



FIELD MANUAL

THE VETERAN RESET FIELD GUIDE

REBUILDING PURPOSE, CONNECTION,
HEALTH, AND FAMILY AFTER SERVICE

WELCOME: A MESSAGE FROM YOUR HOST

A Welcome From Your Host, Scott DeLuzio

Welcome home. No matter if you left the military yesterday or ten years ago, you probably know that leaving service can be harder than joining. The military is great at turning civilians into warriors, but it doesn't always show you how to build a meaningful life afterward. I'm Scott DeLuzio, and I started the *Drive On Podcast* to give veterans hope, purpose, and direction. In this guide, I've collected practical advice from hundreds of guests who have faced the same challenges. They've struggled with losing their sense of identity, short tempers, career uncertainty, and feeling like outsiders. These are real strategies from veterans who have worked through tough transitions and found ways to *drive on*.

This guide is your field manual.

Let's get started. **Drive On.**



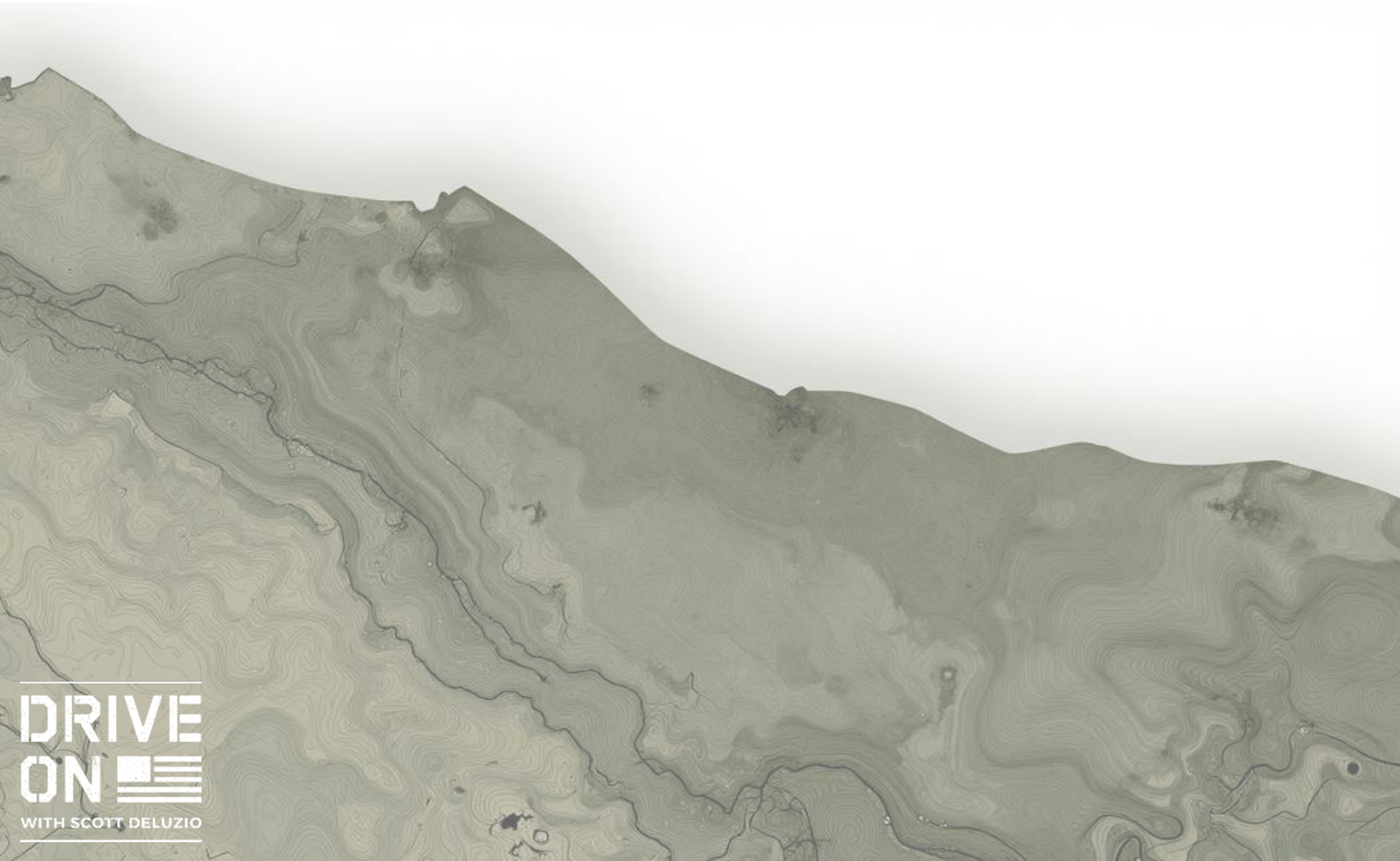
WITH SCOTT DELUZIO

Self-Assessment: Where Do You Need a Reset?

THE VETERAN RESET FIELD GUIDE

Read each statement below. If it sounds like you, mark that area as a priority for your reset.

- ☐ **Purpose:** I feel like my "best days" are behind me, and my current work feels meaningless.
- ☐ **Connection:** I feel like an outsider around civilians and struggle to make friends who "get it".
- ☐ **Stress:** I'm still in "always on" mode, scanning exits and feeling wired in calm places.
- ☐ **Family:** I have a short fuse at home, and I feel like I'm "walking on eggshells".
- ☐ **Identity:** Where do I fit in amongst my peers without being able to look at the rank on their shirts?
- ☐ **Isolation:** I find myself pulling away from people and bottling up my struggles.



1. Understanding Why Civilian Life Can Feel Unfamiliar

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THE CHALLENGE

In the military, your days were structured, and your job was clear. Leaving that environment can feel like a culture shock compared to civilian life. Thinking about the service members you're used to working with, civilians tend to focus more on individual goals than teamwork, and what they call emergencies can seem minor compared to combat.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

