

**THE**

**A No-Hack, Practical**

**EVERYDAY**

**Approach to Life**

**WARRIOR**

**MIKE SARRAILLE**

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## Introduction

Who's standing in your way? Despite what people in today's culture of victimhood and entitlement say, very few battles are against external forces or other people. The overwhelming majority of our failures and shortcomings are the result of internal struggles, which means the person looking back at you in the mirror each morning is also the one standing in your way.

Now the question is: are you going to take the easy route by playing the victim...

...or are you going to fight?

## THE EVERYDAY WARRIOR PHILOSOPHY

Everything in life requires work—whether that's your career, physical fitness, relationships, or mental health. This effort feels easy when things run smoothly, but that never lasts. Despite our best intentions, the circumstances of life often derail us from our goals. Very few people are fortunate enough to have been taught the framework or to have developed the discipline required to remain focused when times get tough.

Today's world is under attack by those looking to take advantage of other people's insecurities and busy schedules. Besides taking cover behind the deafening noise and endless bombardment of information that defines our culture, these individuals wield an incredibly potent weapon: false promises.

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# EVERYDAY WARRIOR MINDSET

*The successful warrior is the average man with laser-like focus.*

—BRUCE LEE

ADAM BROWN WAS AN INCREDIBLE PERSON, A GREAT WARRIOR, AND one of the most resilient Navy SEALs I've ever had the privilege to serve alongside. His path to becoming a SEAL wasn't without adversity. Before the military, Adam battled drug addiction and had numerous brushes with the law. Still, he found it within himself to fight through and join the Navy in an attempt to better his life.

After basic training, Adam's focus shifted to becoming a Navy SEAL. He began Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training, the world's most formidable military

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training program with an attrition rate as high as 90%. He demonstrated world-class mental toughness, resiliency, and perseverance to become one of the few to make it through the training and earn the title SEAL. However, Adam's military career was fraught with injuries and adversity.

During a training mishap, he was blinded in the right eye, which disabled his peripheral vision. He worked tirelessly adapting to his new circumstances, teaching himself to shoot using his nondominant eye.

Then in 2005, a convoy accident in Afghanistan left Adam's hand crushed and mangled. Although tragic, it made something very clear: Adam had no quit in him and always found a way to stay in the fight. He faced many hardships in life, and this one was no different. He pushed forward with the recovery while preparing to try out for a highly selective and specialized SEAL team. Despite the odds, Adam once again proved himself by earning a spot, which put him in the top 2% of the entire SEAL community.

While deployed to the Konar Province in 2010, his team conducted a direct action mission to capture/kill a senior Al Qaeda leader in a remote enemy stronghold deep in the Hindu Kush mountains. Once Adam's team surrounded the objective, the outnumbered SEAL and Ranger element began taking automatic weapons fire and rocket-propelled grenades from enemy positions throughout the valley. With the intensity of the firefight increasing, Adam boldly assumed a position that

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more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.”

In other words, if you don't accept your battles and you refuse to defend what is right—whether out of laziness, self-preservation, or lack of confidence—then you relinquish control of your destiny. Life is brutal enough without acquiescing control of it to other people.

When we think of warriors, people like Adam Brown come to mind. We most often hear the word *warrior* used in the context of those willing to sacrifice themselves for others, but the term has a much broader meaning, one that has nothing to do with armed conflict and everything to do with living a virtuous life. Everyday Warriors exist in every profession, culture, and facet of life, from the volunteer serving his community to the single mom selflessly working to provide her children with the life she never had. Unlike the classic warrior, they are not armed or trained in the art of war, yet they wield a powerful weapon: the Everyday Warrior mindset.

## WHAT IS THE WARRIOR MINDSET?

High-performing individuals often use the phrase “mindset is everything.” Your mindset is your attitude toward life and the lens through which you view the world. When challenges

responsible rather than relying on others to do so. Self-discipline is using internal motivations to regulate your behavior rather than depending on external motivations. Having both is how you get shit done and make shit happen.

Those who refuse to hold themselves accountable will never learn from their mistakes. We have a proud tradition in our country of promoting accountability and teaching our children the importance of ownership. These values are the antithesis of the victimhood and entitlement mindsets currently metasizing through our nation.

## Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is the disciplined act of assessing ourselves and our current position in life. It is about giving serious thought to our actions and motives so that we can make the necessary adjustments to become better, more impactful individuals. Reflection requires that we take an honest and objective look at ourselves—our thoughts, feelings, and actions—with an interest and curiosity that allows for growth. After all, we should be our own worst critics.

