



# Deployment to Iraq

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528<sup>th</sup> Combat Stress Control (CSC)  
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# Life Prior to Deployment



Getting ready to fly to Kuwait (travel is always in the dead of Night)

Wearing gear in 120 degrees



- Working at Walter Reed Army Medical Center
  - Psychiatric Consultation-Liaison Service
- Knowing I would deploy (at some point)
  - Received TCS (temporary change of station) orders
    - Assigned to the 528<sup>TH</sup> CSC (Combat Stress Control) Unit
      - » Fort Bragg, North Carolina



The range in Kuwait

# Deployment to Iraq

- Assigned to FOB Kalsu with 2 Infantry Units
  - 211 Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR), FT Irwin, CA
  - 155 Brigade Combat Team (BCT), Army National Guard, Jackson, MS
- Arrived two days after an IED (improvised explosive device) killed two Company Commanders from the 211 ACR
- Received hand-off from previous CSC unit
  - discussed patients being seen
  - unit cohesion
  - Soldier discipline
  - commanders' concerns



FOB Kalsu Sign



Typical sand storm



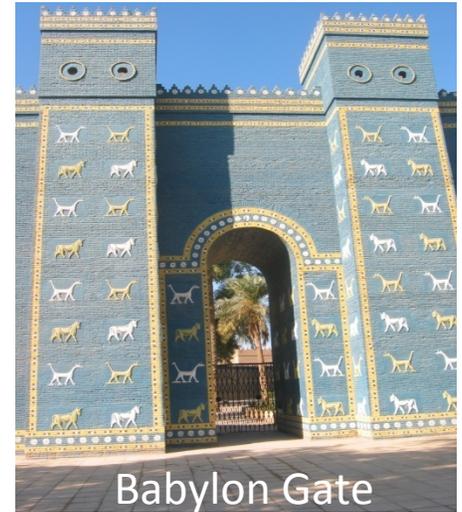
CSC Staff (front to rear)  
SGT Hutsell  
SGT Schwartztrauber  
LTC McLaughlin

**In a bunker after mortar attack  
(note the graffiti)**

# Life During Deployment

## My experience

- Days of the week were the same
  - Worked each day, 10-12 hours (not much else to do)
  - On-call for command issues, mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution
  - Learned lots about your colleagues (the good, bad and ugly) as you were always together
  - Trusted Soldiers with my life
  - Hot, sandy and brown
  - Life goes on at home at a much faster pace than when deployed
- Being one of few females
  - No privacy, port-a-johns, bunked with roommates
  - Could always be found no matter where I was
  - One day a week gave myself a spa treatment (pedicure in a collapsible plastic bucket)
  - Soldiers liked having a female amongst them (brought a softness to the battlefield)



Promotion in a bunker

IED outside the gate



BAS response to IED



Visiting a patrol base



My tent



# Life During Deployment

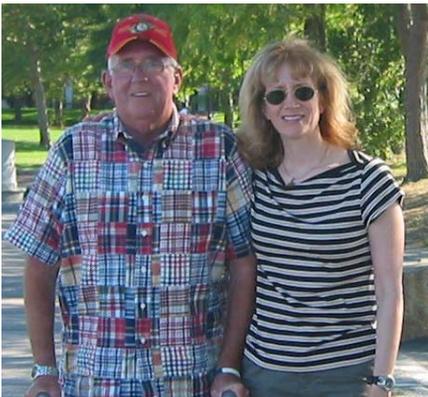
## My experience

- With rank and clinical experience worked autonomously
  - Creative with Soldier tobacco cessation programs
  - Enlisted support from dentist who provided teeth whitening for Soldiers who completed the tobacco cessation program
  - Conducted 50 CEDs (critical event debriefs)
  - Worked closely with unit chaplains when supporting Soldiers
- Soldier Surprises
  - Soldiers will use alcohol, and illicit substances
  - Must remain hyper-vigilant with concerns
  - Will continue to see clinical precursor symptoms for schizophrenia, bipolar, major depression, etc. while deployed
  - Soldiers are resilient, at the end of my tour, Soldiers were conducting the CEDs and did a great job

# Life After Deployment

## My experience

- Takes time to readjust
  - Forgot how to multi-task
  - Slept more soundly
  - Talking about deployment
    - Private experience shared by few
    - Where do you start?
- Feel you can handle anything



My dad and me



Visited Tracey Taylor in Baghdad



Little ones grow