The Light Switch vs. The Dimmer: Joining the military is a gradual process, like slowly turning up a dimmer switch. Leaving, on the other hand, often feels like someone flipped a light switch and suddenly you're left in the dark.

Deconditioning is Mandatory: It took years to become a warrior, so it's unrealistic to expect you'll let go of those survival instincts in just a week.

Accept the Outlier Status: It's normal to feel out of place or like you're speaking a different language, because your experiences and standards are unique.

GUEST EXAMPLE

Wes Black (Ep 13) describes the shock of returning from a combat zone where he carried a rifle to seeing civilians snapping selfies while driving just 48 hours later. He had to learn to restrain the urge to "fix" civilian behavior with military aggression.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Go to a public place for 20 minutes and practice observing civilians without judging them for their lack of discipline. Remind yourself: "They haven't seen what I've seen, and that is a good thing".

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Which military habits (like hypervigilance) am I trying to use in environments where they don't fit?

Am I judging civilians for not having standards they were never trained to have?

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 13 | Wes Black | Burn Pits, the VA, and Keeping a Positive Attitude

EP 206 | Mike Kim | Veteran Readjustment Culture

EP 580 | Taamir Ransome | Why Veterans Miss The Chaos



2. Rebuilding Purpose After Military Service

THE VETERAN RESET FIELD GUIDE

THE CHALLENGE

Many veterans feel lost after leaving the military because they're no longer part of something bigger than themselves. Without a mission, it can seem like your sense of purpose ended when you turned in your gear.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Purpose is Built, Not Found: You need to create a new mission for yourself, based on what matters to you and your family now.

The Mission Changes, the Warrior Stays: Your mission may look different now, but you're still the same person. Now, your focus might be your family, your work, or your community. Keep the skills you learned (being on time, prepared, doing your best work, etc.)

