Improvise, Adapt, Overcome

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Introduction

Improvise, Adapt, Overcome is a motto of the US Army Special Forces Green Berets. The Green Berets are masters at Unconventional Warfare – looking at situations, people and things and getting results when it seemed impossible.

Whether skiing through the rugged mountains of Europe, assembling guerrilla armies in Iraq, or training paramilitary police to fight drug cartels in Columbia, the Green Berets have come to represent the most adaptable organization available in the United States' military arsenal.

Special Forces has another motto - "De Oppresso Liber," Latin for "To Free the Oppressed." In addition to the combat direct action missions these units perform, Green Berets are trained in languages, culture, diplomacy, psychological warfare, disinformation -- generating and spreading false information -- and politics. Operations can include advising a tribal chief on how to consolidate his power; carrying out a quick strike on a guerrilla outpost in the jungle; and conducting a humanitarian medical mission in support of disaster operations. Green Berets are the quiet professionals of the military who approached their missions with a relentless commitment.

Mike Martel takes his experience as a Green Beret and applies them to situation we face in life and business. These are a collection of his essays.
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No Bull

There is an old story that has been told many ways: A Special Forces team is conducting a training exercise and needs to cross a large farmer's fenced field with a huge bull in it. The team leader goes up to the farmer standing next to the gate and asks him if his bull is dangerous. The farmer answers, “My bull wouldn’t hurt a fly.” The team proceeds to open the gate and start across the field. Not even a quarter way across the field the bull bellows and charges the team head down. The team turns and sprints back to the gate barely escaping the furious, charging bull. The team leader, panting runs up to the farmer and says, "Why did you tell us the bull wasn't dangerous?" "Not my bull," replies the farmer.

While the team made the wrong assumption, the farmer in the story didn't tell the whole answer to the question he knew they were asking.

Right now on both sides of the political spectrum, the amount of half truths and innuendo is staggering. It doesn’t matter which political party it is, both spew virulent talk and when the chickens come home to roost because of it, the answer is, “It wasn’t me.”

In the financial world, CEOs have encouraged their employees to buy company stock, while at the same time they were selling. They just left out that part. Banks took it the other way. They did not ask questions they did not want to hear the answer to: how are you going to pay this back.

This mindset that permeates culture right now provides a great opportunity for us that believe in integrity, honor, truthfulness. It doesn't matter if you are a business owner, an independent entrepreneur or employee. If your word can be trusted, simply trusted, without analysis or caveats you have distinguished yourself from a great majority of your competition. This needs to be part of your unique selling proposition.

The simple reason that people don’t call you back, order your product, promote you, or go out on dates with you is that they don’t trust you, not you specifically but everyone in general. They expect something to be behind the curtain. They expect that you are not telling them something or that you plan to break whatever commitment you have made to them.

You can be different from this. Honor all of your promises. Honor your guarantees, even if they are unspoken. If you make this your brand, you will see a difference in your conversion rate, in your sales, in your move up the corporate ladder. But…I suggest you take it even further. Punish those that don’t honor promises, guarantees, commitments to you. If they work for you, either correct the behavior or show them the
door. If they sell something to you, make sure they honor their commitments or take your business to those that do.

We, who believe in the power of Word, can make a difference. This can be the cloak that makes you different from all the rest. Wear this mantle with pride.
Stand To

Back in my military days, I did a lot of patrolling, whether I was in the infantry or with the Green Berets. Part of being in the woods and out in enemy territory was a procedure that is called stand to.

Stand to occurs at dawn and dusk if you are in a stationary position such as a defense or a patrol base. A half hour prior to dawn and a half hour after dawn would be spent lying in a hasty fighting position behind our weapons at the ready. Listening to the noises around us, not doing anything else. We would do the same thing at dusk, a half hour prior and the half hour after.

Transition Times

The idea is that dawn and dusk are transition times. We had to acclimate to the changes around us. During dawn, it is gradually getting light out. Opposing forces love to attack a dawn. You are normally sleepy at this time. They can use the cover of darkness to move into position, they can use pyrotechnics to blind you and then they can use the new daylight to clean up the objective. Dusk is also a dangerous time. If you aren't prepared, you can easily be caught not ready in total blackness. The moon hasn't risen yet and without prepping yourself you might have equipment out, not handy in case of attack.

We used stand to to get ready for either the day or night ahead. We simply observed the darkening or lightening forest around us. The hum of mosquitoes would be in our ears. I would watch the leaves gently blow in the wind. It was a time to calm ourselves, to be a part of the environment we were in. We used stand to to prep our minds and be vigilant in what we knew was a risky part of the day.

You should use stand to

How many times have you driven to work and not even noticed it. Your thoughts were on something the happened the night before or on some meeting that was to occur later on that day. You can think of the drive as a form of stand to.

Too many times we jump from on thing to the next without a transition, a time to adjust ourselves, to get ready. Instead of operating on autopilot, use these transition times to simply observe what is occurring around us. I have a tropical fish tank in my home that I like to use as a transition device. Instead of jumping from one thing to the other, I sit for a few minutes simply observing the fish. It takes me out of the last event and ready to go into the new one with a fresh, open mind.

Take a moment, between what you are doing. Gather your thoughts and observe your own form of stand to.
Karios
The ancient Greeks had two ways of expressing time. Chronos and karios. Chronos referred to time as it passed or chronological time. Karios on the other hand, referred to a special moment of time in which something special happens.

The idea behind karios is that when this special moment occurs, it must fully be taken advantage of otherwise the moment will have been wasted. There is the thought that “educated people” are those who manage their lives so that when karios occurs they are able to rise and take the best course of action.

I believe that karios occurs almost constantly in our lives. That almost every choice we make either leads us to mediocrity or to greatness. The trick of course is know which choice is what. The difference is most of the time easy. The karios choice is the one that is not comfortable that takes us away from the easy, ordinary path.

We need to be ready for the karios moment. Our mindset needs to be one of exploration, eagerness. Be ready to jump in with both feet. Remember that each choice you make might be a moment of karios.
The Sun Always Comes Up in the Morning

In my household we have a saying, “the sun always comes up in the morning.” We remind each other of this when we have had a hard day and it just doesn’t seem like it is going to get any better. Sometimes it just feels like that there is no end in sight and the situation looks hopeless.

“The sun always comes up in the morning” comes from my days back in the Army, specifically my early time in the infantry. Many times we would be out on a combat patrol. It would be night and we would be lying in ambush position in the pouring rain, we might be in a patrol base and trying to get a few minutes of rest with mosquitoes buzzing in our ears with the darkness edging in on us, it might have been freezing cold and the nighttime just made it colder. These could be very miserable times. It would be hard to focus. At the same time, it was critically important that we stay on task, remain vigilant, quiet and in position. We would whisper in our buddies’ ear lying next to us, “the sun always comes up in the morning.”

…And amazingly it would.

The day break of sun coming up through the jungle canopy or over the hills would breathe new life and energy into us. It might still be raining, the mosquitoes might still be there, and it might be just as cold as it was a couple hours ago, but with the sun we were ready to start anew.

When you look at very successful people, you see the ability to start new each day. To self-recharge and begin again. It’s hard doing a lot of things, almost everything. Being a parent, earning a living, running a business, having a spouse. Through all of this there are going to be some tough times. You have to do remember two things. Keep the faith and keep doing the right things. Sometimes it seems like the darkness will never end.

It does though. The sun always comes up in the morning.
Trees for the Forest

There is an old saying, “you can’t see the forest for the trees.” I hear people say this quite a bit meaning that a person is focused on detail and not on the big picture. While this is sometimes the case, more often than not I see people try to see the big picture without really understanding what makes it up.

When I first entered Special Forces I was a Weapons Sergeant. Part of my training was being totally familiar with a multitude of US and foreign weapons. A big test was known as the pile test. The instructors would take and disassemble 5 weapons, one from each sub group (pistol, submachine gun, light machinegun, heavy machinegun and rifle) pile them together and tell you to put them back together and perform a functions check in a specified time period. A lot of people freaked out about this. They would see the pile sitting in front of them and freeze.

I took it a different way. In rehearsal for the big test, I looked at each individual piece and became very familiar with it. I took all the pieces that looked alike and studied the differences. On the day of the test i simply went a piece a time recognized which weapon it came from and separated out the pieces and then put together the weapons.

When we don’t understand what makes up the big picture we become overwhelmed. Details are what give us perspective. Instead of scanning a task, take some time and understand the different components of it. I guarantee you will have better results.
Survivor

I have a confession to make. I am pretty ashamed of it, but I have to admit...I am a reality TV show junkie. I love Amazing Race, Biggest Loser, Cops, Dancing with the Stars, etc. These programs show human interaction and makes a good study of how people react under different circumstances. Probably my favorite is Survivor. Survivor combines beautiful scenery, harsh conditions and I believe the biggest prize available in reality TV, $1,000,000.

Last night was the final show of this season's Survivor. Boston Rob Mariano won the $1,000,000. This was Rob's third time on Survivor. If you haven't seen it before contestants are dropped in a secluded spot somewhere usually in the tropics. They are divided into teams (tribes). The tribes compete against each for food, other rewards and the opportunity not to have to pick one of their numbers to leave. This attrition happens throughout the game until there is only one left who gets the title of sole survivor and wins the money.

Rob got to go through three times because he had played the game very well before, but never achieved the sole survivor status. Now this season probably will go down in series history because Boston Rob, completely mastered his fellow contestants. He had complete control of his tribe from the beginning and led them to victory after victory. He then played the rules of the game until he was there at the very end.

Rob is a polarizing figure. Many criticized his playing style by not being nice enough or his use of other players to further himself.

I am not going to get into what ethics or integrity are. The point to take away from Boston Rob's victory is intent. From the very beginning Rob stated his intent was to win the game in order to provide for his wife and children. He didn't talk about being a role model, playing by a higher set of rules, finding himself or proving anything to anyone. His intent was to win.

What is Your Intent?

Intent is important to have in your mind. With single minded focus on your intent, a mechanism will become clear. Rob talked about a the beginning of the game he was worried because he knew that the other contestants would be afraid of him due to his prior experience. He focused on his intent and it became clear to him that he could show usefulness to the other tribe mates through his experiences of living in primitive conditions. A liability became an asset through intent.

Rob did not have competing commitments to other reasons for coming on the show. His intent was to win to provide for his wife and children. He knew exactly what he had
signed up for with the Survivor rules. The idea was to move ahead in the game and eventually win it. All moves within the game led to this.

Other contestants wrestled with concepts of duty, friendship, desire for comfort and desire for self image. All of these led to a mistake where they were voted out of the game. I am not making a value judgment on Rob’s play but it was according to the rules that they all signed up to before they started.

Boston Rob did not just play a superb mind game. He won several challenges and put on a strong fight for others. In one challenge, despite severe leg cramps and heat exhaustion Rob won the challenge. I have had leg cramps from heat exhaustion myself and they are almost crippling. Rob’s ability to drive through them came from the strong focus on his intent.

**Intent is the Key**

What I take out of Rob’s victory:

Know the rules before you start to play. If you don’t like the rules, don’t play the game.

Know the reason why you want something. This is what makes your intent your overriding focus.

Finally focus everything on achieving your intent. Mechanisms will become available if the intent is strong enough.

Don’t allow competing commitments to intrude and make you vulnerable.
**Dabbling**

I believe one of the greatest problems facing our society in this moment is that of dabbling. Merriam Webster defines dabbling as a superficial or intermittent interest, investigation, or experimentation.

What I mean by dabbling is that we don’t dedicate the necessary commitment or dedication to what we are pursuing.

**US Society Dabbles**

This has been pretty much our method of doing business in the US going back until the Vietnam War. Previously, when we were in a conflict our servicemen stayed until the job was done. Serving during World War II and Korea meant you were there until the enemy surrendered. There weren’t rotations back to the US every year. Vietnam continued the same pattern. The level of commitment in Iraq and Afghanistan is confused at best and could definitely be considered dabbling.

**Problem with Dabbling**

The problem with dabbling is two fold. First we don’t dedicate enough recourses to something to develop it to where it will be successful. I see this so much with would be entrepreneurs, authors or anyone doing some sort of activity on their own. They don’t dedicate enough time to it.

Most of these people have jobs. You get up in the morning, go to work, pretty much work until a lunch break and then finish up the day at work, usually about eight hours. Most would-be entrepreneurs never come close to dedicating the same amount of time to what they want to create. Then they wonder why they are making the same kind of money.

Would-be authors might sit down for a half hour a day and try to write. How much more would they produce if they treated their writing like a job, had a longer, set amount of time where they planned out their writing and then actually sat down and acted as if their boss was expecting results from them. I am willing to be their books would be much further along.

