

Music Therapy Reminds Veterans “Don’t Be Silent”

Veterans and Music Charities Collaborate to Help Heal

ATLANTA (March 3, 2020) – Samantha had faced nerves before. But this was different.

“It’s scary, actually.

“You are there; you have the microphone in your face.

“I’m afraid because I never put myself out there.”

The Air Force veteran served in Iraq and Korea during her 11-year career. She survived a bombing in her vicinity while in Iraq. It was far enough away to not hurt her, but still close enough to make an impact on the tent she was in.

“I had dust in my hair and stuff like that, and it cut out all communication in there.”

But recording herself singing in front of other people —

“It is very nerve-racking in the audio booth.”

Other veterans experience the same dread.

“I heard one say ‘I was never scared in the military, but I am scared to get in that booth.’”

Jaye Budd led the music workshop over 12 weeks.

“People don’t like to hear their voice recorded, so that’s the first thing you have to get over.

“We work with them first with writing exercises, then shortly thereafter we get into some basic musical concepts, then we’re going to analyze songs.”

For Sam, as she prefers to be called, being part of a group of other wounded veterans learning about the healing powers of music called to her.

“For me personally, music has been a staple helping me get through a lot of the PTSD symptoms I have,” she said. “It’s helping me put a lot of the things that I feel on paper.”

Other veterans who took part in the recent workshop with Alchemy Sky Foundation® and Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) felt the same way.

“Sometimes we don’t have a voice to get it out to anybody,” said Tyrell, an Army veteran. During this music workshop, his second, he served as a mentor to Sam and other warriors.

“I sat down with one of the other guys and I asked him, ‘What direction or lane are you trying to take it?’ I started, and he finished it and worked on it, and we build and worked all the way up.”

While Tyrell helped other veterans, he also helped himself.

“Honestly, this is the first step; I’m still working on the process.”

Jaye sees how the process works.

"In the beginning, a lot of veterans are questioning kind of what they're writing and I don't know if this is any good or important.

"But as the group begins to gel, we all start growing together, getting closer together. Then as we begin to support each other more and more, these lyrics take on a life of their own."

For these warriors, the words did more than tell a story. The words helped narrate a collective recovery.

"It's more of a song that is about the struggles that we go through, and there are other people out there that are encouraging us to seek a different way," Sam said. "It's about PTSD, depression, anxiety, and trying to reach out for help, but you feel as if no one else is there to help you."

Jaye thinks the message will resonate.

They wrote the song, "Don't Be Silent," he said, explaining it further: "Hey, don't isolate; make sure you reach out to people if you're in pain."

The message holds weight, not just among the group of veterans who created it, but for anyone dealing with trauma.

"Everybody has had a say in it, everyone has had input, so in a sense we're all kind of bonding and honestly we're probably all healing through this song – and it is a song we made together," Jaye said.

"It's great; everyone has their own story, everyone has their own vibe," Sam said. "And when you come together, everyone just feeds off each other and feeds off that energy."

Recovery and [help for veterans](#) fueled by collaboration.

"Being able to partner with Wounded Warrior Project is why we are here today," Jaye said.

The collaboration even connected Alchemy Sky Foundation with its producer, Marcus McCreary, an Army veteran who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. Marcus is registered with WWP.

"Wounded Warrior Project has been the main staple in my recovery," Sam said.

"Wounded Warrior Project has been great honestly," Tyrell said. "There were other people that pushed me to come here."

About Wounded Warrior Project

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers – helping them achieve their highest ambition. [Learn more.](#)

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Additional assets available online: [Video \(2\)](#)

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/music-therapy-reminds-veterans-dont-be-silent>