Identify Your "Why": Knowing your reason for what you do gives you the strength to get through tough days.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

If a paycheck wasn't the goal, what work would make me feel like I'm serving a purpose?

How can I apply my "warrior mindset" to a non-military goal?

GUEST EXAMPLE

Gerardo Cazares (Ep 125) felt lost after the military but discovered painting on a whim. He turned his creative outlet into a "new mission," proving that purpose can be found in completely unexpected fields.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Write down three things you are passionate about that have nothing to do with your old MOS. Pick one and spend one hour researching how to get involved in it this week.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 125 | Gerardo Cazares | Repurpose Yourself After The Military

EP 301 | Mary Polanco | Finding Purpose and Navigating Military Transition

EP 487 | Juan Espinoza | Veterans Turning Pain into Purpose



3. Managing Stress, Anxiety, Anger, and Hypervigilance

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THE CHALLENGE

Survival instincts, like always being on alert help in combat, but can cause problems at home. Staying on edge can make you quick to anger and unable to relax.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

The STOP Method: When you feel a "spike" in stress, use the STOP acronym: Stop, Take a breath, Observe, and then Proceed.

Grounding is Biofeedback: Try rhythmic breathing or moving your body to remind your brain that you're safe right now.

Identify Your Triggers: Anger often hides deeper stress or fear. Figuring out what's really bothering you can help you feel less angry.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What are my physical "early warning signs" (like clenched teeth) that my stress is spiking?

Is this situation a real threat, or is my brain just stuck in "combat mode"?

GUEST EXAMPLE

Mark Weisman (Ep 140) teaches veterans how to break the cycle of raw reaction by using mindful breathing to "reset" the brain's stress response before taking action.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

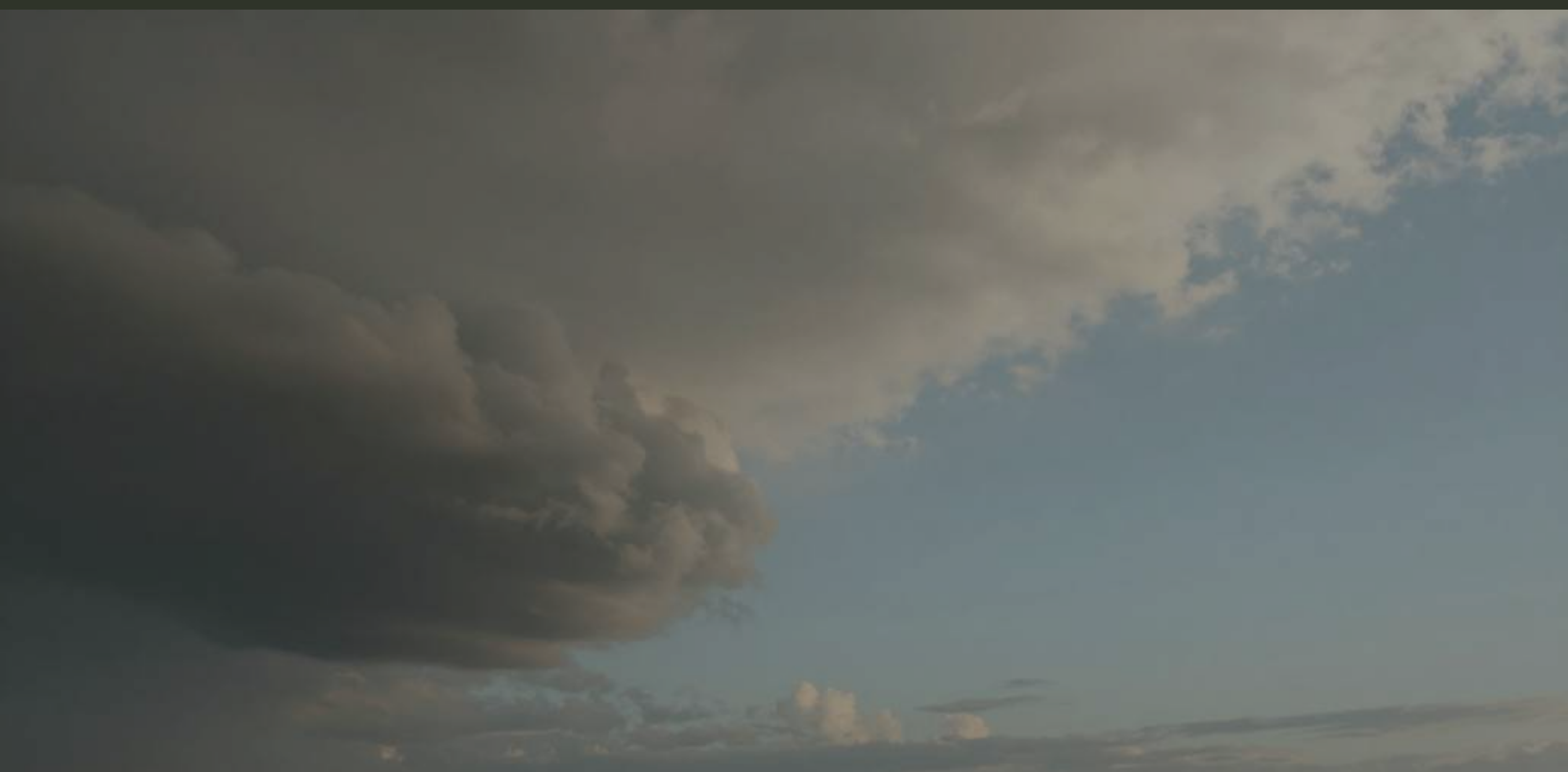
The next time you feel your stress rising in a non-dangerous situation, stop and take five deep, rhythmic breaths. Focus only on the feeling of air moving in and out of your body.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 140 | Mark Weisman | Stop, Breathe, Think, Act