The other aspect where dabbling is destructive is the perception that it causes in others. If we don’t appear committed to a project, others will not support us in it. It is a destructive circle because we don’t sense the support from our family and friends we will gradually lose interest. We need to show others our commitment so their support strengthens us.

**Don’t Dabble, Be Committed**
Back in my Special Forces days, commitment was something that was expected. Commitment got us through hard times, through the dark nights when it seemed like it would never be daylight or warm again.

Commitment will make you spend the time required to get the results you desire.

Just remember, don’t dabble. Either all in or don’t do it.
High Value Targets
In the military we used the term high value targets to describe something that would give us the biggest bang for the buck. We didn’t want to waste our time if the payoff was not great.

It’s a common complaint among busy people: They reach the end of the day, only to realize that although they were running from project to project and crossing things off their list, they didn’t make any movement towards their largest goals.

If you can identify with this scenario, you’ve got an issue with the kind of tasks you’re undertaking. While it’s great to be busy and feel productive, it’s even more important to do the things that matter. The key to making this distinction is this question:

What are my highest value activities?

The answer to this question is going to be unique to you. No coach, no matter how skilled, can tell you what you derive the most value from. It stems from a combination of your unique gifts, talents, and skills, and your overall goals and dreams. Marry the two, and you’ve got a list of the things that only YOU can accomplish – and these are the things that should get priority on your daily to-do list.

If you find yourself getting sidetracked by tasks that aren’t on your highest-value list, you need to find a way to extricate yourself from them. You can delegate them to someone else, hire another person to do them, or just simply stop. Every minute you spend doing something “below your pay grade” is a minute you aren’t reaching your full potential. Concentrate on the tasks that you and only you are capable of doing, and leave the rest to someone else.

Think of it this way: If you call the Pentagon, the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff doesn’t answer the phone. He doesn’t respond to customer complaints. He doesn’t sweep the floors, order more paper for the copy machine, or make sure the cafeteria is fully stocked on coffee. He leaves those details to others, and he focuses on the projects and activities that only he can do: Visualizing the future path for military. Focus works. If it’s good enough for the military, it’s good enough for you.

Just Get It Going
Sometimes we get stuck in the overwhelm of life. There are simply too many projects, too many things to do, too many people clamoring for our attention, and too much information. We aren’t at all sure on what we should do next, and so we retreat to the comparative peace and quiet of a game of Solitaire on our computer, or we check our email yet again, or we head to the refrigerator.
Everybody experiences this. Even in Special Forces there was a lot of information coming in. We learned to ask the right question. Concentrate on what was important.

When you come to a stuck spot and you are baffled as to what to do next, or you are tempted to run away and hide in an episode of reality TV, ask yourself this question:

What is the one thing I could do today to move myself forward?

Sometimes the answer is a big task – “Buy a ticket to the $1000 conference.” But most of the time, it’s something very simple: Make the phone call, buy the book, answer the email. In fact, the answer is often so simple that we’ve discounted its power, which is why we’ve been feeling lost. Just like with a knot in a rope, sometimes it just takes a bit of wiggle room to make the whole thing loosen and come free.

Remember, you’re not looking for the grand gestures or huge movements (“I need to sell my house and move to the mountains); you’re looking for one thing you can start and accomplish TODAY that will let you make progress. Just get started, you don’t need to get it perfect. Often, it’s something you knew you needed to do but were avoiding; other times, it’s something you hadn’t realized was holding up the works. In either case, identify it, write it down, and make it happen.

What can I do to make just a little bit of progress?

If all you did was ask yourself this question day after day, and then take action on the answers, you’d soon find yourself closer to your goals than you ever imagined.

Mike on a counter terrorism exercise in the Netherlands
Commitment and Consistency–Keys to Getting Results

Nothing happens overnight, and success doesn't generally arrive overnight unless you are a prodigy, or it is, in fact, the result of many years of working towards a particular goal. When problems arise and difficulties set us back, it is essential to keep sight of the long term vision, and not to become discouraged.

Part of getting results in whatever you want is building in a commitment to pick yourself up and start again, should set back or disaster strike. In fact, it is really a question of learning from any mistakes you make, analyzing how and why things didn’t work out as planned, and making sure lessons are learned for the future (and mistakes are not repeated.) I talk about the value of After Action Reviews (AARs) in my book “Get Er Done: The Green Beret Guide to Productivity.” AARs are beneficial to show how everyone, even just yourself viewed on something occurred, what went right, what went wrong and what can be done better in the future.

Learning can, and has to be an on-going consistent process. By having a consistent process of looking at what you have done in an impartial, non judgmental manner you are setting yourself up to learn from your past without carrying along any of the emotional baggage.

So make sure you don’t fall into the habit of blame when things don’t go right. Your self esteem or self image is not directly linked to any one project, any one target, or any one goal. Yourself respect and self esteem is linked to your ability to deal with things as they occur in life. Finding solutions to problems is important, but the process is also important. I am in the middle of writing my next book at the moment where I talk about Achieving the Green Beret Way. In this book, I explore how important it is to not concentrate on blame, but rather concentrate on the future on what you want to happen or rather the solutions you want to occur.

Someone once explained to me the difference between being problem centered and solution oriented. If all you can do is think about the problem, you are not really working your way to a solution. The problem is what is going to occupy your thoughts. That is not a very healthy way to walk around, just thinking of problems. Having what you want to occur in the forefront of your mind will serve you much better. If you are determined to find the right outcome, you will be able to see the problem clearly and what is possible to move past them to get the results you want.
The path to getting results can only really begin when we learn to stop feeling guilty, or worried about past events and actions. In other words, allowing your life chances to be held back by being stuck on old problems or experiences. Get committed to positive results in the future. Consistently take action that moves you closer to these goals.

The tanker truck behind me is just like the one we commandeered later to fuel up the vehicles in Northern Iraq. We made do with what we had.
Getting Results by Doing Less

When it comes to getting things done you may think that the more, the merrier. Not so! In fact, after about 10 items, you start to decrease in productivity. The overall number of things to do actually discourages you, and you fall into the trap of, “I’m never going to get it all done, so why bother?” mindset.

What happens then is that you end up in a state of overwhelm, tackling the small, easy tasks (instead of the important things), or just giving up on it altogether. Instead of making progress, working towards your goals, instead you’re flying by the seat of your pants and handling whatever catches your attention. Not a good way to get er done!

The solution: Limit the number of items on your list. Big time getting results expert like the late cosmetics queen Mary Kay Ash recommends keeping the number of items on your list to about six. In speeches and her writings, Mary Kay credits much of her success to the “six most important things” list she would create each night before bed.

You might have six pages of things to do. How do you cut those down to a manageable number? The key is to filter it down to the most important items to be accomplished in the next day or so. Remember, if you get it all done, you can always starting working on something different!

If you worry, you’ll forget the other, less important items, create a separate project list that is kept in a different location, in a different notebook or on a computer file, or even on the whiteboard in your office. A lot of times this is called the parking lot. Here you can “park” all those other ideas, projects, and tasks until it’s time to tackle them. By moving them off your main list and out of your mind, you’ll limit your scope to the critical actions and keep your focus where it matters: On your biggest goals.

It can also be useful to create a running list of “Five-Minute Tasks” that you can turn to when you have downtime between the larger items. Need a breather after you finish writing a 10-page report? Pull out your Five-Minute Task list and make a phone call or two, or order your son’s birthday present from Amazon. Then go right back to your big list and start cranking away at your next major goal.

Just a week or two of using this method will show you how you actually can accomplish MORE by focusing on LESS. Try it out, if it doesn’t help, you can always go back to your old way of trying to do it all at once. I think you’ll find it was worth the try.
Get Er Done by Having a Plan
You can know specifically what you want to achieve, what it looks like, and when you want it – but without a plan, you’re like a 2nd lieutenant who has a map and compass for the first time.

The next natural step after determining WHAT you want is laying out a plan to get it done.

Where many people make mistakes is assuming that having a plan is an all-or-nothing proposition: They need to have a totally laid out path from A to B, and then on to C and D, with no unknowns, and no changes. As I have said over and over again - You don’t have to get it perfect. Just get it started.

Not so! In fact, ask anyone who’s achieved anything of merit, and they will say that what they thought they were going to do wasn’t what ended up happening. But they’ll also tell you that committing to the first step was critical to their success.

Take someone who wants to lose weight. They know what they want to weigh, and they’ve decided to try a diet with walking 30 minutes a day. That’s all they need to get started because it gives them the next steps: To sign up for a meeting, attend the meeting, and begin walking.

What they can’t anticipate, though, is the weather. Or pizza night. Or the fact that they seem to be having trouble losing weight on the prescribed plan after a few weeks of success and need to shake things up a bit.

Situations change; that’s a given. Rare is the plan that is laid out in excruciating detail on Day One and followed without adjustments. You just have to be prepared to make changes along the way, but you also have to know your general direction. Without any plan at all, you are a victim of your circumstances, not knowing what’s going to move you closer to your goal and what’s going to take you farther away.

So after you’ve set your end goal in your intention, figure out that one next step and just take it. Trust that when you take that step, you’ll see the next one and the next, forward to success. You’ll know when you need to move left or right, but only if you move until the point you see ahead of you. Sometimes it’s only in retrospect that the whole path is clear, like the yellow brick road.
How to Set Goals and Follow Through

How often have you set a goal for yourself, worked on it for a little while and then given up? Don't feel bad about it. It happens to everyone. What you need to realize is the people who set goals and achieve them have had a lot of practice. Yes, it takes practice. You get in practice by keeping your goal in the forefront of your mind at all times. It means you do something daily to reach your goal. You can't just set a goal and expect it to happen. It takes work and it takes consistent effort.

How can you finally commit to your goals and achieve them?

Your Why

One of the first things you should do is figure out why you want to reach a goal. Many people set goals of weight loss, eating better, or growing their business. However, they rarely stop to think about the why behind it. Without a big enough reason or a big enough why, it’s soon forgotten. It just doesn't seem that important. Knowing your why for putting forth an effort is a huge key to success with achieving goals, yet many people forget this. In fact, most articles you read on goal setting leave out this key point.

Let’s discuss some reasons why you might set certain goals. Your goal is to lose weight. Why do you want to lose weight? Do you want to feel better, have more energy or look better in new clothes? It’s not just about losing weight. There has to be a compelling reason behind it. You have to focus on this reason, not just the goal itself.

Let’s say you’ve decided to start exercising every day so you can lose weight, which is your ultimate goal. Unless you remind yourself each day of why you want to lose weight, it will become easy to skip the daily exercise. You’ll put it off until tomorrow because you aren’t focusing on the why. And you know that once you put it off today, when tomorrow rolls around you’ll put it off again.

What if your goal is to increase your business? Why do you want to increase your business? Do you want more money, more subscribers, to offer more products? You’ll need a list of things you should do each day or week to accomplish this goal and then work on that list consistently. Keep reminding yourself of your why.

Maybe your goal is to eat healthier. What are the benefits of healthy eating? You’ll feel better. You will have less stomach trouble. It could help you have clear skin and give you more energy. Is there another reason why you want to eat healthier? Perhaps
you’re already having health problems and want to control them with better eating habits. Determine your why.

Get real with yourself and dig deep to figure out why you want to set and achieve your goal. Once you know why and you focus on that, achieving the goal will be much easier.

Follow Through

One of the biggest mistakes people make, other than not determining their why, is they fail to follow through. One way to help you keep working at it is to think about the consequences of not doing it. This is also an important piece of the puzzle. If you haven’t thought about what could happen if you don’t do something to reach your goal, then chances are you won’t do anything to achieve it.

What will happen if you don’t lose the weight? You’ll still be overweight. In fact you may even gain more weight. You still won’t have the energy you’d like to have. You’ll still have to wear the same old clothes you’ve been wearing. You could develop heart disease or diabetes. You need to keep the consequences in your thoughts too. This will help you follow through each day.

This same tactic works in the business building example too. What will happen if you don’t grow your business? You’ll be stuck in the same spot next year. You won’t increase your income. Not increasing your income can keep you from enjoying nice vacations or luxury items you want. Always keep in mind what won’t happen if you don’t follow through with your business building plans. This can be a big motivator in itself.

If eating healthy is your goal, what are the consequences of staying on the same diet you’re on now? Will you feel bad and have low energy? Will your skin look unhealthy? Will your current eating plan lead to health problems? You have to know the consequences of your continued actions so you can focus on creating something better and more healthy. What will happen if you don’t follow through with eating healthier meals?

Commit Daily

Once you set a goal and determine why you want to reach it, you must also renew your commitment to it on a daily basis. If you don’t keep it fresh in your mind and work on it every single day, you will soon forget and it will become unimportant like it has in the past.

