Before Iraq I knew exactly who I was and what I wanted. I could conquer the world. I was so motivated hand happy. I felt amazing and alive.

After Iraq, I don’t know. I’m different. I’m angry and I’m sad. I don’t care until it starts problems. Then I muster up enough anger at myself that I do something big enough to get motivated. I feel like I’m on the road to better for maybe a day – then it’s back to lethargy and depression.

The things I do to try to make myself feel better: rock climb, went through OCS, kayak, snowboarding, hiking alone in Pisgah, 4 wheeling in my Jeep, signing up for big races – but I do those things to pump myself up – to feel “high” and a part of something – but I don’t train or anything – I just do the event or whatever and that’s it – back to bed.

I tried to set service connected PTSD before but I was denied. I didn’t want to have to talk about anything. I saw all of those papers and realized I had to tell my story! It was too much. It’s almost like I’m still in shock. I know it’s over but my body still flinches, my soul is still in a cave and my mind knows that something is wrong but can’t fix it.

I want so much for everything to be normal. I yell at my friends for no reason. I stay to myself. I only trust a few people now – I’m in and out of depression – good days and really bad months. I eat pporly and don’t feel like exercising – I’ve gained weight but can’t make myself do anything about it.

It is so hard to get up and get myself to work. It’s like my body is glied to the bed. I am often late and can’t remember things anymore. I forget the schedule. And I’m the one that makes it. I dream of the Army mixed with other things – like my mom and the place I grew up – Weird dreams. When the air blows just right outside I think I’m in Iraq. The way it smells outside takes me there too. I jump like I have the hiccups when around loud noises. I’m really jumpy when people sneak up on me. I have even been SO startled at work that I ran out of the room and said profanity.

I fought off two dogs the other day. They were attacking my cat. They tore her from my arms and killed her. I shot the male dog between the eyes. It felt like I shot a person, not a dog. Then, I felt like I was back in Iraq, carrying a body when I was dragging this dead dog across a field. FYI – the cops came and I’m not in trouble.

If I was totally weak, I would easily lose my job and be doing drugs – but my friends and family get mad at me. They know somethings wrong but they can’t understand and they get mad at me – so that gives me enough willpower to go to work – and I don’t do drugs at all because my mom does and I’ve seen what happens. I just want to be normal. I have been put on all kinds of medications. I’m not really interested in more medicine unless there’s a wonder drug out there. I really just need – I don’t know – a vacation from life – to decompress, to have someone understand.

The reason I am writing this Monday night is because I know I’m not going to want to talk to some stranger on Thursday – but this is important. This is the chance for me to get the help I need. I can’t even get short term disability insurance due to depression – it’s going to follow me forever. I was discharged 10/6/08 due to PTSD – what if I try to get a Federal job? What happens when people see my record? Something’s gotta give. Please.

It’s now Wednesday. I was pulled over today for speeding. I knew better but was in a fog or something – a mental fog. I was so busy looking for my license/ registration that I didn’t notice the police officer walk up to my window. I nearly jumped in the passenger’s seat because he startled me so badly. This type of thing happens often.

Also – today was one of my many days that I couldn’t seem to get moving. I woke up, made breakfast and took my meds – but then just laid back down and fell asleep. After that – I just kept hitting snooze. I wanted so much to get up – take my dogs for a walk or do something – anything – but I didn’t – I slept and when I finally got up I was late for work. And then I got a speeding ticket.

This problem is interfering with my home life, relationships, work ,family and my physical and cognitive abilities – Please do something to help me.