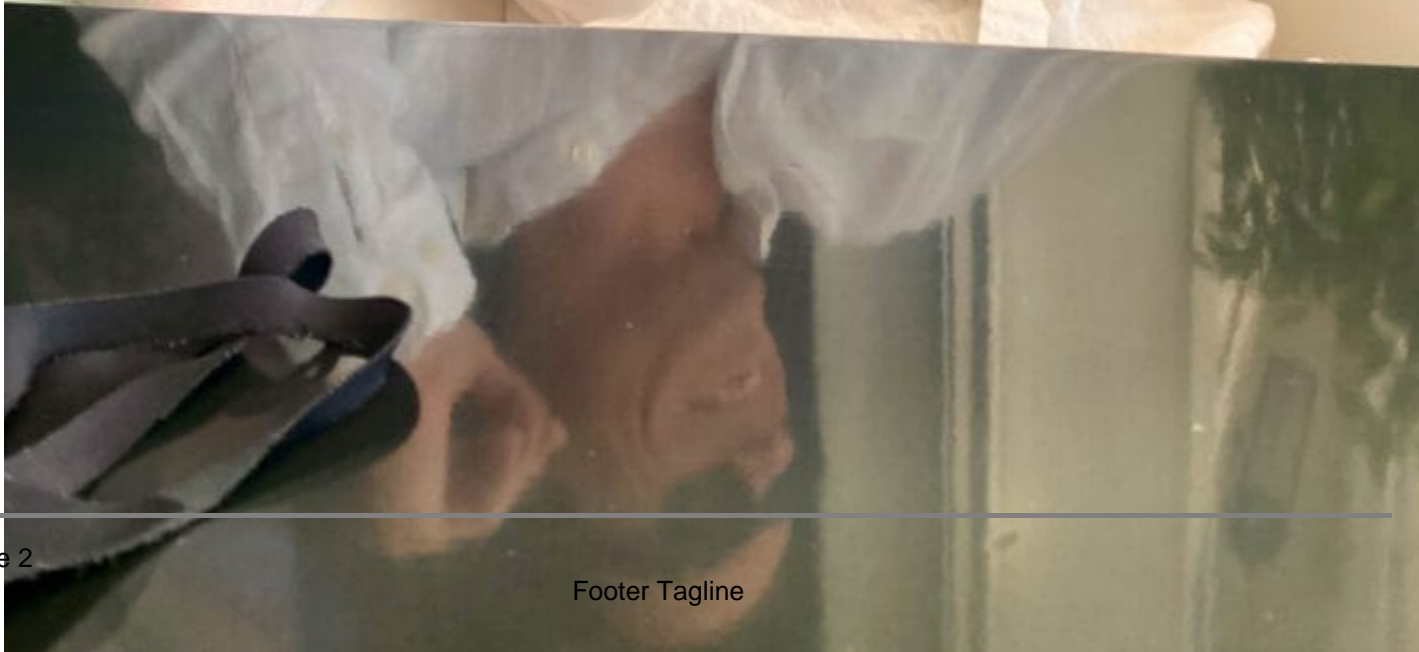




Veterans' Restorative Journeys: Exploring with Wanderers Compass

Description

Ryan had the vision to create a travel blog, hoping to help other disabled veterans experience the life-changing impact of travel. The article by Hannah Scott in The Chicago Journal beautifully portrays Ryan's journey and highlights the healing influence of travel. We felt it was important for us to share this story of a Veterans' Restorative Journey on Wanderers Compass. Our hope is that Ryan's story will inspire and benefit others as much as it did for him. It is a reprint of the original article.



Ryan in Athens, Greece Veteran's Restorative Journey

The original article was published online in [The Chicago Journal](#). It is here in its entirety, and no changes have been made.

By: Hannah Scott

Adjusting to civilian life after military service can be an uphill battle for many veterans, often needing a lot of therapy and support.

But there's an unexpected and thrilling remedy making waves—world travel. This surprising solution is helping veterans uncover new perspectives and reignite their sense of purpose.

For veterans, travel is more than a getaway; it's a recalibrating adventure. The act of scouting new landscapes and immersing themselves in different cultures leads to some massive psychological shifts. It builds adaptability and empathy and forges strong connections to a world beyond their past experiences.

Ryan Slough, a veteran and co-owner of [Wanderers Compass](#), explains, *"Traveling gave me the chance to figure out who I am beyond the uniform. Every new place taught me something different and brought a bit of healing that I just couldn't find in regular everyday life."*

Together with Joelle Machia, whom he first met through Soldiers Angels during one of his deployments, Ryan uses their online travel blog, Wanderers Compass, to promote authentic travel experiences. Based on Ryan's positive experiences, the duo encourages other veterans to see travel as a path to rehabilitation, reintegration, and healing.

Central to their mission is the idea of "restorative travel." This idea strikes a chord with veterans battling PTSD and other service-related traumas. It taps into the familiar military elements of planning, camaraderie, and adrenaline rushes—yet in a safer and more exploratory way. This unique setting allows veterans to step out of their comfort zones, uncover hidden strengths, and uncover new purposes.

Ryan is a living example of this. As a decorated Army Reserve Master Sergeant in a First Sergeant position who has served tours in Afghanistan and other regions, he has faced intense challenges of military life. Battling several disabilities from his deployments, Ryan turned to travel as a means of healing. By exploring new landscapes, he has found a way to cope and build a hopeful future.

Beyond personal growth, travel also provides a vibrant social experience, giving veterans the chance to connect with diverse cultures and people.

These interactions can melt away feelings of isolation and foster a sense of belonging in the broader world. As veterans immerse themselves in different cultures, they can shed their combat identities and embrace a new, global community, enriching their lives with newfound connections and understanding.

Joelle, in this context, shares, *“Watching Ryan dive into different cultures and mingle with people from all walks of life has been nothing short of amazing. He’s sharing meals, swapping stories, and embracing traditions that are so different from his own. It’s been incredible to see how this has helped him heal in ways we never imagined. We’re hoping that by sharing his journey, other veterans might feel inspired to embark on their own transformative adventures.”*

Travel also brings significant physical benefits that enhance veterans’ overall well-being. Activities like hiking, biking, and swimming in new environments not only boost physical health but also support mental health improvements. This healthy lifestyle makes physical activity a natural and enjoyable part of a veteran’s healing journey.

But getting fit is just the beginning. Wandering the globe brings an unexpected bonus: photography. As [Wanderers Compass](#) shows, snapping photos on the go adds an exciting new dimension to the adventure. It breathes life into their stories and helps veterans ground their journey.

For many, photography becomes a powerful way to express themselves and reflect, easing stress and emotional pain. It captures the beauty of new places and the progress of personal healing.

Overall, travel is more than just a trip for veterans; it’s a journey to recovery and self-discovery. Veterans like Ryan show that the world is a vast canvas for healing and hope.

So, whether it’s wandering through the streets of unfamiliar cities, climbing the peaks of towering mountains, or finding solace on quiet shores, travel helps veterans find the peace and purpose that often combat clouds. As platforms like Wanderers Compass advocate for travel as a form of healing, society may approach veteran rehabilitation in a new light.

Published by: Holy Minoza

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Check out [Ryan’s profoundly personal reflection](#) on how travel transformed his life



Ryan at Hadrian's Wall in the United Kingdom Veteran's Restorative Journey

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Author

contactwandererscompass-com