Achieving any goal takes some work on your part. It’s something you have to actively
work on. This doesn’t mean you can’t have a break once in awhile, but even while
you’re taking a break, you need to keep your goal in mind. Plan to get back to it as soon
as possible and then do it!

To recap, you first need to know why you want this goal. What are the benefits of
achieving this goal? Once you’ve determined the rewards of reaching this goal, you also
need to consider the consequences of not reaching it. Let both your why and the
consequences be your driving force. Then it will be much easier to commit to your goal
each day.

Whether you want to lose weight, eat healthy or grow your business, it takes some work
each day so that you can see progress and reach your goal. It doesn’t have to be huge
steps, just small steps each day will keep you on the right track.
Even Green Berets Get Scared

I remember a time riding a transport aircraft into a remote base near the Iraqi border. Our intel people had told us all sorts of stories about it being surrounded by hills and being in a very indefensible spot. There was a noticeable sense of fear on that aircraft. Even Green Berets get scared. The fear of being put in a bad position is understandable. I will tell you though, most Green Berets (like everyone else) suffer from another sort of fear at one time or another.

What holds people back

Anyone can point to people who seemed to have all the talent, resources, and determination in the world, but for some reason, they were never able to reach their goals. They talked the talk, and walked the walk – for a while. But suddenly, they disappear into the sunset, becoming just a distant memory.

In my experience, it’s fear of failure that keeps these people stuck where they are, despite their resources and skill. They somehow figure that they’d rather be where they are, safe and sound, then venture out into the unknown and possibly not succeed that which they’ve set out to accomplish. They come up with every excuse in the book as to why they can’t do such-and-such:

- It’s too cold.
- It’s too hot.
- Everyone knows you don’t start (fill in the blank) in the summer (or winter, or fall, or spring).
- They need to take another class.
- They need to get their office ready.
- They need to wait for their youngest to start kindergarten, their oldest to start college, their husband to die, their wife to get well.

There is never the “perfect” time

There’s always a reason why now is not the right time – but the real reason is that they’re simply afraid of not being able to make the grade. And then who knows what would happen if they (gasp!) failed?

Ironically, it’s the fear of failure actually causes them to fail! And they’re still alive, stuck in their little shell. So I guess failure wasn’t so bad after all, was it?

The Greatest Failure is the Failure to Try

In the Special Forces, we would meet regular troops who had all sorts of excuses about why they had never tried out to be a Green Beret. In reality most of the time it was the
fear of failure that kept them away. One special operation motto is “The Greatest Failure is the Failure to Try.”

We would even see this inside of our units. Guys would not try out for the super secret units because they might not make it and have to come back and face failure. On the other hand, I saw several men try and fail several times and eventually make the cut. There was no shame for them. They knew what they wanted, kept their eyes on the ball and kept swinging until they hit it out of the park.

When working with people who have a fear of failure, sometimes direct questioning is the best method to get them to recognize their obstacle:
If not now, when?
If not you, who?

If you have this goal on your heart, then it’s there for a reason. You may be the only person who can bring that particular goal to reality in the exact way you dream of.

If you don’t do it, no one will!

The truth is, there is never going to be a perfect time to start. And the truth is, you’ll likely have some stumbling blocks along the way. Everyone does. But you have to reach a point where staying where you are and never unwrapping your dream is more painful than any risk of misstep or failure. Then, and only then, will you be prepared to move forward. And I bet you’ll find it wasn’t anywhere near as scary as you thought it would be.
Mike as a young paratrooper before a training parachute jump. It is natural to be afraid before a parachute jump.
Why Experience Matters

There is an interesting story in the Seattle Times about a trend for colleges to teach life coaching. *(Should a Life Coach Have Lived Life?)* The question is how can these just out of college grads teach life coaching if the subject is life?

**Just a feedback mechanism?**

The article goes as far as proposing that there is nothing wrong with having a young life coach; they are only charged with helping clients to hear themselves and to hold themselves accountable to articulated goals. I disagree. I believe the role of a coach is broader than only sitting on the phone and listening and keeping someone on track. There are roadblocks to avoid, pitfalls to dodge. An experienced coach will help their coaching students out of these traps.

**You don't know what you don't know**

An old saying we had in Special Operations was, “you don’t know what you don’t know.” We countered this by pairing junior people with senior people. Each specialty had a junior and senior combo; weapons, commo, medical, even the officers. We would never dream of sending out two junior, inexperienced people on a mission alone.

**Results Matter**

So as not to discriminate against the young, I would add to the statement, “Experience matters” and results matter. Results being the critical component. Look of a coach/mentor that has garnered the results you desire on a consistent basis. You wouldn’t want a lawyer who has only tried a couple cases. If you or someone dear to you need heart surgery, you would not want a surgeon just out of school, you would want one who has perform the procedure many times over.

When I first considered coaching, I made an inventory of life experiences: my military experiences, my world travel, my decades of marriage, battles with every kind of hardship imaginable, business success, my own coaching experience. This inventory convinced me of my value as a coach.

**No guarantees**

Unfortunately, this trend of thinking that experience doesn't matter follow the cult of celebrity we have these days. There is a lack of value on substance. While there are no guarantees that years of experience, of having been able to get er done when the chips are down will result always in success, any sort of odds maker will give you much
better odds on an experienced coach. I think it is ridiculous to claim that experience in whatever subject you are coaching in doesn't matter.
Get Er Done By Not Doing Stuff

Getting er done is not rocket science. It is about doing the important stuff and ignoring the unimportant stuff. This may seem obvious, but too many people allow distractions during their productive, work time. Avoid these things until after your work is done or you’re on break time. If you do these during break time, make sure you set a timer.

1. Social media. Yes, I know, you need to market yourself and be friendly with friends, colleagues and customers. You also need to set aside specific times of the day to do this. Treat this as a business task too. It should be fun and entertaining, but it should not interfere with your work time. Plan those times as part of business building, even if you view it as fun time.

2. Avoid distractions. This is easier said than done, but many people distract themselves by thinking they can take a quick peek at email or Facebook or something else. Do not do this until the allotted time.

3. Don’t let others distract you. If you have a friend who thinks they can text or call you at anytime during the day, be sure to silence your phone so it doesn't distract you. Close your instant messenger programs. Do not set it to busy or go invisible. If you do that, it’s still in the back of your mind that someone may be on the other end and you need a quick chat with them. Or, they will ignore the busy sign and send a message anyway. There are also people who send offline messages even if it looks like you’re not online. They don’t know you’re invisible but their message still gets to you and distracts you.

4. Only use reference and research websites during work hours. If you must open your browser to do some research, then only do the research and close the browser. Do not allow yourself to get tempted to do a quick check of email or social media.

5. Don’t drop everything because a friend wants a spur of the moment lunch with you. This falls under the above tip of turning off your cell phone. Yes, spontaneity can be fun, but it also has its place. People need to know that you can’t drop everything for their whims. This is especially true if you work from home. If you start allowing these minor instances, it will only get worse and they will think they can interrupt you any time they please.

Start actively focusing on your work tasks and mentally prepare yourself to stop allowing distractions to take over your day. This is your business you’re trying to build or run. Don’t let anyone or anything interfere with it during your work time. It will pay off in the long run if you get super focused and control the distractions in your life.
Your OpPlan to Get Er Done

One of the best ways to get er done is to have a plan of action. We used to call it an OpPlan for Operations Plan. If you know what you'll be working on tomorrow, you'll develop the mindset of productivity to get er done. It also keeps you from thinking about work during your “off” time.

Here are some great tips to do at the end of your work day. Set aside a few minutes when you're done with work to make sure these things are in order. When you get up the next day, ready to work, you'll already be ahead by having this lined out.

1. Put away and tidy all of your work materials so they are ready for the next day.

No one wants to walk into a cluttered office to work. This steals your work time because you need to get it organized before you can even concentrate on work. Take care of this at the “end” of the work day so it’s all set up when you return to your desk the next morning.

2. Look over the next days task list so you have an idea of what’s ahead. Adjust it if necessary.

If you plan your week ahead of time there should be no question as to what you need to tomorrow. However, if you like doing things on a day to day basis, this is a good time to plan tomorrow’s work.

3. Review the work you did today. This is where a running “I did this” list comes in handy. If you’ve written down everything you accomplished throughout the day, you can go over this list and find out how well your day went. It’s likely you forget a lot of the small things you did during the day. If they are written down, you’ll remember them.

4. Celebrate your success. If you finished your task list and had a productive day, then give yourself a pat on the back or a special treat.

Even small milestones deserve to be treated as something special. If you start doing this you'll want more of it. Just give yourself something special each day that you finish your tasks. It needs to be something small, but meaningful.

If you’re working on a big project you’ll want to give yourself a bigger treat when it's complete, but don’t forget to reward the small steps either.

5. Perform daily or weekly maintenance on your computer.

Set aside time for this every day or every week. Do not do this during productive time. These things can generally be done while you are on social networks or while you're
reading a book. If you need to organize files you’ll want less distractions, but running virus programs or disk defragmenting can be done while you read or straighten up your office for the next day.

6. Plan tomorrow if you haven’t already done so.

This goes along with #2 listed above. It’s best to have a weekly plan broken down into daily tasks, but if that’s too strict for you, then plan each day at the end of your work day.

7. Unwind. The work day is done, leave it at the office, even if it’s your home office. Enjoy some you time or time with family. Only work after work hours if it is absolutely necessary.

8. Do a final check of email, social sites, paypal or any other business transactions. This is also a good time to check your website stats and things of that nature. I recommend you do this weekly and not daily, but it will give you a good idea if you need to focus more time on traffic and such.

By doing these steps ahead of time, you will find yourself much more likely to get er done the next day.
Having a Get Er Done Attitude

You may be asking yourself what a get er done attitude can do for you?

Having a get er done attitude doesn’t mean that the world around you will magically rearrange itself and become some kind of wonderland. What will change is your attitude, how you handle situations and how you view the world around you and the world in general. You can get to that wonderland if you allow yourself to do so.

The truth is, the world is not perfect, but it can be a better place if you change the way you look at it (and you can get a lot more accomplished!) People with get er done attitudes have the same problems as everyone else. The difference is they look at it through different eyes. They focus on how they can move ahead instead of letting the bad things depress and suppress them. I talk about this in my book Get Er Done: The Green Beret Guide to Productivity. In the Green Berets, we had to make do with what we had. Often it was in very remote conditions. We could have focused on the negative, but we chose to look to see how we could make things happen, get er done.

You have certainly heard about the importance of setting goals. The question is though how many people actually do it? How many then take those goals and put them into actionable steps? That is what I mean by a get er done attitude. You constantly look at the situation and adjust your steps to accomplish whatever you want to accomplish.

Maintaining a get er done mindset is difficult enough in these times of constant negative news, but it gets even harder if you sabotage yourself by being sloppy on execution of your goals. What you want to do is develop little goals that will lead you to the big goal. By doing this you allow for course corrections along the way as barriers come up.

Adopting a get er done attitude will help to empower you to handle situations better. Instead of focusing on the negative you focus on improvising, adapting, overcoming. You will eventually feel less stress, get angry over little things less and avoid a lot of depression.

By keeping your eye on the goal instead of the obstacles, you will approach goals in a more methodical and systematic way. In a way you will become more diplomatic in your problem solving, especially when dealing with other people.

By taking on a get er done attitude, if something does drag you down for a bit, you will be able to bounce back more quickly instead of wallowing in the misery of it. Every moment you spend fixated on the impossible is a moment you cannot get back. It’s moments of opportunity that are lost forever.
A positive, get er done attitude can also give you more health and vitality. Research suggests that disease and illness have a difficult time living in an environment with little stress. If you look around, I am sure you can find the science about how stress causes illness. I just know from my experience when I focus on reducing stress I feel better. It’s definitely worth a try.

“The more negative we are, the less able our brain is to overcome the challenges we actually have, which is why in the midst of challenge, finding a way to raise our happiness and optimism within an organization is of upmost importance not only for a company, but for ourselves as well.”

Shawn Achor, Harvard researcher and positive psychology expert

If you are spending your energy focusing on why something doesn’t work you won’t have the mental bank account to find new courses of action to get to where you want to go. You end up mentally exhausted.

How many people do you know that have all kinds of health issues and also have a negative personality? It is all about stress and energy. How many people do you know who are always in a good mood and doesn't seem to have health problems? Or, if they do they are only minor issues.

Another benefit to having a get er done attitude is how it affects the people around you. At first they may look at you strange or think it’s only a temporary thing. They may even think you’ve started taking medication. However, over time, these people will start to enjoy your positive nature and successes and may even want to change their own attitude.

It is all about developing a success mentality. Develop the habit of accomplishing little goals on the way to the big goal, reduce stress by being organized and focused, free yourself to develop a healthy get er done attitude that attracts and influences people and gets results.