EP 300 | Bronwyn Schweigerdt | Embracing Healthy Anger

EP 468 | Tim Thomas | Mastering Breathwork for a Better Life



4. Strengthening Marriage and Family Relationships

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THE CHALLENGE

Military life is hard on families. Deployments, frequent moves, and the emotional toll of service can create distance between you and your loved ones. After separation, many veterans struggle to reconnect with a spouse or children who learned to function without them.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

You Can't Command a Family: Leadership at home requires listening and vulnerability, not orders. Your family needs a partner, not a platoon leader.

Reintegration Takes Time: Your family developed routines without you. Forcing your way back into the old role too fast creates friction.

Small Moments Build Trust: Showing up consistently for the little things (dinner, bedtime, school events) rebuilds connection faster than grand gestures.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Am I trying to control my family the way I managed my team in the military?

What is one thing my spouse or child has asked for that I keep putting off?

GUEST EXAMPLE

Aaron Quinonez (Ep 197) nearly lost his marriage because he kept treating his home like a forward operating base. Learning to be emotionally present and letting his wife lead in her domain saved his family.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Have a 15-minute conversation with your spouse or closest family member where you only listen. No fixing, no advising. Just ask how they're doing and let them talk.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 197 | Aaron Quinonez | Saving Your Marriage After Service

EP 342 | Lisa Decker | Military Spouses Speak Up

EP 510 | James Killian | Fatherhood After the Frontline



5. Rebuilding Community and Camaraderie

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THE CHALLENGE

In the military, you had a built-in group of people around you. In civilian life, you have to take the lead in building your own community, or you might end up feeling very alone.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Don't Wait for an Invitation: In civilian life, you need to reach out and start building your own network.

Veteran-to-Veteran Connection: There is an "instant rapport" between those who served that bypasses the need for long explanations.

Find a "3:00 AM Friend": It's important to have a few people you can call anytime if you need help.