A common thread among the high performers I've worked with is their reflective nature. They all look back on their successes and failures to extract lessons and grow. For most of them, this process includes journaling. Reflection keeps them focused on their goals and continual improvement.



## FAILURE DOES NOT MEAN LOSING

It may seem strange to talk about failure so early, before we've even really started. But you need to go into this journey prepared for it, because failing is unavoidable. You will fail, which is good since no greater mentor exists. While failure carries a negative connotation, Everyday Warriors understand that success and failure are not the same as winning and losing. Failure is all about learning. The hard lessons learned through failure are some of life's most valuable, and while success builds confidence, failure builds character.

How you handle failure is one of the most significant predictors of success. The Special Operations selection process pushes applicants to the edge of failure to test their response. Some people won't get up after being pushed down five times. That choice may seem insignificant at the time, but it tells instructors all they need to know about someone's mindset. The Special Operations community knows failure is inevitable, so they need people who will get back up a sixth, seventh, and hundredth time as if their life depends on it—because eventually, it will.

I'm thankful for all the times I've failed; those experiences helped me build resiliency and intestinal fortitude. I've never been the strongest, the fastest, the most intelligent, or the most articulate. Instead, I had to work through my failures and strengthen my weaknesses.

## WHOLE PERSON CONCEPT

The whole person concept is a philosophical approach that bases an individual's overall health on the entirety of their being: mental (or emotional), physical, and spiritual.

Connecting mental, spiritual, and physical balance can be traced back through antiquity, from the Greek philosopher Plato's belief that "the body and mind should be cultivated together" to Roman poet Juvenal's maxim "a healthy mind in a healthy body." Greek philosophy defined a well-balanced person as someone who represented physical fitness, mental acuity, and spiritual depth. The celebration of the physical, mental, and spiritual is visible throughout ancient Greek culture, including in their art, the Olympic games, and their polytheistic belief system.

The whole person concept is integral to the Special Operations selection processes and to the intelligence community's ability to complete accurate security clearance assessments.

When recruiting an Army Green Beret or a Navy SEAL, we're not looking for the strongest, smartest, or fastest person. We're looking for someone who can thrive in an environment of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (commonly referred to as a VUCA environment). Decades of research and experience have proven that the most effective operators are those who

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exemplify a balance of mental, physical, and emotional strength. These are the individuals who can regulate stress and consistently perform at the highest levels despite adverse conditions.

This idea of balance applies to Everyday Warriors just as much as it does military warriors. Each of us experiences VUCA environments during our life; if you're wondering whether or not this includes you, it does. On a national scale, we've all faced volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous times, including 9/11, the 2008 financial crisis, and COVID-19. On a personal level, you've undoubtedly gone through other VUCA environments, whether it's divorce, job loss, parenthood, sickness, or any number of challenges.

Your ability to succeed in the face of hardship depends on who you are as an individual. Since being an Everyday Warrior is different than being a warrior in the classic sense, I've made slight adjustments to the whole person framework. Instead of physical, mental, and emotional, I've shifted to physical, mental, and spiritual. I feel these three pillars more closely align with the needs of modern society and will prove the most useful in helping you achieve fulfillment.

### **DIFFICULT BUT NECESSARY: THE BALANCING ACT OF LIFE**

Life is hard—that is a fundamental truth. Full stop. There's no sugarcoating it. One of the biggest challenges we face is *time*.

## THE EVERYDAY WARRIOR

in. We doubt our abilities and fear the unknown, failure, and what others might think. I'll explain how to handle doubt and fear in Chapter 8, "Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable." For now, understand that achieving your goals takes courage. As Mark Twain said, "Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear." Despite your fears, you must act.

Basically, it all comes down to the fact that talk is easy and action isn't. Talking about your goals won't change your life; making real progress requires syncing words and actions.

### WHAT'S YOUR ROADBLOCK?

You may hit different roadblocks while working toward your goals. What's the solution? Well, that depends on the problem you're facing. Here are some solutions to common problems:

- **You're unwilling to put in the hard work:** It's called hard work for a reason—it's HARD! When the honeymoon phase wears off, the reality of just how much work you have sets in. One way to break through this roadblock is to evaluate your commitment early on. Many people set goals they don't care

knowing your objective and setting measurable steps will be nearly impossible. Without a process or framework to gauge and evaluate your success, you're like a rudderless ship at sea, floating in no particular direction.

Achieving your goals will be challenging, but that doesn't mean it's impossible. It just means it's worth working for. Remember how old video game systems had secret codes? You'd press up, down, A, B, left, right and get unlimited lives. Well, there's something like that for aligning your words and actions. Instead of entering a secret code, you follow five simple steps. The best part is that finishing the level is way more fulfilling in real life.

