

COUNTERSTRAIN CAN HELP

My name is J.F. and I am a disaster. I am 47 years old and live in Fresno, California. I am a husband to the absolute love of my life (Joni) for 27 years and we have four amazing adult children, Anthony 25, Madison 23 Carli 21 and Caitlyn 21. I have been treated by Willy for one year and have seen amazing results with **Counterstrain**. This is my story.

"Do as I say, not as I..."

I grew up in New England (Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts). My parents were very loving and cared for me deeply. At the time I didn't realize why so many people were always coming to the house asking for stuff and paying my Dad... they were drug dealers, alcoholics and addicts. At a very young age, I was exposed to things a kid shouldn't see. Needles, Cocaine, Heroin, Pills and degenerates. I don't have very many childhood memories. However, I remember this night... My parents were throwing one of their typical parties (alcohol, drugs, etc). I was eight years old, I was wearing Empire Strikes Back pajamas, watching Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown, and eating Coco Puffs out of a wooden bowl (waiting for the milk to turn chocolatey). My Mom was in another room with her friend when she began to go crazy. She was screaming and yelling, throwing things and saying unspeakable things. I remember all of my parent's "friends" left in a hurry. The only one who stayed was Karen. She put her hand on my shoulder and said, "Mum's okay, she just doesn't feel well." The next part was and is difficult. My Mom collapsed to the floor directly in front of me. Mom was thrashing on the ground and screaming. Paramedics arrived as well as Police officers. An officer picked me up, I noticed his boots were shiny, all the metal on his uniform was immaculate. He passed me off to my Nana, and said, "You don't need to see this." At eight years old I knew I wanted to be a police officer. I also knew things were going to change, and I needed my brother.

My parents both went to recovery programs and we were without them for quite a while. When my parents got clean, they discovered they had been married to complete strangers. They really tried, but after my Dad was laid off from his job and had to move away, they decided the best thing for them is to separate and eventually divorce. Fast forward, my Mom was with and has been with the same woman since I was in 6th grade. Mary is and has been one of my best friends and role models. My Dad had a couple of failed relationships until he met my "step-monster" haha!! Dorothy. I love Dorothy and she has been fantastic for my Dad. In HS I played sports, dated and joined the US Navy in 1992.

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“ATTENTION!” – Drill Instructors

I served in the US Navy from 1992 -1996 during the Persian Gulf War. I was a fireman in Adak, AK then transferred to San Diego, CA. I was trained to launch and land aircraft on the USS New Orleans LPH-11. While in San Diego I met my wife (Joni). We met at a softball game, then later went to a party, then to Tijuana, Mexico. We were at a club, enjoying ourselves with a group of mutual friends and buckets of Corona. I was returning from the restroom just as Joni was on her way... we both met on a wooden dance floor, and time stood still...

We both grabbed each other and started dancing to "Three Birds" - Bob Marley. Then we kissed. Three months later we got married... 14 months later our son was born. Four months after, I was honorably discharged from the US Navy and I take pride in serving my Country and being a Veteran. My wife, son and I moved to Fresno, CA. In 1996 I began a career as a Correctional Officer in Madera, CA. I worked in Madera for 6 years and we had our first daughter, two years later we were blessed with two more girls (twins). I ran to the urologist!

“Put your hands where I can see em.” – The Cops

I was hired by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in 2002. I have been employed by the CHP for 19 years (March 4, 2022 will be 20 years) and have had amazing jobs within the department. From assisting the farm labor communities throughout the Central Valley to working graveyard shift in one of the busiest Cities in California. During my 19 years I have experienced several critical incidents. I have witnessed and investigated multiple trauma related incidents. In 2010 I realized I was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Silently, I lived with this disorder without quiet grasping the concept or the weight PTSD carried. To be honest, I didn't want to. Invested zero time in researching this disorder, because I felt like it was something Doctors made up like "ADHD" or "Anxiety and Depression." Man, was I wrong...

“You don't know you're hurt, until you're hurting.” – J.F.

Growing up, my Mom had every sickness there was. If there was a flu or cold it seemed like she would talk herself into getting it. There is power incredible power in our words. I may be completely off base with this; however, it was my perception growing up. I suppose this is what shaped my negative attitude toward sickness. I can remember when my wife would get sick in the early years of our marriage. I was very insensitive, to the point of almost uncaring. I have come such a long way from these days, or at least I think I have.

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"Are you happy? I just want you to be happy with your life." – Mary Fisher "Nana"

On June 21, 2009 my Nana (Dad's Mom) passed away from congestive heart failure. At the time of her passing, she lived in Florida. I did not handle this well, not at all. Instead of grieving properly, I went out of town with my wife and our friends for our friend's birthday. I figured getting out of town would help me get my mind off things. We stayed at our friend's family's house and there was not a shortage of beer or liquor. We "pre-flighted" at the house and walked to a local bar where we all had a great time, until we didn't. At the end of the evening I was confronted by a very intoxicated person for intoxicated reasons. As this individual was an inch away from my face and yelling obscenities, I noticed two larger gentlemen blocking an exit door to the balcony, who were in front of me. To my left I noticed two additional large gentlemen blocking the front door.

"This guy wants to fight me, like 30's style boxing." – Adam Sandler

I informed this person I did not wish to engage in a physical altercation and stepped to my left as to walk around him and leave the facility in one piece. As I did this, the fella must've tried to block me from leaving and lost his footing. When this happened, my body naturally went into protection mode. I grabbed him and head-butted him in the face. I don't really know what happened after that. What I can say is my guardian angel pulled me out of a pile of male testosterone, opened the door for me to leave and I happily obliged. Long story short, I was arrested for drunk in public (because I didn't listen to my wife) and thank goodness the guy and his cronies were all on parole and did not want to press charges of aggravated assault. I learned a lot from this night. I learned who I didn't want to be.