None of these things will take place over night. You didn’t develop your attitude and personality over night and you can’t expect to change it that quickly. It will take active awareness and consistency on your part, but it is well worth it, especially if you see those around you starting to make changes too.
Mike on a search and rescue mission in northern Iraq. We had a ton of supplies on the aircraft. We just pitched in and got it off.
Get Er Done by Saying No

Are you one of those people who's always busy, running here, running there, trying to please everyone and do everything for everyone else? Or maybe you know someone who is. You know, the soccer mom who is also the PTA mom, the band mom, the school outing mom, always baking something for some function. Or maybe you know a dad who is like that. Or that couple who does all the entertaining in their home.

Yes those things can be fun and some people strive on them, but if you do these things and feel stretched to your limits, it's time you learn to say no once in awhile.

Here are a few tips to help you manage your time better and help you say no to some of those requests.

1. Create a time allotment calendar. You may be wondering what that is. You simply allot specific times in your week that you can devote to other people or to being super mom/dad. This means you only volunteer your time to be available during the allotted time. People may be mad at first, but if you don’t value your time, no one else will.

2. If it’s not something you really want to do or enjoy doing, say no. The stress involved or the resentment you feel for doing things you don’t like really isn’t worth giving up your free time over. You’ll do a much better job and feel happier if you only volunteer for the things you actually like to do. If you aren’t in a good mood doing something, you won’t give it your full attention and you’ll like be angry the whole time. Just avoid those feelings and do the things you enjoy. If you hate baking cupcakes, don’t bake cupcakes.

3. Be honest. If you refuse to do something or decline a volunteer job, be honest if you’re asked why you’ve decided not to do it. If it’s because you don’t enjoy the task, tell them so. If it’s because you do value your time or simply don’t have time, then be honest about that too.

Saying no, in the beginning, can be hard, especially if you’ve always said yes to everything. It will get easier. By saying no more often, you will actually start to enjoy yourself more doing the things you do say yes to.

Don’t allow feelings of guilt to set in either. You will feel some guilt in the beginning, but like I mentioned above, by saying no to activities you don’t like doing, you will have more fun doing the ones you do like, plus you will do better at those because you can devote more time to those things instead of feeling resentment for something you don’t like.
Green Beret Stamina

One of the big things we learned in Special Forces is that you have to pace yourself. I don’t mean, take it easy and don’t give as much as possible. We learned that we had to know ourselves and give as much as possible while making sure we had enough to finish whatever the mission was.

Take a sprinter on a long run with a marathoner and you’ll notice something: The fastest man in the world isn’t so fast once you get past the first 10 miles. The marathoner, who started out at a more moderate pace, slowly overtakes the sprinter who has trained himself for short distances. It’s the classic tale of the tortoise and the hare.

If you tend to start out with a bang on a new idea or project, only to get discouraged when you hit that mental “wall” around mile 13, you may be out of shape and lack stamina. And while you may be banking on becoming the next overnight success, you need to know that:

A. The true overnight successes of today become the one-hit wonders of tomorrow, and

B. Most overnight successes were many years in the making.

Look behind virtually any rags-to-riches story, from Susan Boyd to Zappos, and you’ll see that years went into the preparation for their time in the limelight. It took months for a Green Beret to reach basic proficiency in his specialty and then it took years before we thought of him as an expert.

If you see yourself having trouble with your stamina, it’s time to work on building your endurance. Here are some exercises to help you:

1. **Track your progress.** Often progress is so incremental that you can become discouraged before you hit your goal. Write down the successes – small and large – and review them regularly to remind yourself that you are making progress. You may even want to make a large visual representation of your goal and track your progress towards it, just like schools put up huge thermometers to show how much money they’ve earned towards their pool fund.

2. **Pace yourself.** The marathoner knows that going out as fast as possible in the first mile is usually a recipe for disaster. Yes, you’re excited about your new venture, but keep some of that excitement in reserve. You may feel like staying up until all hours working on your goals, and while that’s great, don’t expect to be able to maintain that level of commitment for weeks or months on end.
3. **Cross-train.** Find other activities to give you a break from your main focus. You just might find that time away from your goal refreshes and energizes you, and keeps you from burning out. Even if it’s just an evening a week, make sure you take mini-vacations.

4. **Find a partner or a coach.** Partners and coaches are great whether you’re heading to the gym or working your way through med school. Sometimes an outside commitment is needed to help you stay accountable and stay on track. Having someone who understands the challenges you’re facing can make all the difference between giving up and going on.

While a sprinter can be in great physical shape, most goals require a long-distance mindset. On my A-team we knew that staying up all night in mission prep was a recipe for disaster on the actual mission. Remind yourself what the tortoise knew: Slow and steady wins the race.
Motivate Yourself and Get Er Done

If you’ve decided to become a better, more upbeat, positive person, you may find it difficult to find people who are willing to help you stay motivated. In fact, you may have to motivate yourself.

How can you motivate yourself?

First you can start by setting goals. A lot of people hate the idea of setting goals, but all successful people do this. All of the motivational speakers you’ve ever heard of or listened to use this as well.

You don’t have to set big goals, just some simple goals that you can easily manage. One goal can be to listen to something motivational every day. Set time aside for yourself and do this. It may not seem like you’re motivating yourself by listening to other people, but in a sense you are. You’re taking this time for you to help motivate yourself.

Set a timeline. Decide when you want to reach these goals and read them daily. If you want to have a better attitude in 30 days, set that as a timeline and then get busy working on it. You may not develop the perfect attitude in one month, but if you make progress it’s all good. You can then set another 30 day goal to improve on that.

Be persistent. Persistence and determination are two leading factors in the success of any goal you set for yourself, especially in creating better habits or a better attitude. If you skip one day, it’s likely you’ll skip two days and so on. Be persistent and committed to yourself and making improvements.

Believe in yourself. This is another key factor in successfully mastering anything. You have to believe that you can achieve the results you set out to do. Sign a contract with yourself if you need to. Use daily affirmations if you need to, but whatever you do, believe in you. Believe you are worth all the effort you put into it.

Find an online support group. There are other people who need motivating too and more often than not, you can actually motivate yourself by motivating others. If no one in your immediate family or your friends will support you in your endeavors, find a group online and start motivating others. They will even return the favor when you feel like giving up.

Listen to upbeat music. Music is a great way to motivate yourself. Pick songs that make you feel like dancing. You don’t have to get up and dance, especially if you’re driving or at work, but the music should make you feel that way. It will help motivate you to keep your goals and will create a better attitude for you almost immediately.
Make a commitment to stay motivated. It may be difficult in the beginning. You may have years of non-motivational behavior to overcome. This is why you need to be committed to it and don’t let anyone stop you. There may be times when people bring you down, but you don’t have to stay there. You can pick yourself up and get back to it. Having a commitment with yourself will help you do this.

Having a better attitude and motivating yourself is very doable and can be really easy if you have a plan of action. You truly are worth it. Don’t let yourself down. Get out there and motivate yourself and others.
Beat Procrastination and Get Er Done

Procrastination, there’s a big ugly word for you. It plagues a large number of people. It’s often easier to put something off instead of just doing it. However, the longer you put it off, the longer you have to dread the task when you finally do tackle it. It’s wiser to just do the task and get it over with. You know you will feel better about yourself if you do it, but it’s not always that simple, is it?

Here are some tips to help you bust through procrastination.

1. Decide what’s really important to you. Why do you want something done? If it relates to your business, remember why you started your business, your purpose behind it. If it’s a personal matter, then decide what the advantages of it are.

   Maybe you hate pulling weeds out of your flower bed, so you put it off. You know the flowers will grow bigger and strive if the weeds are gone, and it will also be more beautiful. Think about the end result instead of the task at hand. Yes, pulling weeds can be a mundane task. If you think about how pretty the flower bed will be when you’re done, you can let that motivate you to get the job done. Also, try to do the job regularly so the weeds don’t pile up, so to speak. It’s one of those jobs you need to stay on top of so it only takes a few minutes to accomplish instead of a few hours.

   The flower bed analogy can be used for other things you need to tackle too. Maybe you’ve let customer emails pile up and need to take care of those, but you keep putting it off. The longer you put it off the more you’ll have to deal with later on. Weed those things out too and then stay on top of it on a regular basis.

   Believe it or not, procrastination is a habit just like anything else and if left unchecked it will only get worse. Start taking steps each day to overcome procrastination and get things done.

2. Get focused. Focusing on a task is a good way to help you get it done and stop putting it off. Like mentioned earlier, don’t focus on the mundane tasks it takes to get it done, but instead focus on the end result. Focus on what you’ll have accomplished once it’s done.

   Having focus is a major key to success. Maybe you aren’t trying to build a large business or an empire, but you do want to successfully master your procrastination habits. Being focused will help you achieve this.

3. Determine that you are going to change your procrastination habit. Once you determine that you can do this, it becomes easier to start tackling the things you put off.
You also need to start creating new, better habits, like the habit of getting things done quickly.

Just like anything else you want to improve life, changing bad habits will take time and effort. Procrastination doesn’t need to plague you unless you allow it. There’s an old saying that if you want to get something done, give the job to a busy person. These are people who have mastered procrastination and get things done. You can be one of those people if you choose to.
Turn Up the Volume on Your Energy and Get Er Done

You’ve probably heard that you’re made of energy and give off energy, but do you truly understand how it works or how it can help you?

If you’ve ever passed someone in a car who’s had a lot of bass coming from their stereo, I’m sure you’ve felt it as much as you’ve heard it. These are sound waves that you feel. Your body, in a sense, emits something similar to sound waves.

If your vibrational state is very low, you generally don’t feel very well, you may feel bored or tired. When you’re in a good mood, the vibrations you emit are shorter waves and they are moving faster. Have you ever noticed that your favorite song has the power to put you in a better mood? This is because the vibrations of your body rise to match that of the sound waves causing you to feel better.

You probably can’t stay in a good vibration 24/7, but the more you can create that vibration for yourself, the better your moods can become and the better your attitude becomes.

What are some things that can increase your vibration?

Music. Music is one of the easiest and fastest tools you can use to get in a better mood and raise your vibration. Music has been around as long as man has known how to bang on something and create a rhythmic pattern of sound. Classical music is known to help build higher IQs in children and even in adults. Music is a very powerful motivator. Always be careful and aware of the music you listen to. If it doesn’t lift your spirits and put you in a good mood, you need to avoid it.

Rap music is one of the most harmful elements in our world. It creates anger and makes people feel inferior and bad about themselves. This often leads to bad behavior and a bad outlook on life.

Practice daily gratitude. Feeling gratitude for all the things you have, your material objects, your friends, the life you live, can increase your good moods. Maybe life isn’t perfect, but when you start to appreciate the small things, you instantly raise your vibration.

Help someone. There’s something about reaching out to someone else and offering your assistance that just feels good and makes your spirit feel alive. Anytime you feel low or depressed, think of someone who may be going through something similar or even worse. Go help that person, go reach out to them. If you pray, you can even say a prayer for them. People are under the false belief that human nature is to be negative
and have a survival mentality when in essence, the human spirit thrives when it helps others. Give it a try and see if it doesn't raise your vibration.

Meditate. Meditation is generally used as a way to relax and calm the mind. It does work very well for this, but in calming your mind you can also raise your vibration to a better frequency. It's like tuning your radio to a better station.

If you listen to upbeat classical music while you meditate this is even better and can put you in a better mood fast.

Watch a comedy. Having a good laugh is an excellent way to raise your vibration and reduce your stress at the same time. It's been said that a laugh a day can keep the doctor away. People heal faster when they laugh during recovery periods. It has a way of melting your concerns and putting you in a better mood. A good mood surely can't hurt your progress and in fact may be what causes people to heal faster.
You Need a CAT Team

Back in my Special Forces day, I did bodyguard work. I led teams guarding VIPs in hostile areas. My unit even provided security for President Clinton and his family.

When you see the President, there are of course, Secret Service agents in the background. Each one of these agents, is prepared to give his life for the protection of the President. They are a brave group who take their jobs deadly seriously. You have probably seen the movies such as “Line of Fire.” What you probably haven’t noticed are the black SUVs parked in the background.

CAT Teams

These SUVs hold the Counter Assault Team (CAT). The SUV is full of guys who could easily play pro football. They are armed with machine guns, grenades, and rocket launchers. The CAT team has one mission. The President will not be taken PERIOD…They will do what it takes to ensure his safety. When the CAT team takes action, they let nothing stand in their way.