## #1: Set an Intention

Your intention is your goal, but did you know that not all goals are created equal? It's true. SMART goals are objectively better and more likely to be successful. *SMART* is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based.

- **Specific:** It's essential to define your goals with focus and specificity. Decide what success means to you—two people can have the same goal but very different definitions of success. If you want to get in shape, that can mean you want to lose weight, build lean muscle, or increase endurance. Instead, be more specific by saying you want to lose fifteen pounds,

## THE EVERYDAY WARRIOR

It's also important to recognize that journeys are rarely linear. It's easy to stay motivated while making clear, steady progress, but things get complicated when you hit peaks, valleys, and the occasional U-turn. You may move forward five feet, back two, then forward one. Despite the setbacks you experience, the most important thing you can do is stay committed and focused.

Consider Alcoholics Anonymous. To the casual observer, AA's 12-step program appears linear, but speak to those with first-hand knowledge, and you'll quickly learn it's circular. Most people who struggle with addiction do not succeed during their first attempt at recovery, so the program uses incremental steps in concert with a cyclical approach. Like sobriety, success is a never-ending process built on daily choices.

An Everyday Warrior recognizes that the long, winding path is part of the process, and the only way forward is to take one step ATTA time.

## THE ATTA WAY: PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

The foundation of the ATTA Way is the idea that success happens one step ATTA time—a concept that centers on five fundamental principles:

- 1. Prioritize endurance:** Life isn't an Olympic sport, a professional football game, or a championship

Everest, the only way to get where you're going is by taking one step ATTA time.

## **BREAKING FREE FROM INSTANT GRATIFICATION**

A giant obstacle blocking us from fully embracing the effectiveness of the ATTA Way is our desire for instant gratification. The modern world has conditioned us with on-demand entertainment, same-day delivery, and credit cards that allow us to buy what we can't afford. Each time we scroll, eat, play, or shop, we receive a single dose of happiness. These activities cause our brains to release dopamine, the chemical responsible for experiencing joy and pleasure. Social media, entertainment, and shopping platforms invest a lot in the scientific research behind fostering this "need it now" mentality, because our need for instant gratification turns into profits for them. The result is many of us are now addicted to instant gratification.

The "need it now" compulsion can be difficult to break. But, working hard to free yourself is worth it because delaying gratification sustains us in far more significant ways. Giving in to the siren song of instant gratification is easy, but it always comes at a cost. Like a credit card, you get what you want now and pay for it later, with interest. Getting what we want feels great at first, but then the bills pile up, stress increases, and our relationships suffer. Delaying gratification means paying a smaller cost up front in exchange for reaping the long-term rewards.

# GET COMFORTABLE WITH BEING UNCOMFORTABLE

*The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers.*

—M. SCOTT PECK, psychiatrist and author of *The Road Less Traveled*

ON JANUARY 24, 2013, THE U.S. MILITARY ANNOUNCED an end to their Combat Exclusion Policy, which prohibited women from serving on the front lines of combat. While this decision was an optical victory, those in the military knew female soldiers had long served in this capacity. Although



## **Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable**

she refused to quit. After six months, Lisa became the first female Reservist, and one of the first three women in history, to graduate from Ranger School. Lisa is the epitome of what it means to “get comfortable with being uncomfortable.” Her story continues inspiring young women for many reasons, including her incredible resolve, discipline, and bravery. Lieutenant Colonel Jaster continues to serve today and recently completed a tour as a battalion commander.

## **THE VALUE OF DISCOMFORT**

A beautiful life is one in which we never stop learning. Does that mean learning is taking comfort in knowledge? No, it's about choosing continuous growth by intentionally placing yourself in situations outside your comfort zone because avoiding discomfort stunts growth and makes room for complacency.

Stress has historically been misunderstood and viewed in a negative light. While experiencing too much stress can harm our mental and physical well-being, some stress is a necessary part of life. Our society, however, encourages working to eliminate all stress at all costs. But having no stress can be just as harmful as having too much. Stress propels growth, which makes it vital that we redefine it and how we manage it.

