

NICK MORRISON



Nick Morrison's Humvee was hit by improvised explosive devices on two separate occasions while he was deployed to Iraq with the U.S. Marine Corps. But it was a vehicle he wasn't in that is responsible for the severity of his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and survivor's guilt. He was just 500 meters behind that vehicle when it was blown to pieces, killing four of the occupants. He and his unit then faced the grim task of collecting the dead and cleaning up the debris.

"On any other given day, I should have been in that vehicle," Nick says. "That was a really hard thing for me to wrap my mind around — I felt like I cheated death and that I needed to pay for it or it was going to catch up with me. I felt guilty that I came home and they did not."

Nick's experience overseas was plagued by an enemy he could not see. When he came home, he felt like he was still looking for the enemy. "Eventually, I think I made people at home the enemy," Nick says. "I made strangers on the street the enemy, I made my friends the enemy, and then my family."

As his PTSD symptoms became more severe, his life began to unravel. Unchecked emotions led to uncontrolled crying and emotional outbursts. He couldn't sleep and was drinking heavily. He isolated himself and, at times, stopped speaking.

For the next fifteen years, Nick received various types of mental health therapy, but he credits treatment he received through the Wounded Warrior Project® Warrior Care Network® with providing the help he needed to get his life back. The three-week, intensive outpatient program gave Nick the information and opportunity to start developing new habits while participating in group sessions with other warriors.

"We are indoctrinated within this military culture," Nick says. "We get rewarded together. We get punished together. We got to deploy together and we come home together, hopefully. So, why not heal together?"

Today, Nick draws on his own personal experiences to be a mentor for other warriors. "I know how hard this journey has been for me and I know there are others out there going through the same things who may give up," Nick says. "I feel a compulsion and a drive to help other veterans figure out the things I have slowly learned so they, too, can begin to heal."

.....
"THANKS TO YOU, I HAVE A CHANCE TO BE THERE FOR MY FELLOW WARRIORS, LISTEN TO THEIR STRUGGLES, AND HELP THEM HEAL."
.....

