

INTRODUCTION

For as long as I can remember, I've been curious to know why people can do what they can do, say what they say, and are who they are. However, I didn't pause and ask some of the same questions about myself throughout my life.

- Why have I done the things I have done...good and bad?
- What am I doing that I should not be doing?
- What am I not doing that I should be doing?
- What was I chasing? What am I chasing?
- Why, why, why?

Thirty years of military service changes a person. It toughens you, tests you, and teaches you lessons you carry far beyond the uniform. Looking back on my journey – from a young Airman in the Air Force to becoming a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army – I can say with certainty that the military has shaped me in incredible ways.

Discipline. The importance of meeting mission. The reality that success depends on all of us, not just one of us. A call to duty that demands honor, integrity, and the Warrior Ethos. The foxhole mentality – where the person next to you matters as much as the mission itself. Respect for others. Courage to overcome fears. Pride in the uniform and what it represents. Esprit de corps and the unbreakable brotherhood that binds service members together.

The lessons I've learned are not only about tactics, operations, or leadership. They are about life itself.

But while I learned much of this in the military, I was also prepared for it long before I ever signed up. I was raised in a family that embodied discipline, respect, faith, hard work, and resilience. The

farm, the “barn gym,” the wrestling mat, the ballfields – those were my first proving grounds. My family, my coaches, and my community planted seeds of resilience that the military would later water and refine.

Though I wore the uniform, my battles weren’t fought on foreign soil or in combat zones. I wasn’t in combat – I sustained and supported the warfighters on the frontlines. But inside, I wrestled with setbacks, divorces, codependency, and an addiction for approval.

The military, in many ways, rescued me. It gave me direction when I was lost. It gave me the structure to rebuild after making mistakes. The road from enlisted Airman to Army officer wasn’t easy. It’s been scarred with detours, collapses, and hard lessons. Every stumble and fall forced me to get back up. Every chapter has made me stronger – stronger than yesterday.

This book is not just for the military veteran. It’s for anyone who’s been knocked down – by life, by circumstances, by failed relationships, or by their own poor decisions. It’s for the man staring into the mirror, wondering if he has purpose. It’s for the woman praying for her husband, children, or herself to come back stronger. It’s for the person who has doubt about their self-worth and value. It’s for the athlete who has had difficulty recovering from a loss. It’s for **every person** that needs a reminder that your story isn’t over.

So, why am I writing this book? Well, I’ve had several family members and friends over the years tell me that I should write one because they say I am one of the most resilient people they’ve ever known. Nonetheless, I’ve held back due to fear and doubt. “Fear” due to not wanting to expose parts of my life to others...and “doubt” due to thinking no one would be interested in my life other than those within my circle of friends and family.

But the real reason I’m writing this book is because God has been nudging me to do it – even in the face of fear, doubt, and that little voice that says, “Who am I to write a book?”

The truth is, no one else has my story but me. And if God gave it to me, then it's not mine to keep – it's mine to share.

My prayer is that as you read these pages, you'll see pieces of your own story in mine. That you'll know you're not alone in your struggles. That you'll believe setbacks don't define you, but they can refine you. And most of all, that you'll be inspired to keep moving forward, and grounded in the hope only God can give.

The purpose is simple: I don't want you to just read my story. I want you to live out the principles inside it. Resilience isn't built by admiring it in someone else – it's built by practicing it yourself.

So, let's get started. This is my story of “Wrestling with Destiny” – of losing, getting back up, failing forward, and discovering that my worth isn't found in performance or perfection, but in God's design. And if you let it, I believe my story can help you discover the same truth for yourself.

Remember – you can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start from right where you are and change the ending.

You were made for more.

You were made for the comeback.

Welcome to my story. May it inspire your own.