about some of my options.

If you need additional support, see a mental health professional or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.HOPE