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Edward Johnson

Edward Johnson is a man who throughout his time in the Army and after has continued to stay strong. With a bold yet humorous personality it's hard to see that he has been through some extreme situations. Starting his military life, he signed up at the age of 19 into the Army. Later Johnson end up in Vietnam serving his country and survive the cruel reality of war. After his time in the Army, he would go on living his life with PTSD. Through everything he experienced in his life, Johnson is an extraordinary man for his ability to prevail, his patriotism, and his unscathed charm.

In 1967, Edward Johnson joined the Army from the city of Burbank at the age of 19 after dropping out of high school. Not wanting to be drafted Johnson volunteered into the Army and hoped that for volunteering he would be able to choose where he would serve. Johnson volunteered into Army believing it was the best branch for him as he it as the fastest, easiest way to get out and serve his country. Johnson's training started at Fort Ord for boot camp, then Fort Knox, Kentucky for his Recon Scout Mechanized Training. Trained to use an M14 rifle he would later find himself using an M16 in combat. On top his training for the M14 and M16, Johnson was also trained to use a .50 cal machine gun, M16, M60, M79 grenade launcher, and a flame thrower. Then after a six day leave with a two days travel and four days at home, Johnson would immediately get sent to Vietnam. Johnson joined the Army leaving his family behind but

never got a girlfriend before leaving in consideration of not wanting his significant other to be put through the tragedy of what could possibly happen to him.

During Johnson's time in Vietnam, he found himself in some engagements with the enemy forces and even being injured a few times. He was apart of the Recon Scout Mechanized for the 3rd brigade, 25th infantry division. As part of the Recon Scout Mechanized, Johnson drove an M113A1 Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) which he also refers to as a "Track." His home base when arriving was Dầu Tiếng, Vietnam which is just North of Ho Chi Minh City in Southern Vietnam. During his time in Vietnam, Johnson would receive packages from his parents containing small but meaningful items such as newspapers, books, cookies, letters, and magazines. Unfortunately, Johnson's experience in Vietnam wasn't all easy as on December 26, 1967, at the age of 20, Johnson faced losing a buddy. While walking mine flank security, Johnson's buddy, an 18 year old year who recently got to Vietnam hit a mine with his bayonet which exploded due to being command detonated. After the event, Johnson's Sergeant came by with a bag and had him pick up the remains of his fellow soldier. Then another time, he was injured himself as he was replaced off the .50 cal on the APC by his friend Jim King to take ammo cans outside when an RPG hit the driver's hatch of the APC. The impact had threw Johnson out the back door of the APC into a tree which rendered him unconscious and blew Jim King's leg "like a piece of paper." As he layed there a Sergeant took to a Dust Off pad, which is an Army aeromedical evacuation, where he was picked up by a helicopter and taken to the base camp hospital. Johnson had spent 14 days in the hospital before going back into combat, but later sent back to base camp due to doctors thinking that he was becoming a "nervous wreck" from having a nervous breakdown. Then later he became a CQ runner and a company commander's

driver. At one time while going to the fuel depot for fuel for his Jeep, Johnson was pulled over by the Military Police, during a mortar attack for a speeding ticket. Throughout his time in Vietnam, Johnson made it out without doing drugs, as part of his goal to live a healthy life, with the rank Specialist, and the Purple Heart medal.

After the war in Vietnam Johnson experience many different trials. Not only did he eventually get married three times, but he went through major medical problems such as, suffering from brain damage, PTSD, and depression. He had a hard time adjusting to his life back at home. He took pills for his PTSD, which he suffered from his brain damage, but it didn't work as he unfortunately overdosed and they made him feel like he needed to commit suicide. At one point he had slipped into a coma, in 1976, for eight days where he was taken to the Loma Linda VA hospital after going to visit his mother after he had surgery. Then in 2006 he had developed a blood clot near his liver. Even worse his last wife had ripped open his scrotum and tore out a testicle from there, and because of that he had to go to hospital for it to be sewn back together.. Despite of the injuries and conflicts Johnson recovered and keeps himself occupied by going to car shows, volunteering to help other veterans, and contributing by raising ten thousand dollars for his current city palm Springs, where he is proudly recognized and appreciated for his services.

Overall Johnson was a great success in the Army and still achieves it even now. With all his experiences and knowledge now he is able to share and continue to make a difference in someone's life with all of the hard work and sacrifice. Whether to his old comrades, young adults, or youth Johnson will never let you down. Although he went through major trails Johnson is still ready to help and serve.