

NEVER WALK ALONE

PART 1



As

Suicide Prevention Month comes to a close, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has said preventing military suicides will remain one of the Defense Department's highest priorities.

"As we observe Suicide Prevention Month," he said in a message to the department's workforce, "we must rededicate ourselves to actively working not only every month, but every day to fulfill our collective responsibility to watch out for each other and take care of each other."

This is the first article in a four-part series about a Navy petty officer who came close to taking his own life but did not do so, thanks to the intervention of his leadership and the use of support networks, and how he continues to brave his battle with alcoholism and depression.

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Thompson, a mass communication specialist, is an instructor at a joint command in Maryland. He began his journey in Detroit as the child of a mother and stepfather who were drug users. He suffered physical and emotional trauma, he said, and his mother repeatedly told him he was a liar and a cheater, that he was stupid, and that life was only going to get worse.

Because of this, Thompson said he first thought of suicide when he was eight years old, and he attempted it when he was nine.

While living with his mother could be challenging, Thompson said his father

fought for custody and was a positive influence in his life.

"My father was and remains my best friend," he said. "Unfortunately, given Michigan's legal processes at the time and my mother and stepfather's unified efforts, I was terrified to speak out against them, and my father simply could not get any legal recourse.

"Over the course of weekends and holidays," he continued, "my father and I bonded truly as a parent and child should. We continue an excellent dialogue that both nurtures and guides while also being a slapstick comedy show. He's one of four people in my entire family I speak to regularly."

CHOOSING NAVY SERVICE OVER SUICIDE

Thompson said he thought again about suicide at 18, but decided his best way forward was joining the Navy, and he enlisted July 7, 1998. He began his naval career as an undesignated seaman aboard guided missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53), where he became a boatswain's mate and then a quartermaster.

In 2003, he cross-rated into the journalism career field, and then in 2006, the career field merged into the mass communication specialist rating.

“My time in the Navy has been adventurous,” Thompson said. “It has been bittersweet at times. It has been melancholy and lonely at times. My time in the Navy has been marked by tidal shifts of long periods of sustained superior performance and also

intense depression, melancholy, [and] loneliness.”

Senior Chief Petty Officer Misty Hubbard, the Navy element senior enlisted advisor at Thompson’s command, has known him for 11 years. They first served together aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65) in Norfolk, Virginia, when Thompson was a petty officer third class, and as a petty officer first class at the time, she was the lead petty officer of 10 mass communication specialists on the ship. The ship would deploy for six months at a time, and the Sailors would work 12- to 16-hour days.

Hubbard said she can describe Thompson in one word: “phenomenal.”



“He’s always been a phenomenal worker,” she added.

“We used to tease him all the time [that] he was Superman. Anything that needed to be done well and quickly went to him, because he could perform like a champ in a pinch. He did great work under pressure -- really enjoyed tight deadlines, because adrenaline went up in those kinds of circumstances. He was always an incredible worker in that regard. The challenge was he wasn’t very good at letting people know when he was overwhelmed or when he had taken too much on his plate.”

Hubbard noted that when people are deployed, they learn each other’s quirks, and that one of Thompson’s quirks was that he had a bit of a temper and would have little “hiccups.”

“He would have a blow-up but then he would very quickly get control of himself again and pull himself back together,” she said. “And 95 percent of the time, he was No. 1, on fire... just [an] incredible Sailor [and] worker.

“But every three or four months, you could guarantee he was going to do something impulsive and silly and not well thought out that was going to result in him getting in trouble,” she continued. “And he would have to bank on all the great work he had done up until that point to kind of rescue himself from the situation he would get himself in



HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Contact the Military Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255 (option 1)**, visit **www.veteranscrisisline.net**, or text **838255**. It's free, easy and confidential, and trained professionals are there for you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For service members and their family members seeking non-crisis support, call Vets 4 Warriors at **1-855-838-8255** or visit **www.Vets4Warriors.com**.

Support for families of service members who have lost their lives to suicide, contact the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a 24/7 tragedy assistance resource, at **1-800-959-8277**.

More information on suicide awareness and prevention can be found at **www.suicide.navy.mil**.

about once a quarter. You could guarantee that about once a quarter, Thompson was going to do something stupid."

