

Be Where Your Feet Are



Rev. Amy Miller, 56, of Kings Mills, served all over the world in the United States Air Force Chaplaincy Corps. Through her service she encountered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Though she was not officially diagnosed in the military because she was on flight status, Amy received counseling for a couple of years and was doing fine.

Amy's last PTSD event associated with her service in the Air Force was in 1996, until two years ago when an event in her neighborhood threw her into a new PTSD event. Unfortunately, at that time, Amy was home by herself, as her spouse was away at school for veterinary medicine and her children were participating in post graduate schooling. As she was on her own, her coping mechanism took her back to a war time situation and she began sleeping in a tent outside of her home. When her family was finally able to observe what was going on, the question was "Where are you going to get help?" Whether it was voluntary or involuntary.

She chose Lindner Center of HOPE. Amy's spouse had previously worked for Duke Energy and HGC Construction and had been on the project to build Lindner Center of HOPE. Amy actually remembered coming to eat lunch at the project site years ago.

After a conversation with Lindner Center of HOPE's Access and Referral Center(ARC), Amy came in for an intake appointment. "They were so kind and spent 2.5 to 3 hours with me."

After an assessment, Amy decided to follow the recommendation of the staff and utilize the Rapid Access Service (RAS). RAS offers swift access to an outpatient appointment with a psychiatrist and next steps recommendations. The ARC staff member followed up with Amy to make sure she was intending to follow through with the RAS appointment. "I felt her care and concern."

Gima Albers, MSW, LSW, the RAS social worker, went over everything with Amy at the start of her appointment. Amy conveyed that her priorities were safety and proper diagnosis.

Dr. Nelson Rodriguez, MD, FAPA, staff psychiatrist, was able to confirm Amy's safety and a diagnosis of PTSD with paranoia and recommend Lindner Center of HOPE's Mindful Transitions Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP). Dr. Rodriguez also prescribed medications. Amy had not been on medications before, but with a thorough explanation, she felt good about it.

Though there was initially a wait list for PHP, Amy was able to get in sooner than originally indicated. Everything had fallen into place. Except, two days into PHP, Amy experienced another traumatic event with a neighbor. Thankfully she had her list of resources to contact and was able to manage the situation without hospitalization.

The content of the PHP programming ended up really addressing the most recent event. "The staff was there to help everyone in that room. They saved my life."

Amy felt a genuine concern from the staff for all of the individuals in the program if they wanted to accept it.

Amy recommends embracing the program as the staff gives it to you. "If you leave it all on the floor, you can walk out of there in a positive way. In my experience, I did not want to miss a day."

Amy said she learned the skills of being present. "Be where your feet are. I was a soldier, but that's not who I am. Right now I should focus on being where I am. If I can be present, I can conquer the world."

PHP also gave Amy the knowledge to keep asking questions. "To make sure what you see and hear is there."

In addition to the core content of PHP, Amy saw Pastor Valerie Martin for about 30 minutes several days during lunch time. She was instrumental in guiding her back to reading daily scripture and she gave Amy clarity of thought and understanding of some very traumatic events. Amy saw this as an extension of what the PHP program had to offer and followed up with take home reading material for continued study.



Amy believes that her military mind trained her to have a "quick mind", but in civilian life this can become an issue at times when the time is not taken to slow down and try to ask questions before leaping to a conclusion.

To keep skills learned in PHP fresh, Amy is reviewing the program content on a regular basis and has also now engaged in Radically Open Dialectical Behavior Therapy (RO-DBT).

Amy said when she first walked into the intake assessment at LCOH, she did not think she would be walking right back out. She was happy to learn of the options available in treatment.

"I stayed in class the whole time and got what I needed. If you lean into it, you get out of it what you put into it."

The military was certainly the most honorable thing I have ever done for others.

Getting help from Lindner Center of HOPE has been the most important thing I have ever done for myself.

Call for appointments:

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