"It only takes one second to ruin everything it has taken you years to build." – J.F.

Let's fast forward. I survived almost losing my Career and worked extremely hard to reverse people's perception of me. I did this by being open and honest with them. Before I knew it, I was back in the good graces of my peers and supervisors, and the black cloud hanging over my head dissipated with traffic.

One of my "careers within a career" as my wife calls it, was being the Public Information Officer for California's Central Valley. I conducted training, public speaking engagements, teen safe driver programs, from bike safety to DUI awareness. I was also able to create and conduct a weekly segment "On Patrol" on one of the largest news channels, Fox 26. I've spoken to thousands of people, live and recorded interviews (television and radio). I did this for five years. During this time, the CHP appreciated my hard work and allowed me to be in "Why I Wear The Badge episode #4" a video produced and filmed by the CHP (on YouTube).

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"I have never been truly injured because I have always played through the pain. What happens when you can't rub dirt on something and keep going? What do you do then?" – J.F.

Just like everything else in life, you have to take the crooked with the straights.....I assisted a woman who was out of gas on a crowded freeway off ramp. As I began pushing her vehicle out of the roadway, I ruptured my achillies tendon. December 2016, I had achillies surgery. I returned to work in April 2017. Needless to say, my yard needed a lot of work, because I had been out of commission for almost four months.

This is when my life changed forever (again)...

On April 12, 2017 I was off work and trimming trees in my yard. As I was on a six-foot ladder, and trimming a tree branch in my backyard, with an extended chainsaw. I had every bit of safety equipment on except for a catcher's mask. I remember my neighbor's RV starting, as I was operating the chainsaw. I woke up 27 hours later in a hospital with my entire face bandaged.

According to my neighbor (who saved my life), I was struck in the face by a tree branch called "The Widomaker." My injuries were severe and almost fatal. My skull was fractured, fractured jaw, eye orbital, upper pallet, broken nose in four places and my nose bone was driven into my skull, missing my brain by a human hair.....My wife never left my side. Over the next four years, I have had four surgeries on my nose and face.

"You don't know you're hurting until you're hurt." – J.F.

I along with my wife and kids have battled additional PTSD / TBI / Anxiety / Depression and suicide. I have attended two PTSD retreats, one for first responders (West Coast Post Trauma Retreat) and one for combat Veterans (Lone Survivor Foundation). I worked with three therapists, one of California's best neurologists, psychologists, psychiatrists and so on... doctor after doctor, appointment after appointment, test after test, ART, ERMG, electricity, etc.....Each appointment I felt so alone and treated like absolute shit... a number ... in constant and incredible pain everyday. ...my face, my nose, the way I looked, anxiety and panic attacks, dealing with intellects with no bedside manner. Crying in my car after every appointment... sitting on my bedroom floor weeping. My wife, never leaving my side. She stood by me and because of her I am here. I had the idealization of suicide. That's when I told my wife I need help.

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"I need help." – Everyone with Courage

After the Lone Survivor Foundation program / retreat, I began writing more, I was able to forgive God, forgive myself and ask for forgiveness from my friends and family. I started yoga, and a new form of physical therapy called **Counterstrain**. I am working on myself constantly, that's not to say I don't have my nightmares or wake up angry and disappointed because I'm still alive. However, I am investing in me, investing in a new J.F..

My life is moving in such a positive direction. My plan is to retire from the CHP in three years and become a motivational speaker (leadership, inspiration, marriage, success). I have discovered a mixture or **Counterstrain**, yoga and therapy have completely caused a 180 in my life. In December of 2020 my Doctor recommended a gentleman who helps Fresno State Athletes with major concussions and recommended Willy.

"Counterstrain changed my life." – J.F.

I met Willy Cherry on Wednesday, February 3, 2021. I was slightly apprehensive about someone touching my head and face, however Willy is an absolute magician. The first session with Willy changed my life. I walked into Willy's office and there were numbers and graphs everywhere. There were pictures of his beautiful family hung on the wall and picture frames which were hung unevenly. Sometimes I think he hung them that way purposefully. I explained why I was there, and Willy got to work. As I laid there looking at the ceiling tiles and a light cover which was made into a cloudy blue sky, I couldn't help but make shapes and see faces in it all. Willy shut my head off! I totally passed out! I woke up and apologized, to which Willy said, "I did that to you." I smiled and called him a warlock. I was in absolute shock! I could not believe I met someone with magic hands. Willy has been able to relieve pain, release pressure in my face and made my head feel lighter. Honestly, I have lived with so much pain for so long, I don't know what it feels like to not be in severe pain. Well, that was until February 3, 2021.

Over 2021 I was treated by Willy 24 times. I had my fifth nose and facial surgery in March of 2021. I returned to Willy as soon as possible and I was amazed at what he was able to do through Counterstrain. Thanks to Willy and Counterstrain, I was able to stop taking Opioids sooner and get back to work faster. I can accept the things I've seen and what I've been through in my life, I can do that in part of Willy and Counterstrain.

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“Counterstrain can help.” – J.F.

If you are a combat Veteran, a First Responder, or a Teacher, Counterstrain can help. If you have been exposed to any sort of trauma and are suffering with PTSD, Counterstrain can help. If you are an athlete and have suffered one concussion or ten concussions, Counterstrain can help. If you are a new parent and are living with postpartum depression, Counterstrain can help. If you suffer from Anxiety and Panic, Counterstrain can help. If you haven't learned anything from what I've written, please take this; Counterstrain can help you. Combined with diet, exercise and therapy, you will feel unstoppable.

“Thank you, Willy and everyone at “The Bridgeback Program.” Whether you know it or not, you saved my life.” – J.F.