Thompson kept in touch with Hubbard and maintained a protegee and mentor relationship with her. They met back up as instructors at the joint command, and Hubbard continued providing professional development to Thompson and felt responsible for him.

A SERIES OF SETBACKS

In 2012, Hubbard said she started noticing a change in Thompson when the chief petty officer promotion board did not select him.

"Initially, he took it hard, which is not abnormal -and we sat down and talked about what the factors were that prevented him from getting promoted and what we could focus on in the upcoming year to make him more competitive for promotion," said Trent. "In my mind, that's when it started - when he wasn't selected for promotion."

Not long after that, Thompson broke up with his girlfriend; a relationship she said was one of the healthiest she had seen Thompson in since she had known him.

"He didn't get promoted; the relationship ended; those were two big things that happened within a few months' span," she said. "He started oversleeping, showing up unshaven with his uniform not looking its best, and then he missed a duty day. He was behaving out of character. These are the sort of things you see from a junior Sailor who is struggling to adapt to Navy life. This is not what you see all of a sudden from this senior E-6 who's been in the Navy for 14 years.

"It went from a slip every three or four months to a screw-up every other week or every week," she said. "We verbally counseled him and did written counseling to document this stuff to explain to him that these things were going to be factors in his annual performance evaluation. There was just no way around it."

During this time, Thompson, at age 32, had decided he was going to take his life. He said he did not say goodbye to anyone, because he did not want to give away any kind of signs. "I didn't want an intervention," he explained. "I didn't want to cry for help. That wasn't my interest. That wasn't my goal. My goal was to die. I wanted to die."

(This is the first article in a four part series, adapted from DoD News for All Hands Magazine).

NEVER WALK ALONE

PART 2



This

is the second article in a four-part series about a Navy petty officer who came close to taking his own life but did not do so, thanks to the intervention of his leadership and the use of support networks, and how he continues to brave his battle with alcoholism and depression.

Due to emotional and physical abuse as a child, Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Thompson, an instructor at a joint command in Maryland, grew up with suicidal ideations and attempted suicide as early as age 9. He joined the Navy in 1998 and is a mass communication specialist. He has battled with his depression throughout his Navy career.

WARNING SIGNS

His supervisor and mentor of 11 years said he was a superior performer, but would slip up now and again.

“He was always a phenomenal worker,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer Misty Hubbard, the Navy element senior enlisted advisor at the joint command, who has known Thompson for 11 years. “Anything that needed to be done well and quickly went to him, because he could perform like a champ in a pinch. He was always an incredible worker. Ninety-five percent of the time, he was No. 1, on fire... just an incredible Sailor [and] worker. But you could guarantee that about once a quarter, Thompson was going to do something stupid.”

In 2012, while Thompson was working at the same joint command as an instructor, Hubbard said three events in Thompson’s life were the warning signs for her: he wasn’t selected for promotion to chief petty officer, he broke up with his girlfriend, and he missed a duty day.

Another chief, who was an instructor and the drug and alcohol prevention advisor (DAPA) at the joint command in 2012, also noticed signs.

“My first impression of him was that he always displayed himself as an extremely professional, intelligent, charismatic guy, but he started habitually coming to work late,” said Chief Petty Officer Herb Banks, now the leading chief for USS Theodore Roosevelt’s media department. “I knew something was wrong.”

Banks said he pulled Thompson into his office to ask him what was going on and used his training to ask certain questions to make an assessment.

During this time, Thompson, at age 32, had every intention of taking his life.

INTERVENTION

After Banks' conversation with Thompson and after Thompson had missed the duty day, seven Navy chiefs assigned to the joint command discussed during their weekly meeting how best to handle the situation.

"We were hesitant to bring him in, fearing that we didn't want to do anything that could negatively impact his career," he said. "But at the end of the day, us being chiefs, we put our personal feelings to the side, and we did what we had to do. It wasn't an easy conversation to have with each other, let alone with the individual, but when we say, 'Chief up,' we did, and did what we did for the sake of the Sailor. We were going to do whatever we could to keep this guy alive."

"We could have handled it strictly from a discipline standpoint, but we would not have resolved this issue," Hubbard said. "We wouldn't have figured out what was causing him to behave this way if we just handled

-AND HALT!



"...when we say, 'Chief up,' we did, and did what we did for the sake of the Sailor..."

it with paperwork and consequences. So we found a conference room where we could talk with him and not be interrupted."