You aren’t going to make it as a Maverick

We think we can walk solo in the world. We think that we have it all going on. When someone asks, “who do you depend on,” it is pretty tempting to reply with some absolute answer like “no one”, “only yourself” or “God”

I’ve talked before in the blog about our two man rule in the military. We never went anywhere alone. You can never cover your own blindside. We had another rule, use overwhelming force whenever possible. In the end, it saves lives on both sides. You see this when police take down a subject. They pile on with as many officers as they can muster. It subdues the subject very quickly, takes away the will to struggle and protects the officers from injury. You can’t do this by yourself.

You need people to rely on. You need a CAT team in your life. Who can you depend on to keep you out of trouble? Is there someone who will give their all for you?

Interdependence – 1+1= 3

The cool part of this is that when you bring people in to be part of your CAT team, you become part of their CAT team. This interdependence is what starts creating the magic of getting things done, creating amazing results.

I have built this into my life several ways. My family is a CAT team. I am active in my community and church with small groups, people that I can count on. I have a couple
mastermind groups on different topics. I also work in a coaching role, both as the coach and as the coachee. Either way, these are people I can count on as my CAT team.

Who do you have in your life as your CAT Team?

Mike’s team prior to going into Iraq 1991. Mike is on the right.
Increase Your Intention and Get Erm Done

People tell me all the time they want to move forward, but then they don't do what they say they are going to do. My question to them is what is their intention. A good definition for intention is: “to have in mind a purpose or plan, to direct the mind, to aim.”

When you say you want to do something you need to set your intention to go where you want to.

Are you ready to move forward – not just a step or two, but a whole level?

Are you ready to leap into a new existence of achievement and power?

Are you ready to leave your old life behind and move right into the life you deserve?

We can only achieve as high as we think we can.

Try this little exercise: Stand up and extend your arms out on both sides of your body. Close your eyes and, turning at the waist, see how far you can twist to one side without causing yourself bodily harm. Open your eyes and make a mental note of where you are pointing behind you. Now, close your eyes and imagine yourself going a little farther. Ready, twist! Open your eyes and see if you surpassed your previous point. If you’re like most people, you did.

Why didn’t you go further the first time? For the simple reason that you didn’t think you could. Once you imagined yourself going further, you did. It’s not very complicated!

If your mental beliefs impose limits on your physical stretching, it makes sense that they’ll limit your mental and spiritual achievement, too. So you need to ask yourself what limits you’re putting on your:

• …dreams. Are you dreaming big enough?

• …income potential. Are you unnecessarily limiting your income or salary?

• …relationships. Do you doubt what you can achieve in your friendships and family life?

• …physical health. Are you accepting less than the best because you think you’re too old or too out of shape?

The first step to changing your boundaries is to “up” your deserve level. Here are three things that block you from accepting that you deserve the best:

• Envy. Envy is the result of a scarcity mindset. You think that if someone else gets something – a great job, a new car, a book deal – that you can’t have it, too. That is not
the way the universe works. Just because someone else gets something doesn’t mean no one else can ever have that. Hey, even Brad Pitt has been engaged more than once!

Realize that whatever anyone else in this world has – from a great body to a great family to a great career – you can have it, too. Use their example to inspire rather than depress you.

• **Fear.** Fear is one of the greatest demotivators. It’s hard to feel limitless and powerful when you’re shaking in your shoes! It’s natural to feel scared of breaking outside your normal boundaries, but remind yourself that all growth takes place outside your comfort zone. To grow, you must push your own limits, by definition. Get comfortable with discomfort – see it as a sign of growth, much like aching muscles indicate you worked out hard and are getting stronger.

• **Laziness.** We get used to where we are and decide it’s good enough because we don’t really want to have to work harder. Time for a harsh truth: If you want an extraordinary life, you’re going to have to go to some out-of-the-ordinary measures. That means whipping yourself, bribing yourself, coaching yourself, whatever it takes to motivate yourself to move beyond “average.”

Moving upward and onward starts with believing you deserve to have more and be more. It’s essential to own your dreams – and dream big.

**3. Surround Yourself with Success**

It’s been repeated so often that it’s basically internet law at this point: Your income will average that of the five people you hang around most.

Whether it’s literally true or just sort of true, it doesn’t really matter – the point is, if you want to be successful, you have to surround yourself with successful people.

If you want to run a triathlon, hang out with Ironman-types.

If you want to be a published author, go where the published authors are.

If you want to start a successful internet business, commune with online entrepreneurs.

There are many reasons to hob-nob with people who have achieved the goals you aspire to:

1. **They show it can be done.** Often we think that success happens to “other” people, not people we actually know. When we get to meet actual achievers, though, we see that they’re really not much different than we are. They put their pants on one leg at a time, they have dogs who chew the furniture, and they have kid/car/in-law troubles just
like the rest of us. By demystifying those who live and breathe where you want to reside, you gain a realization that you can do it, too.

2. **They know what it takes.** We tend to believe the “overnight success” stories. But talk to the Ironman athlete, the best-selling author, the online businessperson, and they’ll tell you that it took a lot of hard work to get where they are. The bad news: It takes extraordinary effort to achieve extraordinary results. The good news: Once you stop believing that luck determines your success, you’ll see that if you’re willing to put in the time and the sweat, you can have whatever you want.

3. **They share their secrets.** It may be nothing more than where to buy the best wetsuits, or how to cut a minute off your transition time from swim to biking stage, but these little secrets add up – and they’re exactly the kind of help that you won’t read in books or magazine articles.

4. **They want you to succeed, too.** Most successful people know that there is more than enough to go around, and they’re happy to see you get your share, too. Being surrounded with people who have an abundance mindset will help you think of all you can have in this life, not all that you can’t.

5. **They show the gaps in your knowledge, skills, and behavior.** If you see that all the self-made millionaires you know invest in real estate and act as their own agent, you might decide it’s time to brush up on your broker’s license courses. If the people who have lost a significant amount of weight and kept it off all bring their lunch to work and work out at least an hour a day, you may commit to finding more time to hit the gym. Model yourself after those you admire and you’ll find yourself becoming more like them, success and all.

I’m not saying you have to say goodbye to the boys from the old neighborhood, but if you want to soar with eagles, you may have to limit your time with the turkeys.
Getting What You Want

Special Forces teams would often be inserted deep in foreign territory. The twelve man team would then work with the native forces, training them and eventually leading them in combat ops. We couldn’t force our will on them. We had to convince them to help us help them.

Later in my career, I set up exercises throughout Europe. I had to go and convince a local government to allow us to use their facilities for a training exercise. I couldn’t force them to give or do anything for us. They had to want to. Using proper negotiation skills were the key.

We’ve all seen instances where an irate customer is berating the counter clerk at the airport, or venting her venom on the checkout cashier at the mini-mart. Usually, we look at these out-of-control people with a mixture of pity and embarrassment. But I also look at them and think, “Don’t they know they’re alienating the one person who can fix their problem?”

Think about it.

You missed your flight and you’re not going to be able to make the big meeting in Houston. You approach the gate agent and choose one of two approaches:

1. You start blustering and yelling, telling her you’re going to have her fired if she doesn’t get you on the next flight immediately, or

2. You approach her calmly and politely, asking her for her assistance in meeting your goal.

Who would YOU be more likely to go out of your way to help?

Customer service people are often the lowest on the corporate totem pole. They typically aren’t particularly well-paid, they don’t have a lot of seniority, and they don’t have a ton of power. But one thing that they can control is how much they’re willing to go out of their way to help you out. Be rude and nasty, and they’re going to slam the virtual door in your face. Be kind and polite, and you just may find out that the rules are bent in your favor.

This is not to say there isn’t a time and a place for getting angry, or escalating the issue. But you need to be in control of yourself. If the person you’re negotiating with is actually fearing for his or her personal safety, they’re not only going to shut you down, they may call Security on you as well! Let’s see you make that flight to Houston while you’re shut up in a holding pen.
Just Step Away

If you feel yourself losing control or spinning into anger, step away. Let the other person know your emotions are getting the best of you, and you’ll get back in touch when you’ve calmed down a bit. If this sounds like you have to bite back your pride, so be it. It’s a lot easier on the ego to take a five minute break, rather than looking like a fool in front of a store full or airport full of people.

Keep reminding yourself of your ultimate goal, too. Your goal is not to make the other person back down or feel bad; your goal is to get as much of your desired outcome as possible. View the other party as your ally, not your enemy.

Find Out What They Want

You may think that once the other person has had their chance to share their position, it’s your turn to spew. But how you share your position has a great deal of bearing on the outcome of the conversation. Here are some tips for sharing your perspective:

1. Don’t get defensive. You might be inclined to start out by telling the other person just how wrong they are. Stop! Defending your position or attacking them puts you on opposite teams; we’re in search of a win-win, so find something – some point, no matter how small – about which you can agree.

2. It could be as simple as, “I agree with you that Sally and Regina have a later curfew. I’m willing to explore the topic with you.” This lets the other party know you heard them and you are searching for common ground.

Just Ask for Help

Ask for help. One fantastic technique is to ask the person to help you. “I’m having trouble with the way shifts are scheduled for next week; can you help me understand?” brings the issue to the table without making the other person the enemy. Get them on your side. People – particularly those in customer service – like to help when they can. Make them feel useful and powerful.

Ask for what you want. Make your request clear so there’s no question what you see as the desired outcome. “I’d like it if you could reverse the charges this month and help me figure out how to lower my overall bill,” for example, is a much more powerful statement than, “I got charged for 100 texts this month.” What you want is clear in the first request; the second leaves nowhere for the other person to go. They could easily reply with, “So?” You will need to give them more information before they can do anything, so why not make your request clear?

Shut Up
Shut up. One of the worst things you can do in negotiating is to negotiate against yourself. Once you’ve made a request, be quiet. Let the other person respond. If you keep talking, you will keep conceding, often unnecessarily. In order to calm the urge to talk, some salespeople tell themselves that every word they speak costs them money. Often, that’s true!

Knowing how to properly phrase your own request is key to successful negotiating. Being able to share your thoughts and feelings without alienating the other person will help you maintain a position of strength and not give away unnecessary concessions.

Getting What You Want and Need

Negotiations take place all throughout our lives, from interactions with our family to interactions with our friends, co-workers, clients and bosses. While it is possible to use brute force, loud voices and the intimidation factor to try to get what you want, there are more successful – and less frightening – methods.

Negotiation is a skill, just like water skiing, pistol shooting, speaking French, or woodworking. The more you practice, the better you’ll be. It can seem overwhelming at first, but pick one skill or principle each week to focus on. After being involved in a negotiation, review how it went. What worked? What didn’t? What can you try differently the next time?

Over time, you’ll see your negotiation skills slowly and steadily building, until soon you’ll be the one people turn to to negotiate for them.
Mike negotiating with Kurdish guerillas in Northern Iraq. He is on the left.
You Don’t Have to Get It Perfect

Life is all about choice. Will we wear the blue tie or the red tie, or no tie at all? Will we have oatmeal or eggs for breakfast? Will we take the car or walk?

Yes, these are seemingly simple decisions that you may think don’t belong in a report on how to change your life. But when it comes down to it, the decision to quit your job, start a business, lose 100 lbs., move to Idaho and build a log cabin, are no different physiologically speaking than the decision to go to McDonalds instead of Wendys.

What is different is the amount of strife and angst we place upon ourselves.

And one major source of that angst is when we choose to assume the outcome of our decisions will be bad instead of good, and revisiting our decisions over and over again in the hopes that things will become more clear the second (or third, or fiftieth) time around.

You’ve done this before: You make an informed decision. You look at all sides of the matter. Maybe you even make a “Franklin List” where you list all the pros and cons. You consult a friend or an expert or two. Then you decide.

And you immediately second-guess yourself. You assume you made the wrong decision. You wonder, “What if…” You may even try to change the original decision, whether it is returning a new car, second-guessing your business decisions, or just wondering if dinner would have been better at Fridays.

Then you put yourself right back to square one – agonizing over that decision again. Not only are you right where you’ve started, you’ve also managed to kick yourself in the self-confidence and waste some time, too. And it’s not like you’ve gotten some great information that would’ve affected your decision; you’re right where you were, with the same information you had before, struggling with the same decision you’ve already made once.

Here’s what to do instead: Go through the same careful process of decision-making, then let it go. Tell yourself you’re stuck with it. Assume you made the right decision instead of the wrong one. Move forward, move upward, move onward.

Sure, you can revisit the past, wondering if your decisions could have been better or the outcome could have been different. It’s up to you. But no going backward. It only wastes time.
No Room for Doubt

You say, “Let’s go to the drugstore. I need a new pair of reading glasses.” Your friend says, “Are you sure? We could probably get the same thing cheaper at the mall.”

You say, “I hired a new accountant.” He says, “Are you really ready to invest in that?”

You say, “I’m joining 24-Hour Fitness.” He says, “Bally’s is running a special this week.”