GUEST EXAMPLE

David Dezso (Ep 131) highlights that because veterans change jobs frequently in the first two years, having a stable "village" or networking group is essential for finding long-term stability.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Reach out to one person you served with whom you haven't spoken to in six months. Send a simple text: "Thinking of you, hope all is well".

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Who are the three people I would call if I hit a crisis tonight?

Where can I find a local group with shared interests like fitness or business?

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 131 | David Dezso | Connecting With Veterans

EP 155 | Dennis Volpe | Transition On Purpose

EP 581 | Bryan Rigg | Why Veterans Need Their Tribe



6. Turning Military Experience Into Civilian Career Value

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THE CHALLENGE

Many veterans don't realize how valuable their skills are just because they didn't have a corporate job title. You might be overqualified for some jobs, but not sure how to show your value to civilian employers.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Translate the Lingo: Remove "Three Letter Acronyms" (TLAs) from your resume; "Logistics" becomes "Supply Chain Management".

Soft Skills are Hard Assets: Being reliable, well-groomed, and able to handle stress sets you apart from many civilian workers.

Highlight Accountability: Emphasize the millions of dollars in assets or the human lives you were responsible for as a leader.

GUEST EXAMPLE

Mark DeLuzio (Ep 18) advises veterans not to quit their current jobs too early when transitioning, as it is easier to build a platform while you still have a steady income stream. He also emphasizes packaging military integrity as a "soft skill" that employers value.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Update your LinkedIn profile. Remove military jargon and focus on "results-oriented" bullets (e.g., "Managed \$2M in assets" instead of "Arms Room NCO").

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What responsibilities (budgets, lives, equipment) did I have that a civilian my age has never touched?

Am I willing to be an "apprentice" for a few months to learn the civilian way of doing things?

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 18 | Mark DeLuzio | Gold Star Father On Giving Back To Veterans

EP 87 | Cliff Payne | Military Transitions to a Post-Military Career

EP 486 | Jon Safran | Why Veterans Struggle With Civilian Careers



7. Improving Physical and Mental Well-Being

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THE CHALLENGE

Your body took a beating during service, and your mind may still be running on high alert. Many veterans neglect their physical and mental health because they were trained to push through pain. But ignoring these needs leads to burnout, chronic issues, and a lower quality of life.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Movement is Medicine: You don't need a gym membership to stay fit. Walking, hiking, or bodyweight exercises can reset your nervous system and improve sleep.

Sleep is Non-Negotiable: Poor sleep wrecks everything else. Establish a routine and cut screens before bed.

Ask for Help Early: Waiting until you're in crisis makes recovery harder. Regular check-ins with a counselor or peer group keep small problems small.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

When was the last time I did something purely for my own physical health?

What is one habit from my military routine that I could bring back to improve my daily life?

GUEST EXAMPLE

Dr. John Stracks (Ep 362) explains how unresolved stress manifests as chronic pain. He teaches veterans that addressing the emotional root of pain can eliminate physical symptoms without medication.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Commit to 20 minutes of intentional movement every day this week. It can be a walk, stretching, or a workout. Track it and notice how your mood and sleep change by day seven.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 362 | Dr. John Stracks | Mind-Body Connection for Veterans

EP 289 | Kyle Carpenter | Rebuilding Body and Mind

EP 471 | Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas | Mental Fitness for Life



8. Finding a New Mission Through Service or Entrepreneurship

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THE CHALLENGE

Veterans often miss the fast pace and independence of military life. The slower speed of corporate jobs can feel frustrating if you're used to making quick decisions.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Veterans are Born Entrepreneurs: Your training has already taught you how to handle risk, lead teams, and get things done with limited resources.

Don't Quit Your Day Job Too Early: Start building your business or side project while you still have a steady paycheck.

Trade Skills are a Strong Path: Jobs like electrical work, plumbing, or HVAC need technical skills and often give you more independence than office work.