On Dec. 7, 2012, the seven chiefs sat on one side of a long oval-shaped wooden table and had Thompson report in on the other side to what they had called a professional development board. Thompson called it an intervention.

"I didn't want an intervention; I wanted to die," he said. "I had every intention of saying whatever I had to say to leave that room, because that night, I was going to kill myself."

Hubbard said the setup was intentional, because "Thompson is ridiculously intelligent, and usually the smartest person in the room. One-on-one, he can fool you. If he's talking to two people, he can still do a good job of selling you whatever he thinks you want to hear. But there were seven chiefs in that room..."

BREAKING THROUGH THE WALL

Thompson held his own in the beginning, Hubbard said, and started with apologies and accepting responsibility for his actions, but then the chiefs broke through his wall.

“The end of it happened very quickly,” Hubbard said with tears running down her cheeks. “You could see him starting to get frustrated. One chief asked him, ‘Petty Officer Thompson, is there anything you actually do care about?’ and another chief asked him, ‘Are you thinking about hurting yourself?’

Thompson said he cried and finally admitted he needed help.

“The chiefs gave me my life back, and I’m just now learning how to live it, really live it, with purpose and clarity, possibility and hope,” he said.

“The intervention didn’t save Thompson’s life,” Banks said. “What saved him,” he added, “was his admission that he needed help.”

“I’m thankful that Thompson was courageous enough on the day of that conversation that he had with us chiefs to admit that he really did have a problem,” Banks said. “That is what saved his life. It wasn’t what any of us did. He let his wall down at that moment and said, ‘Yes, I need some help.’ That was one hell of a display of courage, in



my opinion. As sharp as he was, as professional as he was, as smart as he was, and as squared-away as he was on the job, at that moment, he needed to take that wall down and ask for help, and he stepped up. And for that, he will have my respect [forever].”

Thompson agreed. “I saved my life that day,” he said. “I had a ride to Bethesda, and that’s when it really started. I was relieved. There was no reason to lie to myself or anybody else anymore.”

(This is the second article in a four part series, adapted from DoD News for All Hands Magazine.)

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE ?

Contact the Military Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255 (option 1)**, visit www.veteranscrisisline.net, or text **838255**. It’s free, easy and confidential, and trained professionals are there for you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For service members and their family members seeking non-crisis support, call Vets 4 Warriors at **1-855-838-8255** or visit www.Vets4Warriors.com.

Support for families of service members who have lost their lives to suicide, contact the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a 24/7 tragedy assistance resource, at **1-800-959-8277**.

More information on suicide awareness and prevention can be found at www.suicide.navy.mil.

NEVER WALK ALONE

PART 3



This

is the third article in a four-part series about a Navy petty officer who came close to taking his own life but did not do so, thanks to the intervention of his leadership and the use of support networks and his strength and resilience on the road to recovery.

THE JOURNEY TO RECOVERY

After opening up about his struggles and asking for help, two chiefs from Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Thompson's command accompanied him to the hospital at Walter Reed. He filled out his own check-in form for inpatient mental health care.

"At that point, I was relieved, because there was no reason to lie to myself or anybody else anymore," Thompson said.

"Each patient is addressed individually and receives his or her own treatment plan," said Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) Bryan Bacon, chief of inpatient psychiatry at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. "We help them to remember that life is worth living. We start to address some of the core problems or beliefs that have been bothering them or irritating them or bringing them down; and we start connecting thoughts and feelings together so that behaviors can change."

The treatment plans include group and one-on-one therapy, Bacon said. Thompson recalled sitting down in his first

group therapy session, and feeling like he wasn't ready to listen to other peoples' stories.

