

# 'He Showed Me It's OK to Hurt'

## **With the assistance of a VFW Accredited Department Service Officer, Marine Corps veteran Erik Myers received a disability rating of 90% and learned how to navigate the VA system**

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Veteran Erik Myers, 44, retired from the military in 2019 after 21 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. Today, he lives in Wichita, Kansas, with his family.

While serving, Myers survived several traumatic events. As a result, he copes with a Traumatic Brain Injury, Post Traumatic Stress (PTS), musculoskeletal pain and hearing and memory issues.

His family experiences the effects of his service-connected injuries as well.

"My wife needed to learn to work around my issues and help me remember simple tasks, and my child has had to learn what PTS is," Myers explained.

He feels fortunate to have been introduced to VFW Accredited Department Service Officer Todd Schroeder through mutual friends.

"I was lucky. Todd has helped me beyond words, and I wouldn't be where I am as a retired combat veteran without him," Myers said. "He showed me it's OK to hurt and to seek help for myself and my family."

With Schroeder's assistance, Myers received a disability rating of 90% and learned how to navigate the VA system. Myers encourages other veterans to find similar support.

He also stresses how important it is that veterans take the time to understand how their service affected them. For Myers, it was a combination of outside assistance and self-work that helped him come to terms with the past and embrace this new phase of life.

"Todd helped me move away from the Marine Corps and settle into the world of

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retirement,” he said. “Todd is the type of person who makes you want to try and do more. I am lucky beyond words for his support.”

[Learn more](#) about the VFW's National Veterans Service (NVS) program.