And if you were to take his advice and go to the mall, fire your accountant, or head over to Bally’s, he’d have problems with that, too. That’s because his input isn’t a matter of helpful suggestions; it’s only designed to make you question your own choices.

If you had a friend who constantly questioned every move you made like this, you’d probably knock him in the teeth.

If this behavior is so unacceptable in our friendships, why do we do it to ourselves? We choose – and then we immediately revisit that decision over and over again. Here’s the problem: Sometimes there are no “right” decisions. There are only choices we make and live with.

That’s why to take yourself to the next level, you need to let go of doubt. Accept that you’re working with imperfect knowledge and that you’re a smart cookie and that you will indeed make some mistakes along the way. But tell yourself that whatever happens, you can handle it.

If you pay $5 too much for reading glasses, you can live with that.

If you hire an accountant and discover you’re really not ready, you can let him go.

If you join the “wrong” gym, you can always switch.

Often we think that we are at the whim of circumstance and we can’t control the outcome. Not so! If you chose to buy a Toyota instead of a Honda, YOU get to decide whether that was a successful outcome. Does it get you from Point A to Point B? Does it get the required gas mileage? Is it a safe ride? (By the way, these are probably all items you considered before you made your purchase!) If the answer is “Yes,” then congratulations! You made a successful purchase!

The situation with your business may be a little different. The “success” criteria are not as clear-cut, but your influence on the outcome is no less significant. You can hustle, work extra hours if need be, commit to working things out, or even end up selling the business and thanking the benevolent heavens for giving you the opportunity to learn some lessons along the way.
Commit to doing whatever it takes to ensure your choice was a good one. And don't doubt your own ability to make it so.
**Your Patterns of Success**

Even if you’re not quite where you want to be, you still have a history of success. You’ve graduated high school, done well on a test, lost weight, had a great friendship, or otherwise set and achieved some sort of goal. By analyzing your past successes, you can find a lot of clues about how you best work and what you can do to set yourself up for future success.

I recommend mining your own past for success stories because not everyone works in the same manner. You may read a book about adopting a low-carb diet and loses 20 lbs. In two weeks. Wonderful! But right next to it on the bookstore shelf is a high-carb, low-fat diet that promises the same thing. And right next to that is the Zone diet, which is next to the Raw Foods Diet, which is next to… well, you get the picture.

Not everyone’s body is the same. Not everyone’s brain is the same. Nor is your motivation, history, goals, or personality. That’s why looking at your own history will be a huge clue as to how you can replicate your own patterns of success.

Here’s what to ask yourself:

- When did I set this goal? Did I consciously set it, or was it an unconscious goal?
- How analytical was I in charting out my path?
- What kinds of obstacles and challenges arose, and how did I handle them?
- Who helped me along the way? What specifically did they do to assist me? (Concrete skills, advice, sounding board, cheerleading…?)
- Was I accountable to someone along the way? Who and how?
- Did I track my progress? How?
- If I were going to give someone else advice about how I achieved Goal X, what would I say?
- If I were to go after this goal again, the one thing that I would do differently to speed up my progress would be…?

Repeat this series of questions with several different goals – and maybe even some goals you didn’t achieve – to look for patterns. You may discover you work best with an accountability partner, and when you tracked your progress in a visual manner. These are your patterns you can easily adapt and replicate for just about any goal you’re striving for.
We can overlook our own stories when trying to learn how to succeed. That’s a mistake. Often, the best indicators of future success are right under our own noses – and in our own histories.
Daily Check Ups

Our lives are full of scheduled check-ups. You see the dentist every six months. You get a check up every year past 40. You get your car tuned up every 3000 miles or so. And you should review your day every 24 hours.

Why so frequently? After all, you could do this once a week or month, or even once a quarter. Well, you should review your progress at different time frames, but there are several reasons to review your activity daily:

1. Because you’re looking for a big breakthrough. And if you wait too long between assessments, you can find you’ve let weeks or even months go by when you could have been making consistent, positive movement towards your goals.

2. Because it’s easier to correct a minor slip-up. An inch off-target now becomes a mile or more when extrapolated over time. Make the fix now and you won’t have to deal with the big problems later.

3. Because it’s less intimidating. Sitting down for an hour or two to review a month’s worth of activity can be downright off-putting, but taking five minutes at the end of the day can become a relaxing bedtime ritual.

4. Because your actions are fresh in your mind. You’ll forget lots of details if you wait too long to go over your schedule and activities. It’s hard enough at the end of the day; don’t wait a week or more.

Here’s what you should ask yourself at the end of the day:

• What did I do today that I was proud of?

• What one item on my to-do list made the most difference in the achievement of my goal?

• What one item on my to-do list is left over, but I should have done it?

• What took longer than I anticipated?

• What took less time than I anticipated?

• What did I enjoy doing the most?

You can easily go through these questions in five to ten minutes. You might even consider writing the answers down; it will take a bit longer, but having a longitudinal
view of your answers can be invaluable to figuring out where you’re wasting time, what your highest-value activities are, and what you can change.

You might find that just by paying attention to what’s going on in your life, and where you’re spending your time, you will naturally make adjustments that put your schedule more in line with your goals.
Green Beret Secrets to a Better Memory

Memory is an important ability you want to maintain. When I was in the military, it could mean mission success or failure. We had to remember code words, directions, faces. It was critical to retain details of briefings, intelligence reports etc.

When your memory starts going it can be fast or slow. It may start with some small incident like forgetting the birthday of someone at work. Then you will start to forget the birthdays of people close to you. Or it could be fast, maybe it will be the name of your favorite restaurant and then even, you will forget where you put the remote to the TV two minutes ago. You want your memory to be at its best possible.

In the Special Forces we did exercises to improve memory and retention. We used Kim’s Game where you view either a set of items or a landscape. You then look away and have to recall what you just saw. Our sniper observers would use this to make sure they were at the top of their game.

I once had a team sergeant on one of my teams that had a photographic memory. He graduated at the top of every class he went to. The ability to retain information gave him a huge leg up on everyone else. Although we are not all blessed with a photographic memory, there are ways to at least improve what we are given and make us a little less forgetful. This is especially true with people who are already growing older. As we age, the neurons in our brains also age. Some die while others perform slower than usual. This is why people who are older have poorer memories than younger people.

But hey, as mentioned, there are ways to improve memory. Here are some of them I have seen used:

1. Use visuals or sounds

   Depending on what kind of learner you are, people can either use visuals and sounds to remember something. We call them triggers. The trigger would help you remember what ever you are seeking to retain. For instance, if you are trying to remember a to-do list, all you need to do is stare at the paper and you will be able to see in your mind the list. We would use the same for directions. We would build out a route using sand and string to help us fix the route in our minds so we would not have to use maps.

   There are people however who need to hear the trigger before they can remember everything that they have to do. We would repeat to each other details of our mission, whatever was important to fix it in our minds. To find out which technique will work for
you, try remembering how you memorize in school. Do you read the words silently or read them out loud?

3. Use associations

Our brains also need help when it comes to remembering things. The easier we make the remembering task for the brain, the better it will be able to remember the information. This is where associations come in. Associating information with things that we already know or things that we can see is a technique that has been utilized in improving memory. For instance, have you heard of mnemonics? When memorizing a set of words, we often take the first letter of that word and then form a sentence or words from those letters. Associating the word that we are trying to memorize with the first letter makes it easier for our brain.

We had to remember cryptographic codes in Special Forces. One way was to create a sentence out of the code. This is also good for computer passwords. Simply create a sentence – My dog is ten years and has fun! This could give you a nice strong password of Mdis10yahF!

4. Visualize it

Do you ever wonder why photographic memory is the term use for people with really excellent memory? This is because people who really memorize well or have great memories do not see one item or one information when committing them to memory. They see a picture of the words in group. For instance, a person with a grocery list will usually memorize the items one by one but people who learned to improve their memories will memorize it as a whole. They will look at the list and visualize it as a whole until they can see the list in their mind’s eye.'

This is why we played Kim’s game. Kim’s game strengthened our ability to “mentally photograph” a scene and recall it. Another good way to strengthen your visualization skills is when you meet someone new, imagine you are taking a photo of their face and mentally file it in your mind.

5. Eat right

I have to admit in Special Forces, we didn’t focus much on diet. Some of our main intake as beer and pizza. At the same time we were burning thousands of calories carrying huge rucksacks or going on endurance marches. That doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t have.

Your diet will factor a lot in your ability to memorize things. Eating nutritious foods will help your brain perform better and faster. This is especially true when eating known
brain foods like seaweed, milk and fish. I recommend a book that while focused on Multiple Sclerosis talks a lot about the value of food and neurological function – Minding My Mitochondria.

There are many ways to make your memory better but the most important thing is to commit to the task and promise to improve it no matter what. Remember you don’t have to get it perfect, just get it going.
Taking on the Education Crisis

“Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787

This is a bit off topic from my usual getting results personally and professionally. It comes from my deep desire to see people get out of crushing situations and flourish. Sort of like my old Special Forces motto De Oppresso Libre – To Free the Oppressed.

Everywhere you go on the Internet you see discussions of America’s education crisis. I couldn’t resist not to add my two cents as to what I see going in the United States education system.

I agree with many, including Mark Cuban, Ben Stein, and Marty Nemko, that our higher education system is not serving us and even leading the country down a road of disaster. We have an idea that all kids should go to college and that it has even become an expected entitlement.

First, I am going to say it for all to hear. The concept of higher ed is that it is higher. Not everyone was made to go to college or the University. From living in Europe for thirteen years I am familiar with the European model where only the best and brightest go to the University. Because of the low volume the country can afford to pick up most of the tab based on need. The rest of the kids are moved into apprenticeship programs and trade schools. The kids graduate quickly and not in debt. These schools because of the work-study aspect of it are inexpensive and not as long a four year degree.

What is happening in the US is that we have set the expectation that all kids need to go to college. They end up getting admitted to a program that has dubious reputation, pile up a ton of student debt, and either graduate with a ton of other mediocre grads or don’t even graduate at all and still have a ton of student debt.

This has turned the once great American University and small Liberal Arts colleges from places of challenging places of learning into expensive trade schools with absolutely no accountability. I have nothing against a college degree. I believe a classic Liberal Arts degree is one aspect of a renaissance man (or woman). I do have something against Universities and colleges that bring in unqualified students cheapening the degrees and flooding the market of college grads.
…So as I always say, don’t complain if you don’t have a solution. Have kids go to college only if they want to pursue something requiring an advanced degree – law, medicine, scientific research, or if they fully understand that going to college is not a guarantee for a job or for money. Have the rest consider a trade, look for a business that will train them for minimum wage for a period of time with the idea that they will go off on their own and eventually recreate the business.

Finally teach all young people about the new information age. How information is a commodity, how money is flowing in and through the Internet. Encourage all to have multiple streams of income, small businesses/gigs on the side to give flexibility.

I am really a big fan of Tim Ferris and his Four Hour Work Week. The Internet has such a potential to allow us to do everything we were meant to do, raise a family, serve our community, travel the world being ambassadors for our faith, make a difference. I just think it is important enough to fight for.
7 Ways to Improve in 24 Hours

What if there was a set of action steps you could take that would improve yourself personally and professionally before this time tomorrow? Would you want to know? Would you honestly use the list if you knew you would get big improvements from it? I challenge you to take these on for the next day and see what you can accomplish in this brief period of time.

Each of the action steps I’ve included in the acronym I.M.P.R.O.V.E. can be implemented in the next 24 hours. While you can repeat these things over and over for as long as you want, it doesn’t take much time to get them in place and seeing results.

Here they are…

I – Initiate
M – Make
P – Produce
R – Resolve
O – Organize
V – Vent
E – Educate

Let’s take a look at each of these in greater detail…

I – INITIATE

There are three words that I’m aware of that will have a profoundly dramatic influence upon your business if you will take them to heart and act on them:

Just. Get. Started.

So many people wait until they come up with the “perfect” idea or until their product is “perfect” or until their website is “perfect” or … fill in the blank. Remember, you don’t have to get it perfect. Just get it started.

Stop waiting. Waiting is for the emergency room. Waiting is for the grocery store checkout line. Waiting is for rush hour.

Waiting is NOT for taking steps in your life and business.
What have you been putting off? Get started on it during the next 24 hours. Even if it's not “perfect”, which, by the way, NOTHING is! For most reading this, taking a step forward during the coming day is the catalyst you need for big, game-changing results. Take it.

M – MAKE

The only thing worse that not getting started is not knowing what it is that you need to get started on.

Make a decision once and for all and stick to it. Whether it's choosing a settling down, setting off on an adventure, choosing a career or a market, determining a traffic strategy or selecting an outsourcing vendor or anything else that you’ve been in limbo over, make a decision about it during the next 24 hours.