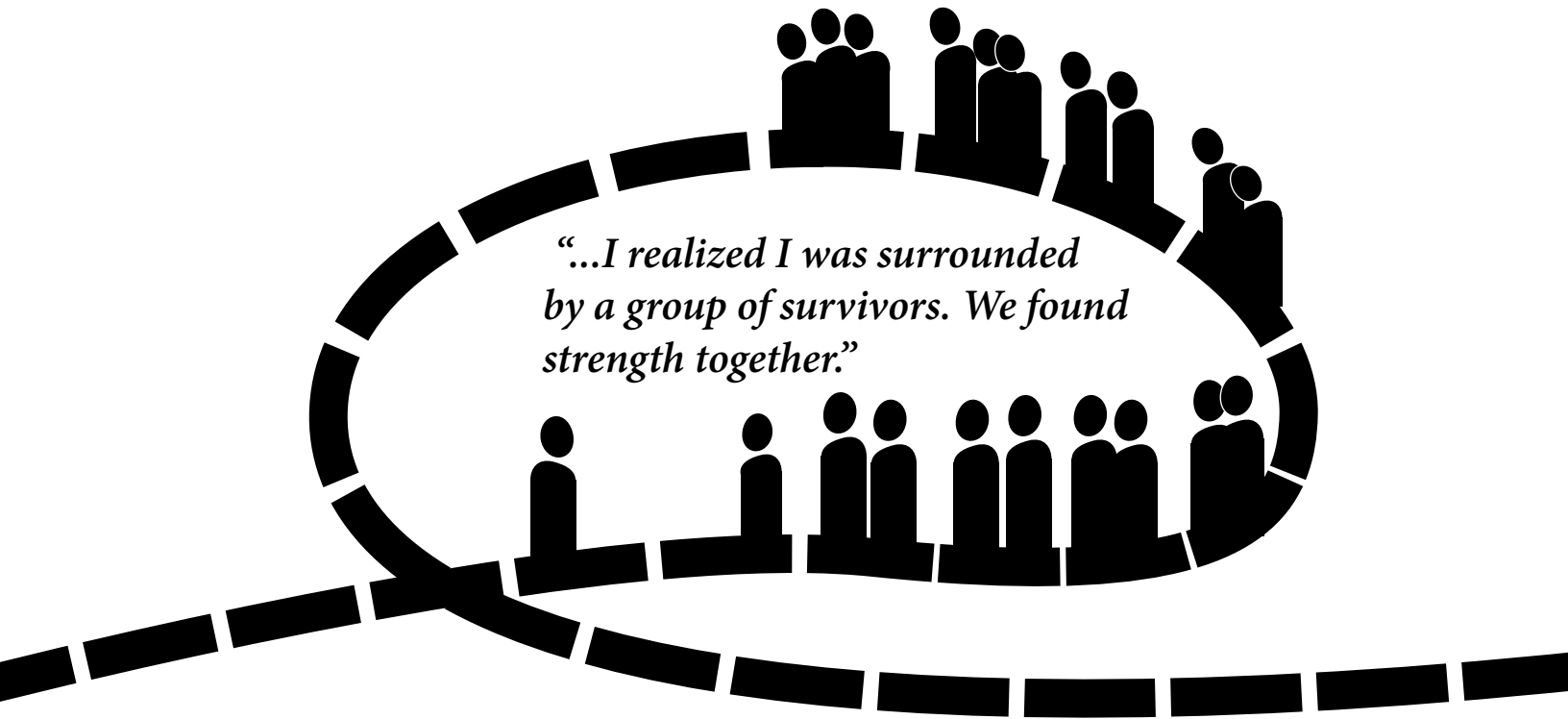
"I was still hurting and wanted to focus on me," he said. "They're not the ones living my life, but what I took away was not the individual stories of those who had also tried to kill themselves. What I took away was that there's a measure of honesty that, once reached, breaks down all barriers. I realized I was surrounded by a group of survivors. We found strength together."

Thompson's next step was one-on-one sessions tailored to his needs.

"After the second [session], I spent the next day in my room crying the whole day...The dam had finally broken. My therapist waited two days before we met again, but then it just got easier and easier to discuss with unabashed honesty what was really bugging me, why I do the things I do and what happened to me."

"I haven't had a suicidal ideation in almost two years. It just doesn't occur to me





*“...I realized I was surrounded
by a group of survivors. We found
strength together.”*

anymore,” Thompson continued with a smile that lit up his face. “The idea of ending my own life was no longer a viable option. My thinking started turning around once I sought help.”

Thompson also received treatment for post-traumatic stress and substance abuse. After some time passed, he began to regain his sense of humor.

“In addition to the breakthrough, I was able to grow a really nice beard,” he said with a quick smile. “I found that, at least for me, if I can make fun of my problems, they lose their teeth and they can’t bite me anymore. I like who I am now. I appreciate who I am now; I never did that before. I can be honest with those around me.”

Thompson said asking for help and admitting his suicidal ideations didn’t negatively affect his career.