GUEST EXAMPLE

Adam Peters (Ep 424) believes entrepreneurship is the path back to purpose because it gives you "infinite purpose" over something that is truly yours to build.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

Identify one skill you learned in the military that could be turned into a service. Research organizations like "Bunker Labs" or "Warrior Rising" to see what resources exist for veteran business owners.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Am I more comfortable following a "playbook" (like a franchise) or building from scratch?

What problem can I solve for others using my military experience?

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 55 | Joey Mac Dizon | Veteran Entrepreneurs

EP 424 | Adam Peters | Empowering Veteran Entrepreneurs

EP 555 | Marty Strong | Blue Collar Comeback For Veterans



9. Asking for Help Before Reaching a Crisis

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THE CHALLENGE

Many veterans were taught that asking for help is a sign of weakness. This mindset keeps people suffering in silence until small problems become emergencies. The truth is, reaching out early is a tactical decision, not a failure.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Normalize the Ask: Asking for help is no different than calling for backup in a firefight. It is a smart move, not a weak one.

Build Your Team Before You Need Them: Identify a counselor, peer group, or battle buddy now so you have someone to call when things get hard.

Watch for Warning Signs: Isolation, increased drinking, anger outbursts, and sleep problems are signals that you need support, not willpower.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What would I tell a fellow veteran who was struggling but refused to ask for help?

What is the worst that could realistically happen if I asked someone for support?

GUEST EXAMPLE

Ken Falke (Ep 401) founded Boulder Crest Foundation to help veterans through struggle-based growth. He emphasizes that asking for help early prevents the downward spiral that leads to crisis.

PRACTICAL ACTION (NEXT 7 DAYS)

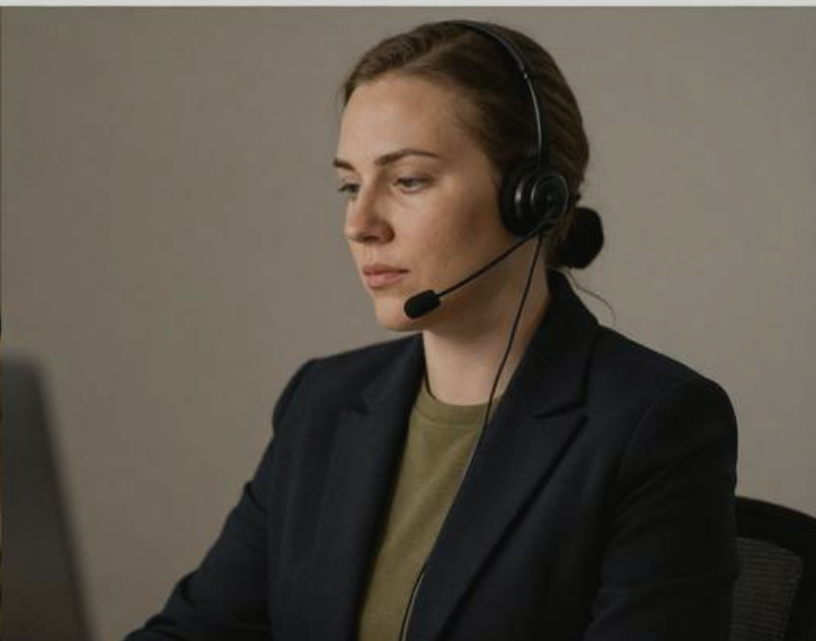
Identify three people you could call if you were having a tough week. Write their names and numbers down. Tell at least one of them that you may reach out and ask them to hold you accountable.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

EP 11 | Kim Petters | Air Force Veteran Turned Veteran Advocate

EP 433 | Garret Biss | Healing Unspoken Veteran Trauma

EP 521 | Kris Searles | One Vet's Fix for the VA's Failures



10. Ten Lessons From Hundreds of Veteran Conversations

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LESSONS 1–5

- 1. The uniform comes off, but the warrior remains.** Repurpose your drive into a new, meaningful mission.
- 2. Transition takes time.** It usually takes three to five years to feel normal again, so trust the process.
- 3. Isolation is your enemy.** Stay connected to your "tribe" to prevent the downward spiral.
- 4. You are more than your MOS.** Your value lies in your character, discipline, and grit.
- 5. Your family served too.** They deserve your presence and your vulnerability.

