

To: Combat Veterans Cowboy Up;
 Cc:
 Bcc:
 Subject: My testimony

Hi - My name is Don Dupuis I want to share my story with you about Equine Psycho Therapy @ Combat Vet Cowboy Up that has helped me to make progress in healing from the disorders caused by P. T. S. D. that I unknowingly was afflicted with in Viet Nam Equine or Horse Psycho Therapy has given me more success in readjusting to a fulfilling and productive life than any therapy ive received in the last 9 years My tour in Viet Nam was in 1966 to 1967. For the first time in 43 years I have " HOPE " that I've found the trail out of the Darkness of the Woods. When I came home from Viet Nam in Oct. Of 67 I had a 30 day leave. I cut it short to 15 days because I thought my family and friends at home in Maine all acted strange and odd....

To be honest.....I now know that I was the one who was acting strange and odd.

Some of my odd & inappropriate behaviors were:

Throwing lit cigarettes on shag carpet in living room floor and walking out of living room-- not even aware of what I had just done.

I would light a cigarettes in 3 or 4 rooms at the same time--unaware that I had several cigarettes going at once. My mother and sister would go around putting them out and didn't tell me.

I would be in the middle of a conversation with my parents, brothers and sister and I would just walk away forgetting someone was still talking with me. I had asked my sister in 2001 what was I like when I first came home? She said she didn't even know me I couldn't focus on anything for more then 5 to 10

seconds

I Didn't eat for 3 day when I got home

I could sleep for more then 2 to 3 hours at a time if at all

Now when I meet and talk with Iraqi and other vets--I see many of the same behaviors in them that I experienced when I came home. My continuing long term behaviors such as :Being unfocused; Having a faulty memory; Dreading going to sleep because of repetitive night mares and flashbacks; Waking up tired with no energy , if I did get some sleep; Unexplained anger out bursts.

Alcohol and pot were my answers to cope with the stress from these behaviors and they helped me to get some proper rest and sleep. I learned that returning Vets are generally classified as fighters, flighters or freezers. I am a flightier and a freezers, witch means I learned to disassociate and deny because I couldn't confront or I just would freeze and do nothing.

Since working with John and Angela and the Horses at Combat Vets @Cowboy Up I'm learning to trust more. I have less anger so I do less harm to myself and others. I am beginning to communicate my thoughts--feeling and emotions to my Wife and Others in my life Now... Communication is everything, without proper communication -no other therapy or treatment I've had has been successful in bringing healing to me mentally and physically. No other therapy has been successful in helping to restore my broken life. Unrecognized, a million or more Viet Nam and other combat vets have been damaged or destroyed mentally and physically. Our innocence, dignity and worth were lost or stolen. Our Marriages and Families are broken or destroyed. For many the ability to work and earn a decent living was hindered or an impossibility. Worst of all a million or more Combat Vets have committed suicide because there was no successful help available to give them HOPE

Thru the grace of God my marriage has survived for over 40 years and we have 4 children and 9 grandchildren

Now

thanks to my experience at Combat Vet Cowboy Up, my mental and physical health is in the process of being some what restored. Now I have HOPE for a more fulfilling life. My dignity and self worth are slowly being mended. I Hope and pray that all Combat Vets from Viet Nam and other places of combat in the world will be given the

opportunity and choice to receive the successful therapy I am now getting from John and Angela, and the horses and all supporters of CVCU . I would like to close with these 2 questions? 1 Why wait to provide critical and necessary help to the Men and Women in uniform who serve and defend our People and our Great Nation? 2 Why not help now? Thank you for this chance for me to tell my story which represents many other Combat Vets and their families. I especially want to thank John and Jackie Nash, Angela and all those horses--Bo, Taxi, Rainy and the rest of the herd, also all the supporters of CVCU who make this possible. May God Continue to Bless The U.S.A. and The Men and Women who Defend it.

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