“When I admitted I needed help, I wasn’t thinking about my career. I just wanted to live,” he said. “But there have been no negative effects on my military career at all. I volunteered for treatment, self-referred, and I got all the help I needed. I haven’t seen an adverse note on any evaluation since then. There have been no negative repercussions. In fact, quite the opposite -- they’ve been nothing but supportive.”

RECONNECTING DURING RECOVERY

After being released from treatment, Thompson reconnected with his childhood mentor, Barry Davis, a former Army chaplain and McDowell High School history teacher in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Thompson met him as a teenager living in Erie, where he was active in the Air Force Junior ROTC program. His friendship with Davis, and then senior aerospace science instructor, retired Air Force Col. Charles Marriott, continues to this day.

“I lost two twin boys at birth, and Jason became the surrogate son I never had,” Davis said. “He’s provided a lot of support to me, and I take pride in what he does. I carry a picture of him so he’s constantly with me. He became very much a part of my family. I knew there were some difficulties with his family, but he hid it very well.”

“I thank God for the Navy,” Davis continued. “It saved his life. I don’t think he’d be around today [if he hadn’t joined]. When he asked for help, the Navy was there and without that, I have no doubt that we wouldn’t be talking about him today. They saved his life, and I’m

very thankful to God that they were there. When he called me from the hospital, the first thing I said to him was, 'I'm very proud of you, that you took this step, and I love you. I will always love you, and I will be here for you when you get out and we will go on.' And we both cried."

Marriott, a longtime friend and mentor to Thompson, said Air Force Junior ROTC was like a family for him. After teaching hundreds of students for more than 22 years, he has only two photos of students behind his desk. One of them is of Thompson.

"Jason was probably the smartest kid I've ever had in ROTC," said Marriott, a former special operations C-141 pilot in Vietnam. "As a young man, you could see he was hiding some problems, but when he was with us, he was open, happy, patting everybody on the back; a big team

player; a leader. He was a vital part of our program. I spent a lot of time with him, talking with him, working with him, listening to him," Marriott continued. "It was fun to watch him grow. He cares about other people, and if he can save one other person, he'll do anything he can to help that person. He was one of the best cadets I ever had. I have a picture of him behind my desk, because I always knew he was going to grow up to be successful. I'm still waiting for his best-selling novel."

Davis and Marriott are just two of the many peers and mentors who support Thompson in his recovery.

"I got phone calls from every continent except Antarctica," Thompson joked. "People I hadn't spoken to in maybe five years called me, wrote me letters. Friends of friends wrote me letters. They rallied around me. I really understood the

impact my life has had on those around me, how I affect those around me, how significant that is. I realized how thin and frail the lines are that connect my existence with others. I have an extraordinary set of friends."

Davis continues to be encouraged by Thompson's progress and optimism. "You don't just walk away from depression and alcoholism," he said. "Every day is the first day. It's your first day of sobriety. It's your first day of realizing how beautiful the world is. With Jason, he's enjoying life. For the first time, he has that purpose. He's always known what he's wanted to do but now he's gotten his chance again. And he wants to share it with people. I'm very proud of him."

(This is the third article in a four part series, adapted from DoD News for All Hands Magazine.)

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Contact the Military Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255 (option 1)**, visit www.veteranscrisisline.net, or text **838255**. It's free, easy and confidential, and trained professionals are there for you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For service members and their family members seeking non-crisis support, call Vets 4 Warriors at **1-855-838-8255** or visit www.Vets4Warriors.com.

Support for families of service members who have lost their lives to suicide, contact the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a 24/7 tragedy assistance resource, at **1-800-959-8277**.

More information on suicide awareness and prevention can be found at www.suicide.navy.mil.



NEVER WALK ALONE

PART 4



This

is the fourth and final article in a four-part series about a Navy petty officer who came close to taking his own life but did not do so, thanks to the intervention of his leadership and the use of support networks-and his strength and resilience on the road to recovery.

RETURNING BACK TO WORK AND HOBBIES

When he came back to work, Jason Thompson's supervisor said he wanted to hit the ground running, but she made him start with baby steps.

"He's getting better," said Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer Misty Hubbard, the Navy element senior enlisted advisor at a joint command in Maryland and Thompson's supervisor. "And he's alive, so I'm happy with that."