To be sure, you want to make a wise choice. You want to make a calculated choice. You want to make a good choice. But, just make it already!

Set yourself a deadline for this time tomorrow and make a final decision.

P – PRODUCE

An easy way to improve your life in the next day is simply to be more productive during that time period. And every time period after it. It’s time to implement some healthier scheduling habits. Look for time-wasters and eliminate (or at least minimize) them. Identify ways you can use your time more effectively. Check out my book Get Er Done: The Green Beret Guide to Productivity for some productivity tips.

Outsource things that slow you down or get in your way. Time is a precious resource. You only have 24 hours – just like everyone else. That never changes. What CAN change is what you do with those trips around the clock. Be more productive. Besides using my book, take a few minutes today to search Google for “productivity tips” and begin using them immediately.

R– RESOLVE

I've got two more life-changing words for you:

Fix. It.

Whatever it is that is costing you, fix it. Part of improving your life is resolving outstanding issues that are harming it.

I don’t know a single person who can’t identify at least one thing that is creating problems for their lives, which ultimately is costing. Chances are, like everyone there are multiple issues for you.

Resolve them. Take time during the next day to fix it.

**O – ORGANIZE**

I’m a planner. It was one of my jobs in the Special Forces. I organize things like my life depends on it. Wait a minute, my life DOES depend on it! You need to organize your short and long term “to do” list and streamline it. You need to prioritize it. You need to put things on your schedule during the next 24 hours that are important NOW.

If you are getting ready to have your first child, you don’t need to decide where they will go to college. You should rather think about what kind of diaper you are going to buy.

If you’re trying to build a webpage, it’s probably not important at this point to spend time learning how to effectively buy pay per click advertising. You need to schedule things related to building that webpage.

One of the reasons that people get overwhelmed and paralyzed is because they try to do too many things at once. We’ve bought into this idea that “multi-tasking” is good. Sometimes it is, but most times it puts pressure and stress upon the person to the point they get nothing done. I talk about in Get Er Done how focusing on one thing at a time will serve you better most of the time.

Strip everything down to whatever comes next. Focus on what’s important now in the life of your business. To be sure, you want to have a clear long-term vision and plan. But, you can’t build the penthouse until you’ve laid the foundation.

**V – VENT**

This can be a completely freeing practice for a lot of people. Vent about the barriers and obstacles you are facing. That is, find something who can give you advice and ask for their help in areas that have you “stuck”.

Whether it’s a mentor or a mastermind group, a friend or an employee, someone at a forum or a workshop … talk over your struggles and get qualified advice on what to do next.
I recommend that EVERY person (I don’t care if you’re making $5 a month or $5 million a month) get a COACH. Hire someone to help you. Check out my coaching page for what I do. If you don’t hire me, then hire someone else.

When you find the right coach, it is money well spent. Hire a coach and get “unstuck”. Or stay stuck without investing a penny. Seriously, which of these two things is best for you life?

Take the next 24 hours and hire a coach. You need it.

E – EDUCATE

I’ll close out with two more words for you…

Learn. Something.

That is, identify what you need that you don’t currently have and spend some time learning how to get it. It’s simple really. If you need to lose weight, spend some time learning how to do it.

I am a constant learner. In the military, when we had a need for a new skill come up, we looked around to see where we could learn it. We sent people to evasive driving school, to locksmith school. We didn’t restrict ourselves to just what was already available.

If you need to get more clients, spend some time learning how to do it. If you need to setup a WordPress blog, spend some time learning how to do it. You can dramatically improve your life by getting educated in the areas that are currently standing between you and success. By educating yourself you can make the decisions we talked about earlier, as well as most of the other things on this list.

Learn how to do something that you need.

CONCLUSION:

Any of these things can be a big, big deal for you. I strongly encourage you to get started on this list. Devote time each day for the next week to completing the things I’ve shared with you. One per day. Look back 24 hours from now, and then 7 days from now, to see how monumental this has been for you.

Good luck!
How to Overcome a Lack of Progress

There's a reason that a hamster running on a wheel inside a mesh cage has become western civilization’s icon of a wasted, purposeless life. Who wants to work so hard, day after day, just to remain in the same place? Unfortunately, this is how a lot of us feel about our lives: That we work and work and work and never make any progress or move any closer to our dreams. And that’s a sure-fire recipe for burnout.

While that may be okay when you’re at the gym and your goal is just to get in a quick workout, it’s no way to live a life. To have a fulfilling life, or month, or day, you need to have goals and have a sense of making progress towards them.

It’s simple: If you feel like you're spinning your wheels, you WILL burn out, just as a motor straining against an immovable object will eventually give out. Humans are meant to have a purpose, a goal, a destination. Even back in the days of Moses, the most frustrating thing about wandering around in the desert for 40 years was the idea that they were wandering – not making progress, just going aimlessly from Point A to Point Who Knows?

Some people may be content to show up and do the same thing day in and day out, like handing out tickets to drivers on the turnpike. But I’m guessing that’s not you. In some area of your life, you need direction and you need to feel like you’re moving that way. If you feel frustrated, like you're banging your head against a brick wall, or just pained at the thought of spending another day of your life doing the same darned thing, then you may be suffering burnout from the lack of progress in your life.

One simple solution is to just quit – get off the hamster wheel, walk away from the dead-end job, or give up on whatever goal you were aiming for. If that works, great! Quit wandering around aimlessly and just sit down where you are. But if that’s not a viable option, read on about tracking and celebrating small victories.

Track and Celebrate Small Successes

To fight burnout that comes from frustration at lack of movement, you must have a sense of making progress. Depending on your exact goal, how you measure that progress will vary. But it’s essential for your mental well-being for you to be able to look back at your day and say, “Yes! I accomplished this!”

Tracking progress could be as simple as having a daily list of things to do and crossing them off, knowing that the day’s list rolls up into your larger goals. Or you may want a more firm metric, like miles traveled, dollars earned, calls made, pounds lost. Obviously,
some goals are easier to track than others, but overall, you should know where you’re going and how close you are to achieving them.

Let’s say you want to get a promotion. You sit down with your supervisor and determine that in order to make it to the next level, you need to take a few extra classes in project management, you need to demonstrate leadership ability, and you need to be more diligent about submitting your monthly reports in the required format. Bingo! You’ve got a ready-made checklist of items to tackle.

But what if your goal is more touchy, feely, like making your wedding photography business your day job? You can still break it down into actionable chunks. What do you have to do before you can quit? Make enough money to replace your income, or $50,000. What do you have to do to earn $50,000? You need to shoot 25 weddings this year. How many couples will you need to get in touch with before you get 25 customers? You know it’s about 10 go-sees for each booked appointment, so you will need to talk to 250 customers. Bingo! There’s your progress chart.

Making progress is the first step; tracking that progress is essential, too. Some people are very visual and like to see at a glance on a chart or graph what they’ve accomplished. Others find it sufficient to look back at their calendar or old to-do lists and see what they’ve done. Still others like to monitor their bank balance on a daily basis. Whatever works for you, find a way to link your progress to your goal. When you see yourself making strides forward, no matter how small, you’ll see that the end is closer every day.

One final word of advice: Celebrate your progress! Whether it’s five pounds lost, 100 pages written on your novel, or ten new sales calls, take a moment to enjoy the completion. Reflecting on how far you’ve come will make success that much sweeter.
Your Goal Behind the Goal

So you feel like you’re making progress, and you regularly take breaks to let your batteries recharge, but you still feel a general malaise and a lack of motivation. What gives?

The answer may lie in your end goal. You may think, “I know why I’m working twelve-hour days: I want to get my goal off the ground.” And to that, I respond: “Yeah, but…”

-Yeah, but… why do you want to do what you have in mind?

-Yeah, but… how will you know when you’ve reached your game?

-Yeah, but… what after your goal is accomplished. What then?

Think of a group of metal workers in a mid-Twentieth-century steel factory. The first group knows that each day they’re working to build airplanes and ships to liberate occupied Western Europe. They go to work knowing their labor and very sweat and lifeblood are being put to use for a greater good.

Now there’s a second group of metal workers. They have no idea what their daily effort is going towards. They show up, put in their ten hours, and clock out without any understanding of how their work will be used.

Finally, we’ve got a third group. Unfortunately, these workers are greeted at the gates every morning with a large flag flying overhead – and the red, white, and black flag has a large swastika emblazoned in the middle. As they work, they are blasted with Nazi propaganda, being constantly reminded that the products of their labors are going to protect the world from the scourge of Jews, gypsies, and other “undesirables.” Whether or not the workers share this perspective, they are forced to salute the Nazi flag and claim allegiance. Those who don’t are punished and might even lose their jobs.

Which group of workers do you think feels most motivated during the day? If you haven’t figured it out yet, having a goal isn’t enough. Sometimes your goal is fantastic, perfect – the perfect combination of motivational and inspirational. But if you’re not feeling the love, there’s a good chance your lack of motivation comes from a lack of vision. Put it this way: Having a goal that is misdirected, unclear, or not motivating enough can be worse than having no goal at all.

So if you’re not waking up psyched for the day ahead, lack of vision could be the issue. Thank goodness, there’s an easy way to rectify this issue…

Get Clear on Your Why
Today’s culture is full with rags-to-riches stories, those now-successful entrepreneurs who were able to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, inserting themselves into a life of leisure and umbrella drinks. Analyzing these stories – at least the ones that seem to be true – show that one thing many of these self-made successes had a big reason to succeed.

- Financial guru Dave Ramsey had faced bankruptcy and was at risk of losing his family.
- Music phenom Jewel was living in a car.
- Motivational coach Carrie Wilkerson was $100,000 in debt and 100 pounds overweight.

All of these people had huge reasons for working hard, day in and day out. Like explorers who had burned their ships after arriving at the New World to take away any option of retreat, success was not an option; it was an imperative.

So to bring this home, if you’re working to put food on the table, you’re not going to worry too much about motivation. You’re going to get up every morning and start hustling because you have no other option. But what if you’re not in this back-against-the-wall position?

You can still create a strong “why,” one that motivates and inspires you. Money is rarely sufficient; instead, think of what you’ll do with the money you earn. Take your family on a trip? Ensure your parents’ comfortable retirement? Build houses for the homeless? Take your goal beyond a number in the bank,

If you’re trying to lose weight, why did you pick your goal weight? To look sexy and get a new girl or boy friend? To be able to shop in any store you want? To be around when your kids have their children? You need to know the why behind the goal in order for it to successfully motivate you.

During this exercise, you might determine that your goal is misaligned with your values. You may need to re-align your goals, find a different “why,” or find a new goal altogether. Don’t let that discourage you, though – better to re-evaluate now than to reach your goals only to look around and wonder why you bothered.
You’ve Got to Swing Away

Swing away Merrill. Merrill… swing away.

Mel Gibson as Graham Hess in Signs

Did you know that you can go to the plate as many times as you want in baseball, walk each time and still have a 0% average? The only way to get a double, triple or home run is to swing away and get a hit. Yeah I know, that might mean you could strike out. Even if you hit only one out of three, you will have a 333% average, which is awesome by baseball…and by any other standard.

In baseball, business or life, you have to go for it. Sure, you can score every once in a while because your competition is so bad that a potential spouse, friend or client will choose anything else. But to really be a superstar and make something happen, you’ve got to get a hit. And to get a hit, you have to swing. It’s as simple as that.
Getting to the Next Step

Burnout can often come when you are so overwhelmed with information, possibilities, and ideas that you have no idea where to go next. It’s like planning a vacation, but you’re not sure where you want to go, when you want to leave or return, how you want to get there, or what you want to see along the way. Mountains? Beach? Safari? Skiing? It’s all on the table.

Even if you have the end result in mind – trip to beach, let’s say – the possibilities can still be overwhelming. Studies have shown that a confused mind does nothing, and nothing is more confusing – and tiring – than a plethora of options to evaluate, rank, and act upon.

Sometimes you can feel overwhelmed and burned out not only because there are so many options, but because you have no idea what your criteria should be. To go back to our beach example, if you don’t have a departure date in mind, a specific destination, or a price range, you’re going to have a difficult if not impossible task in sorting through all options to find the “best.”

If this sounds familiar, the good news is that your frustration and lack of motivation are temporary. Typically as soon as you can identify your end goal and define some parameters for your decision, you can move forward. It’s the dozens of possibilities combined with the lack of decision criteria that make for the banging-the-head-against-the-wall feeling.

So before we get into some specifics of handling overwhelm, here are a few quick actions you can take if you’re feeling bogged down and mired in choices:

**Define the ideal outcome**

Back to the beach example: Do you want to relax, skydive, be surrounded by people, or be on a desert island? Get clear on what you want to feel, have, or do.