LESSONS 6–10

- 6. Anger is often a mask.** Look underneath the reaction to find the unresolved trigger.
- 7. Structure breeds function.** If civilian life feels too chaotic, create your own daily "battle rhythm".
- 8. Vulnerability is courage.** True strength is being able to share your story and ask for help when you need it.
- 9. You are not "broken."** You are a high-performance individual who needs a different kind of maintenance.
- 10. The oath doesn't expire.** Continue to serve your community as a "civilian leader".



11. Your 30-Day Reset Field Plan

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DAYS 1-7: REFLECTION (THE AFTER ACTION REPORT)

Write down your Top 5 Strengths from the military (e.g., Leadership, Calm under pressure).

Identify the top 3 triggers that make you "spike" into anger.

DAYS 8-14: REBUILDING CONNECTION (THE QRF)

Identify 3 people to be your "3:00 AM friends".

Reach out to a veteran organization or local meetup (e.g., VFW, American Legion, Team RWB).

DAYS 15-21: FUTURE PLANNING (THE MISSION OBJECTIVE)

Identify one career goal that isn't just about money, but about passion.

Sign up for one wellness activity (gym, yoga, rucking).

DAYS 22-30: BUILDING STRUCTURE (SOP)

Set a strict wake-up time and "lights out" time for each day.

Schedule one "Daily Temperature Reading" check-in with your spouse or partner.



12. Write Your New Mission Statement

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EXAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT

"My mission is to lead my family with patience, grow my business with integrity, and serve as a mentor to the next generation of veterans".

MY NEW MISSION IS:



The Veteran Reset Listening List

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FOR THE CAREER SEEKER:

- EP 18 | Mark DeLuzio | Gold Star Father On Giving Back To Veterans
- EP 87 | Cliff Payne | Military Transitions to a Post-Military Career
- EP 486 | Jon Safran | Why Veterans Struggle With Civilian Careers

FOR THE FAMILY MAN:

- EP 158 | Elizabeth Polinsky | Maintaining Healthy Military and Veteran Relationships
- EP 183 | Chris Shaver | A New Way To Help Military Marriages Survive
- EP 409 | Nathaniel Turner | Engaging Kids While Deployed

FOR THE WELLNESS SEEKER:

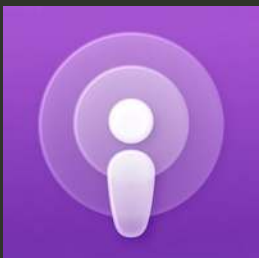
- EP 72 | Kevin Rose | The CATalyst
- EP 154 | Jennifer Boileau | Healing With Meditation And Yoga
- EP 577 | Joe Gonzalez | Scuba Therapy For Veterans

FOR MENTAL HEALTH:

- EP 50 | Margaret Rutherford | Perfectly Hidden Depression
- EP 133 | Virginia Cruz | The Soldier's Guide to PTSD
- EP 206 | Mike Kim | Veteran Readjustment Culture

FOR ALTERNATIVES TO THERAPY:

- EP 20 | Bradley Noone | Using the Outdoors as a Healthier Coping Mechanism
- EP 344 | Zachary Leyden | Equestrian Therapy for Veterans
- EP 494 | Sam Westfall | Archery for PTSD Relief



CLOSING

You don't have to carry the weight of your service alone.
The *Drive On Podcast* is here to provide hope, purpose, and
direction for your life after the military.

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Remember: Your best days are not behind you.
They are in front of you. **Drive On.**