As part of his recovery, Thompson channels his energy into hobbies such as woodworking.

"I take old pieces of wood, discarded and reclaimed pieces of wood, and strip them down," he said. "The dents, scratches and flaws in the wood lend the finished product character. It's a great comfort to me to refurbish these old things once abandoned and give them new life. Woodworking requires my full concentration, and it allows me to narrow my focus and be entirely present in that moment."

Thompson has also created a podcast series, showcasing his love for music.

"My show is a way of showcasing those things I appreciate," he said. "My records have been therapy for me. I'm magnetized to record crates, and I spend hours sifting and pouring through them endlessly searching for that next great piece of music that explodes across the acres of my mind and takes my heart strings with it."

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

When Thompson isn't engrossed in his hobbies, he's thinking about his future. He plans on becoming a teacher in his hometown.

"I'd like to go back to Detroit and teach high school in my hometown, because education is the way out. The more people we're putting into college, the fewer people we're sending to prison," Thompson said. "It starts with education and a fearless guy who's been to the bottom, who's now going to pull other people up. I don't want to be rich. I want to make a difference."



His mentors see him eventually writing a bestseller or exhibiting his photography.

“When the Navy put a camera in his hand, and they let him write, he found himself. He found his soul,” said longtime friend and mentor Ret. Army Chaplain Barry Davis. “He found what he was looking for when he got on those ships so long ago. His photographs - they’re beautiful. They’re expressions of what he sees. His writings, podcasts - they’re him. He would make a great teacher. I believe somewhere in Jason, there are five or six really good novels.”

Thompson has also received significant support and encouragement for sharing his story.

“If he comes away with saving one person, then everything he’s gone through is worth it,” Davis said. “It takes a lot for anyone to get up and say they’re wounded...I’m proud of him. I see how he finds ways to cope instead of drinking, whether it’s making something out of wood, taking photos or writing,” he continued. “These are positive ways of coping. There is help out there, and Jason Thompson is an example that you can get the help if you want it.”

THERAPISTS
FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER
COUNSELORS
VETERANS CRISIS LINE
CHAPLAIN



IT'S OKAY TO SPEAK UP WHEN YOU'RE DOWN

Thompson credits his peers, supervisors, mentors and support groups with his positive recovery efforts.

“The recovery steps help put together the pieces of a life that was very close to being destroyed,” he said. “My sponsor is incredibly close to me, and my chain of command is nothing short of remarkable. I can reach out to anybody at any time with no fear, with no stigma, with no worry about perception. In fact, I’ve been praised for my honesty about how I feel because I’ve found that the more often I tell my story, it gives others permission to share as well.”

His friends have learned a lot while accompanying Thompson on his journey to recovery as well. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Wood Paschall, one of Thompson’s friends (and loyal Podcast follower) recognizes that anyone can be susceptible to the negative effects of stress. “No one is immune,” he said. “It doesn’t matter how strong you are, how smart you are...what rank you are. You could be an admiral or a private-it doesn’t matter. We all

have things [we] struggle with.”

Paschall encourages his fellow service members to reach out to a peer when they’re struggling. “As a military, we stand shoulder to shoulder. We can be hurt in our hearts and our souls. Just look for your friends, look for your shipmates, and look for the people who are there to help...There’s no stigma to it. It’s an injury; it’s a hurt. There’s no reason to carry it; there’s no reason not to get help,” he said.

Thompson advocates the many Defense Department and civilian resources available to anyone who feels they need help. “There are so many outlets and people who are trained to not talk at you but listen to you -- chaplains, fleet and family support center members, counselors, military therapists, civilian therapists, even your best friend -- the ones who are willing to tell you the things you need to hear, not the things you want to hear; the ones who will delay judgment. Those are the ones you need to surround yourself with,” he said. “You never have to walk alone, and I learned that. In this uniform, in this service, you never have to walk alone.”

One resource that Sailors and their families can reach out to when

they don't feel comfortable seeking mental health services is their local Navy chaplain, who is committed to providing compassionate and confidential support.

"It should never be a matter of taking your life, but taking control of your life," said Rear Adm. Margaret Kibben, Chief of Chaplains. "As chaplains, we help people reconnect with their sources for hope. That's really our whole reason for being. We are here to make sure you have some place safe, that sanctuary, to go where you have complete confidentiality to share your concerns or fears when things seem out of your control. You talk, and we'll listen. If you just want to sit and not say anything, we'll remain by your side. And when you're ready, chaplains will help you connect with the right resources and get you the help you need."

