



For Chris Wolff's high school graduation present, his grandfather took him to visit New York City. Growing up in Southern California, Chris was excited to see Manhattan — and he still remembers the moment he saw the skyline for the first time. It was the evening of September 10, 2001.

The next morning, he and his family watched from Staten Island as the towers were struck by planes and collapsed. Within the month he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force.

Chris was an aircraft mechanic and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan on many occasions. On one deployment, Chris' C-17 aircraft brought back 172 allied forces caskets from Iraq in just four months. As a result of his exposure to the aftermath of war, Chris lives with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Yet after all that happened on his many deployments — including being in an airplane that was hit with a rocket-propelled grenade and almost crashed — it was a normal procedural inevitability that ended Chris' military career. His annual flu shot infected his spinal cord and left him paralyzed.

For months he lay in a hospital bed unable to move on his own. Then, one day, he lifted his left hand a quarter of an inch. "I was proving to everyone and myself that I wasn't dead," Chris says. "From then on, it was progress — inch by inch."

Despite his progress, the drastic changes in Chris' life were taking a toll on him mentally. On top of his PTSD, he was transitioning to a new career — and life in a wheelchair. It was during this time that Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) came into his life.

"Wounded Warrior Project was with me at the moment I was ready to give up on my own life," says Chris. "They basically said, 'Don't think about it. We've got it. Let us take the wheel.'"

One of the ways WWP helped was by introducing Chris to programs like the Adaptive Training Foundation, which gave Chris the training and mindset to make great strides forward in his life.

"In January of 2016, I rolled into the gym in a wheelchair," says Chris. "And at the end of March, I walked out of the gym using forearm crutches. What they did in nine weeks changed my life."

Today, Chris hopes to share his inspirational story with as many warriors as possible, so they realize it's possible to come back from anything — as long as they don't give up.

"Right now, a fellow warrior is where I used to be — in a hospital bed, or on a couch, or in a wheelchair — and he or she thinks life is over," says Chris. "I felt that way, too. And I was wrong. Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) helped me see that. So sign up. Be a part of this and see what this does for your life."

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