In Iraq, this Master Sergeant was severely scarred.

We helped heal his family’s emotional wounds.

Marine Master Sergeant Blaine Scott was traveling with his division when an IED exploded underneath his vehicle, leaving him badly burned over 40% of his body. Three of his comrades also died. Back in the States, the reverberation of the explosion hit his wife and three children hard. Their father, as they knew him, was gone.

Enter Operation Mend-FOCUS. As part of the UCLA Health System and in partnership with the Nathanson Family Resilience Center, the Operation Mend-FOCUS program offers psychological support, guidance and tools for families of those wounded in service to our country. As Master Sergeant Scott’s physical wounds were healing, his wife took point, and together they navigated the rocky terrain on the family’s long road to recovery. With our help, they were able to hear each other’s struggles and share each other’s pain. That can only happen when you have a lot of support. And an abundance of inner strength.

That’s why resilience is in our name. Visit us at http://nfrc.ucla.edu or call (310)794-9000.

UCLA Health | Nathanson Family Resilience Center
A Circle of Care

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That turned out to be the easy part.

Tamara was 16 when she passed out and woke up with someone else’s heart beating inside her. Her family was overjoyed with this lifesaving miracle. But Tamara found herself feeling guilty and unworthy of this precious gift. Her family couldn’t understand how Tamara could feel that way.

The FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress™) team at the UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center was there for them. FOCUS helps families deal with the psychological impact of challenging life events, giving them all kinds of useful tools, like a common emotional language to make it easier to communicate their feelings. Now Tamara has accepted her gift, and her family better understands her. For a second time, hearts are beating stronger.

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A truck shattered Daniel and his family.

We helped bring them back together.

Daniel hated sitting in the back of the SUV. He had just convinced his younger brother, Max, to switch seats when a semi truck slammed into them, badly injuring Max. In the chaos that followed, Daniel was left with strangers as his family was airlifted away.

After an accident, most hospitals don’t address the emotional wounds, but one place does: The UCLA Family STAR (Stress, Trauma And Resilience) Clinic at the Nathanson Family Resilience Center. We gave Daniel’s family a safe place to explore what happened and gave them tools that could lead them from the darkest moment of their life towards a new beginning. They found the strength to heal, both physically and emotionally.

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A four-year-old has a hard time understanding some things.

Like why Daddy is going off to war again.

For the third time in Sara’s young life, her father was being deployed overseas. Mom was anxious about parenting two young children alone. Dad was feeling guilty about leaving his family again. Sara was acting out with more and more tantrums.

They called the FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress™) team at the UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center. Together, they found ways to voice their concerns and deal with challenges as they came. As Sara realized her fears were being heard, the tantrums stopped. Dad and mom had new skills. Sara had the reassurance she needed. Their willingness, and the support they found at FOCUS, gave them the strength to make one of life’s toughest missions a little easier.

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And she realized she was a great one.

When Alicia adopted her daughter’s children, she also adopted a huge challenge. These toddlers suffered from prenatal alcohol exposure, as well as neglect. Alicia realized that she was not coping well with this second chance at motherhood and needed help.

That’s when she entered the SEEDS Program, part of the Nathanson Family Resilience Center. SEEDS stands for Strategies for Enhancing Early Developmental Success, and that’s just what Alicia received. She learned to read and respond more supportively to her grandkids’ emotional cues and be more patient around feeding and bedtime routines. She even learned how to take better care of herself. Now she not only keeps up with her grandkids, but has found joy in the process. We gave her SEEDS. Alicia made them flourish.

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We helped Lisa care for her child.

By helping her care for herself.

Her baby was on the way, and Lisa was depressed and feeling overwhelmed by the coming responsibilities. Her recently passed grandmother had been her main source of emotional support and the person she had turned to for help, since she wasn’t close with her mother.

Lisa came to the Family Development Project, part of the Nathanson Family Resilience Center. We gave her communication tools so she could speak up for herself. She began to regain her confidence and see herself as her grandmother had seen her. Lisa found the best way to ensure the healthy development of her child was to find her own strength. Now her baby is thriving.

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And now they’re learning to listen.

At 15, she had already run away from home once. She started dating an older boy, drinking alcohol, and skipping school. Her parents were furious, telling her she was ruining her life and theirs. Kim told her parents she hated them, and was ready to run away again.

Not knowing where else to turn, Kim and her family came to Project STRIVE, a program of the Nathanson Family Resilience Center. STRIVE teaches families of runaway and homeless youth important skills for communicating, problem solving and conflict negotiation. Now, Kim and her parents understand each other better. They’re talking, and most importantly, they’re listening.

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