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Thompson's mentors and co-workers recommend that Defense Department leadership should show their employees that leadership is on their side, and that it is OK to speak up when you're down. Encouraging open conversation and trust, and staying continuously engaged with personnel, are simple yet essential ways to reduce the negative

"Know your people. That's the most important thing you can do as a leader."

perceptions that become barriers to seeking help.

"Know your people. That's the most important thing you can do as a leader. Whatever rank, whatever service, know your people and know the resources available to them," said Navy Chief Petty Officer Herb

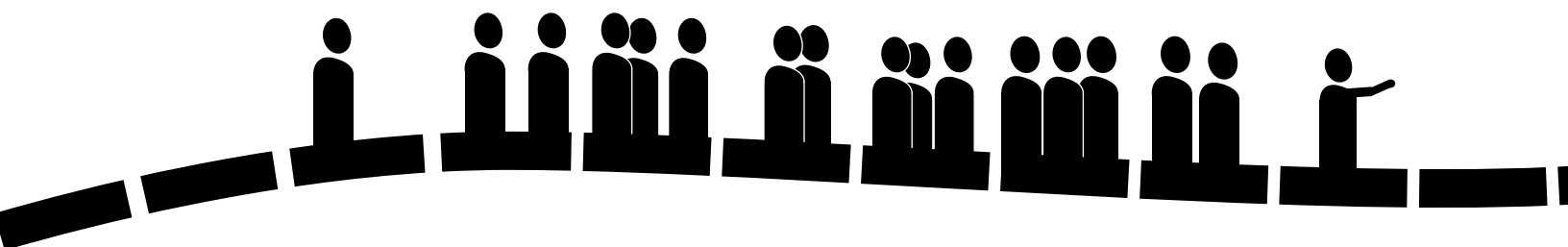
Banks, media department Leading Chief Petty Officer aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt and one of the chiefs instrumental in Thompson's intervention. "Don't accept the immediate answer. They may tell you they're not thinking of hurting themselves, but you may have to dig a little deeper. When Thompson told me that, I could have left it alone, but I didn't. Be willing to go the distance because it's somebody's life we're talking about. You're not talking

about turning in a task. You're talking about someone's life.

If we're going to call ourselves leaders, we

have to be willing to go the distance to save someone's life."

Acknowledging the increasing responsibility leaders now have as they're asked to do more with less, Davis implores them to set the example for their troops. "You cannot say you're taking care of your



men and women underneath you unless you're taking care of yourself," said Davis. "You can't ask them to do the physical fitness test unless you can do it with them. You can't ask them to go to the field or to go into danger unless you're with them. And I don't think you can say to them, 'I'm there for you,' and then turn your back on them if they have an emotional problem," he continued. "Be willing to say, 'Deployments are hard on me and my family as well... We're all here together. Let's be family and take care of each other.' Military leaders need to realize they don't have to be stone or steel -- that they can be people."

Ret. Air Force Col. Charles Marriott, another mentor of Thompson's who provided support throughout his recovery, believes that the sense of community that's embedded within military service is one of the best

protective factors against adversity. As a former special operations C-141 pilot in Vietnam, the military was like his family during his 26 years of service.

"The person who's with you on an aircraft is almost like your brother," said Marriott. "For some children who didn't have family when they were growing up, the military can be that family. There's going to be someone there for you to talk to, someone there to guard their back, to listen to you."

As his support network continues to watch him overcome obstacles and thrive in the face of personal challenges, they know that Jason Thompson is an example that seeking help is a sign of strength.

(This is the fourth article in a four part series, adapted from DoD News for All Hands Magazine.)

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Contact the Military Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255 (option 1)**, visit **www.veteranscrisisline.net**, or text **838255**. It's free, easy and confidential, and trained professionals are there for you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For service members and their family members seeking non-crisis support, call Vets 4 Warriors at **1-855-838-8255** or visit **www.Vets4Warriors.com**.

Support for families of service members who have lost their lives to suicide, contact the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a 24/7 tragedy assistance resource, at **1-800-959-8277**.

More information on suicide awareness and prevention can be found at **www.suicide.navy.mil**.