Stress is just as necessary to build muscle as rest. Our physical, mental, and spiritual health requires stress to grow, followed

**THE WARRIOR WAY:  
GET SHIT DONE.  
MAKE SHIT HAPPEN.  
DO IT ALL AGAIN  
TOMORROW.**

*Discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most.*

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WHEN JULIANE GALLINA WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD, HER FATHER, a former Manhattan assistant district attorney, was murdered in what newspapers called a “mob-style attack.” Although she didn’t know it, this horrific tragedy would shape her life, mold her character, and factor into her decision to live a life

**The Warrior Way: Get Shit Done. Make Shit Happen. Do It All Again Tomorrow.**

their community—these are also codes. Codes are important to the collective because, without them, society breaks down. They're also crucial for individuals because they create a sense of belonging, help us maintain our principles, and are powerful tools for achieving success.

As Everyday Warriors, we live by a code that's simple to understand, easy to implement, yet challenging to master. It's one that Juliane Gallina, and warriors like her, have instinctively followed without even realizing it. While they may not have been able to put it into words, they certainly felt it—because it's a code that embodies the very willpower, determination, and grit that define the warrior spirit:

*The Warrior Way: Get Shit Done. Make Shit Happen.  
Do It All Again Tomorrow.*

Each part is built upon a different warrior principle:

- 1. Get Shit Done:** We must develop the discipline and accountability to do what it takes to accomplish our goals, even when we don't feel like it. This takes time, dedication, and the commitment to recover from slipups when they happen.
- 2. Make Shit Happen:** We must be ready to seize opportunities without being told—this requires a bias for action. It also means avoiding excuses; if we want something bad enough, we make shit happen.

Tribes are not static; they'll ebb and flow throughout life as you grow and change. For your tribes to remain effective, work to expand them continuously. There are two ways to do this. First, extend yourself into another tribe—the more connections you build, the more relationships you'll have. Second, invite others into your tribe because many people are looking for a tribe, and keeping yourself open to others is one of the best ways to make an impact.

## SERVE THE TRIBE, NOT YOURSELF

Being part of a tribe isn't just about what you get; it's about the value you provide the group. Relationships are two-way streets, and your goal is to be an asset to your tribe. Here are a few key traits to focus on to ensure you're giving more than you're taking:

- **Listen more than you talk:** Paying attention enables you to help the tribe and its members. If you're always talking, it means you're not listening and not bringing value. Your relationships with individual members and your standing within the group will suffer.
- **Provide support:** There is strength in numbers, but only when everyone plays their part. When you recognize where you can help others, don't just say you'll support them—take action. If a member

# TAKE TIME TO REST AND SELF-REFLECT

*Destroy the idea that you have to be constantly working or grinding in order to be successful. Embrace the concept that rest, recovery, and reflection are essential parts of...a successful and ultimately happy life.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN (but whoever said it is a damn genius)

AFTER RETURNING HOME FROM A FOUR-MONTH COMBAT deployment in July 2014, I took command of a highly selective and specialized Army troop as part of the first-ever officer exchange. A month later, we conducted a rapid deployment to Iraq—it was my tenth deployment.

There's an iconic scene in *Legends of the Fall* where Colonel Ludlow, played by Anthony Hopkins, thrusts his sword into the earth and walks away from the military out of

## Take Time to Rest and Self-Reflect

Rest and reflection function as a loop. When you rest, you create space for self-reflection, and when you engage in self-reflection, you identify the need for rest.

Self-reflection is a crucial trait of the warrior mindset. People associate soldiers with action, not reflection, but this is a misconception. Reflection is so integral to Special Operations that we've built it into our process. In fact, you already know how: after action reviews. Following every mission—training or combat, successful or failure—we review what happened. This debriefing period allows us to slow down and assess our approach, hold ourselves accountable, identify strengths and weaknesses, and improve.

As an Everyday Warrior, you should also conduct after action reviews. You've already been practicing these throughout the book, and I hope you continue doing them on your own. While reflection can happen at any time, consider incorporating it during these five key moments:

### **1. When you start a goal or reach a milestone:**

For the best chance of success, start every big goal with a period of reflection. Then, each time you reach a milestone, check back in with yourself to ensure your goals are still reasonable, attainable, and in line with your definition of success. Taking time for self-assessment allows you to adapt to the ever-changing situation on the ground.

# THE EVERYDAY WARRIOR PLEDGE

I PLEDGE TO STRIVE FOR PROGRESS INSTEAD OF PERFECTION, develop a bias for action, and never stop pursuing potential. I commit to a lifelong journey of personal growth and acknowledge that lasting change requires time and consistency—not hacks and shortcuts. I accept that failure is a part of the process and that we learn more from our struggles than our successes. I will fall, but I pledge to always get back up, regroup, and continue moving forward. I will do my best to inspire others through my actions, compassion, and vulnerability—because I am an Everyday Warrior.