**Eliminate the obvious**

If there are some options that are just so far out there that they’re not even in the realm of possibility (like a three-month trip to Richard Branson’s private island), get rid of them. Do a quick pass through your contenders to narrow down the choices as much as possible.

**Make a list of criteria**

For our fictional vacation, is cost an issue? Travel time? English-speaking?
Once you’ve taken as much off the table as you can, you may feel motivated enough to move forward with clarity.

Getting unstuck

Well.. these are some ways to quickly wade through the information and/or options overwhelming you. For some people, that fast sort-and-purge may be enough to get you on track. But if you’re still stuck and feeling burned out as the result of the avalanche of choices you face, here are some tips to help you move from “stuck” to “superstar:”

Make progress, however small

Sometimes all it takes is a bit of traction to get yourself moving again. Think of a car stuck in the snow, spinning its wheels. The snow is so slick, the wheels can’t get purchase and so they just spin and spin. But with a handful of kitty litter or sand, there’s enough grit that the wheels have something to push against and Voila! The car moves. The same can be true for you. All you need is a little handful of something to let you make progress.

Your “little something” could be cleaning off your desk and getting rid of all the extraneous papers and projects. Or you could make a phone call, submit an article, write an email. What it is, is less important than the actual process of undertaking and doing something.

Swallow the Bitter Pill

Sometimes we’re not really overwhelmed with tasks, we’re overwhelmed with tasks we don’t want to do. We’re burnt out because instead of just doing what we need to do, we think about it, whine about it, and resist it. Resistance, whining, and mentally rehearsing the task all take a ton of energy, more than it would take to just do the stupid thing in the first place!

Maybe you’re resisting a sticky personnel problem, like a poor performance review or even firing someone. Or maybe dealing with the “business” side of business, like finances or taxes, is where you get bogged down. Oftentimes these rotten little tasks build up until we feel totally overwhelmed by them. Doing one or two can get you moving again.

Make a choice

Ask anyone who’s planned a wedding or other huge event and they’ll tell you that the whole thing seems like a big ball of snarled yarn. You can’t book the church until you
get the date. You can’t get the date until you talk to the caterer. You can’t get the caterer until you choose the reception locale. You can’t get the reception locale until you get the church. And you’re back to the beginning again. It’s enough to make you want to elope!

What works in these situations is to just put a stake in the ground. Decide to do one thing, however small. Even knowing you want fish for dinner and you want an outdoor reception will help narrow the field. Once that stake is planted, you can begin to make other decisions based on it.

**Give up the idea of “perfection”**

Whatever goal you’re tackling, whether it’s a product launch or a wedding or a new YouTube show, you probably want it to be the best it can be. But striving to make everything “perfect” is just going to drive you nuts. Perfection doesn’t exist, and looking for the “perfect” harpist or camera or website design is going to have you wasting time. Instead, look for “adequate” or “good enough.” Once you release yourself from the bonds of perfection, you’ll be able to move forward more easily.
Breathe New Life in Your Goals

Do you still get a headache every time you think about working on your goal?

Sometimes our goals seem fine. They’re measurable, we put a timeline to them, and they’re things we really want – or think we want. But still they’ve lost their ability to motivate us, and as a result we feel bereft, bored, or just plain blah. If this sounds familiar, you may think that there’s something wrong with you – you’re not disciplined, you lack commitment, or you simply don’t have what it takes.

Don’t be so hasty to get down on yourself. The problem may not be you: It may be with your goal. If you haven’t found yourself in the previous sections but are still suffering from burnout, here’s one more possibility: Your goal is stale.

Let me explain: In order to have the capacity to motivate, our goals need to captivate us – not just logically, but emotionally. The logic part is important, sure, but even more important is the ability to ignite our passion and capture our imaginations. If your goal makes logical sense (“Get into law school,”) but your heart isn’t in it, you could be suffering from stale-goal-itis.

Before you chuck all those LSAT practice exam books, though, do some evaluation. You could still want to be a lawyer in your heart of hearts, but you haven’t painted a bright enough picture to involve your emotions. You know logically that going to law school is the right thing to do, and it even feels right, but you aren’t captivated.

Sometimes stale-goal-itis occurs when we’ve been working on a goal for so long that we take it for granted. We know we’re working towards a larger picture – launching a company to become financially independent – but it’s become words on a page rather than a living, breathing dream. It’s the living, breathing dreams that get us through the downtimes!

Your goal can also lose its luster if it’s so far off that any and all progress seems just a drop in the bucket. For instance, when you’re an ultra-marathon-runner, passing the quarter-mile mark doesn’t give you much motivation when you know you have 49.75 miles ahead of you.

Fortunately, in these situations, it’s not that your goal is wrong; it merely needs some freshening up.

Solution – Make Your Goal Come Alive

So by now you know that having a great goal is only the first step. For it to truly motivate you through times of trouble, low energy, and even burnout, you need to make your
goals come alive. Fleshed-out, passion- and emotion-filled goals are the ones that are
going to have you getting up early to hit the gym or staying up late to add one more post
to your new blog. While logic may tell you what to do, passion motivates you to do it.

Consider the difference between saying, “I want to lose 20 pounds so I can look good at
my college reunion,” versus, “I want to lose 20 pounds so I can go buy a knock-'em-
dead little black dress from the swankiest boutique in town, wear it to my college
reunion next month, and make all those sorority girls who were so mean to me fall over
in a dead faint because I look so good. Oh, and my freshman dorm crush will see me
and dump his wife to run away with me.”

Which goal do you think has the chops to inspire? Duh.

If you’re wondering how to make your dream come alive, it’s actually quite simple.
Thanks to Oprah, “The Secret,” and other New Age-y gurus, we’re all familiar with
concepts like “visualizations” and creating vision boards. These “woo-woo” techniques
are not magic; they’re tools that have been used for decades to motivate.

Think about the basketball coach who has his players imagine playing – and beating –
their big rival. Or the aspiring novelist who lies in bed at night, imagining what she’ll say
when she’s interviewed on the “Today” show. Or the next Justin Bieber, singing his ten-
year-old heart out in front of his bedroom mirror while imagining he’s performing in front
of thousands. These are just visualizations.

If you want to make your dreams and goals come alive, you need to add texture,
emotion, and color to them. What will it feel like when you walk across the stage to
accept your law school diploma? Exactly what store are you going to buy your reunion
dress from, and what shoes will you wear with it? Who will be in the audience at your
first book reading? This isn’t mindless dreaming; it’s creating the blueprint for your
future success. Plus it’s a lot of fun!

If there’s one thing to remember, it’s that logic gives you the quickest route to your goal,
but emotion makes the time fly.

Conclusion

It’s natural to face some burnout along the way to your goals. Sometimes it’s as a result
of working hard, sometimes it’s because you aren’t clear on where you’re going, and
sometimes it’s because you’re not passionate enough about your end goal. Whatever
your goal, and whatever the cause of your burnout, I hope that you have gotten some
ideas about how to revitalize your spirit.

Remember always that you don’t have to do this – whatever “this” is – alone. If you still
need some motivation or support, find an online group or coach who can help guide you
through the process. Dreaming and making those dreams into reality can be a lonely business. I’d be honored to assist you in the process.
Leave It Better Than You Found It

This is a long blog post. I have a lot of thoughts and have come to a decision about how I want to take this blog, my businesses, and my life.

I believe I am in the middle of a karios moment. I have talked about karios moments before. To keep it short this time, it is basically a moment when a special opportunity comes up. The choice is to you to take advantage of it. The reason I believe that I am at this point is the number of amazing, monumental events taking place in my life.

If you have subscribed to updates, you should have received a copy of my manifesto. In it I talk about how I have come to the conclusion that having a single normal job is not going to serve most people any more. I believe that multiple streams of income are the only way most younger people are going to achieve the same standard of living as their parents. While I have nothing against traditional jobs and even advocate having one along with other streams of income, based on modern economics the chance of a secure future is low.

It might have snuck up on you, but we are fully in the information age. As when the industrial revolution took over the agricultural age and society and economics changed, so have the same sort of changes occurred with the shift to the information age. These days when you think of something, the new natural reaction is to google it. We expect information on demand, at our finger tips. Demand for it is insatiable. Information has become the new commodity.

I am coming to see how this has changed the whole game for myself and others. The deck is stacked against those who simply want to work for a wage. Modern business is about keeping costs as low as possible, “getting leaner and leaner.” The normal Joe is only a resource like many other pieces of the business. The chance for a normal person to work at the same job for years and be able to expect an retirement is growing less and less.

So…given all this, what's a person to do? I say embrace it. Consume as much information as possible. Grow yourself in many different ways: fun, new skills such as cooking, dancing, foreign language, personal development. The costs are low and the information is now almost unlimited. If you aren't growing, you are dying. The tools with the information age make it easy to continue to grow.

To make this even better, the information age allows us professionally to do things a couple decades ago would not be possible. I am talking about dealing in information. Not state secrets, they hang you for that. I am talking about stuff you know. The appetite for information is constantly growing and people are quite happy paying for it.
Just look at the rise in eBook sales as proof. My books Get Er Done and Train Your Brain have done extremely well this first year. Get Er Done is available both in paper and eBook, I went fully with eBook/Kindle for Train Your Brain.

Now a lot of people are saying, “that that is fine for Mike Martel, but I am not a writer.” Really we are all some of information broker. You don’t have to be a writer. I guarantee that you have some knowledge of something that is more that someone else. At a particular point, they will want that information. You have a whole lot of different ways to get it to them. I have been expanding into making more videos lately. You don’t have to write anything, just talk. Video is helping me push my limits and growing my ability to reach out and help others grow.

I really see this as giving back, leaving it and others better than how I found it/them. I simply refuse to accept the status quo both for my self and others. Jesus tells us the parable of the Good Samaritan. In the parable, Jesus equates the priest and Levite that leave the neighbor in the road as guilty as those who beat him. Being neutral is not an option. I feel drawn to the idea of helping people better themselves. Helping get the information they need, helping them navigate the information age.

My coaching work with Klemmer and Associates, my church, and individually have shown me that this is something that is meant for me. I really see this as changing lives, allowing people to see what is possible. Even more, as my faith grows and deepens I feel God guiding me. Recently I had a prophetic word given to me, “Be the man you were meant to be.” I hear God telling me this and also telling me that I am meant to help others do the same. Lead in a way to make others see things differently. Reality is that there is so much opportunity in the world at this given moment to live a monumental life that is full of adventure, service and prosperity.

What I intend to do is use all of the tools, experiences, gifts that God has given me to show others what is possible for them individually and professionally to have the lives that we meant for them. I am talking about building tribes of people across the world, helping each other. Creating information to enrich others lives and bring prosperity in our own. Leveraging the information to grow traditional businesses and create new ones.

I don’t think I stumbled into this. I believe I had divine guidance in walking my path so far – a former green beret trained in unconventional warfare, building armies, using leverage to create amazing results, along with a graduate degrees in information technology. I have been around the world; Europe, Asia, Middle East, Africa, Asia, Central America, jungles, mountains, forests, the great cities. I know what the world has for us. On top of it all, training in personal development, leadership, and coaching.
So whoever is with me, let's saddle up. Looking forward to going on another adventure with you.
About Mike Martel

Retired Chief Warrant Officer Mike Martel has overcome a lot in his life. Having always struggled with a stutter, his first days in the military his drill sergeants wondered if he would ever amount to anything. Coming from a troubled past, Mike wanted to get as far away from his hometown in Ohio as he could, and the military seemed like the best chance for that. He was right – he was sent to Germany. Determined to succeed, he began to climb the ranks, serving as an infantryman, paratrooper and Special Forces Green Beret. In 2002 he retired as Chief Warrant Officer 3.

What is a Green Beret? A Green Beret is a member of the United States Special Forces, a special section of the U.S. Army that focuses on Unconventional Warfare. The Green Berets are usually the first ones sent into an area to gather intelligence, help citizens or organize rescue missions.

Mike excelled as a Green Beret because of his ethics, integrity, and his ability to think creatively about situations and because of the value he puts on personal productivity.

Since retiring, Mike joined the business world. He’s managed large teams and budgets upwards of $70 million dollars. In that time, he couldn’t help but notice how the lessons from his Special Forces training could be applied to make individuals and business teams even more productive. “Improvise, Adapt, Overcome” speaks to the need for creative, outside the box, solutions to common everyday and business problems. Mike focuses on helping individuals, entrepreneurs, and small businesses get results and improve productivity.

Mike’s books cover many different topics about how-to do things and get amazing results. Most of his books are listed on his Amazon author page. http://amazon.com/author/Mikemartel

As a coach, Mike acts as an accountability partner working with you to determine what sort of results you want in your life and then help you keep them in the forefront and work towards them.

Visit his website http://www.AchieveTheGreenBeretWay.com to find out how to get started.