

Chuck DiChiara - Episode 788

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SPEAKERS

James Geering, Chuck DiChiara



James Geering 00:00

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Chuck, I want to start by saying Firstly, thank you to George for connecting us, you have yet another great human being and I want to welcome you to the behind the shield podcast today. So thank you for coming on.

 Chuck DiChiara 03:34

Thank you very much appreciate the privilege and opportunity.

 James Geering 03:38

So where on planet earth are we finding you today?

 03:41

So I am just up in Massachusetts, just northwest of the city of Boston. All right,

 James Geering 03:47

by your accent, I'm guessing you've probably been there a long time. So to start your your kind of origin story as it were, tell me where you were born and tell me a little bit about your family dynamic what your parents did, and how many siblings?

 03:59

Okay, let's see I was. So the accent is pretty bad. But I'm going to give you a quick history lesson first, which is the Pilgrims landed in a place called Plymouth Rock, which is a Massachusetts so my version of the Queen's English is perfect. And everybody else has an accent. I've been told they talk too fast and the accent is too thick. But since the Pilgrims landed here, I think I got it. Okay. But yeah, I was born place Stoneham, Massachusetts, which is just north of Boston. And I grew up parents. I had four three brothers, one passed away. We were younger. So basically, my parents were really young, got divorced, young. So I think by the time I Father, take my time, my parents were 23 years old. They had four boys. So they had a pretty, pretty full household. And they they get divorced and we're pretty young, so decent relationship with both but kind of the product of divorced parents right around the metro Boston area.

 James Geering 04:58

How old were you when you lost your brother?

 05:01

I believe I was spot seven years old.

 James Geering 05:03

Oh god, I'm so sorry to hear that. All right, so what about the professionals? What were your parents doing?

 05:10

So my mom was a stay at home mom and my father was a blue collar guy you know, he was bounced around the law jobs insurance and drove a truck in, you know, ran around a couple of different jobs even more just a blue collar guy goes once pill and, and went to work.

 James Geering 05:26

And what about your exposure to law enforcement? Were you one of many guests who actually were on the other side of it at first when you were younger? Or would you you know, what did you have people or mentors in your life that kept you on the straight and narrow early?

 05:39

So I kind of had a mixture of both, I guess growing up both sides of the fence. I probably I probably was one of those kids. That could have gone either way. I think playing football probably got me from being an angry divorced kid to into contact sports and everything else. But I think that at the time. Probably combination of both but I had an uncle, my uncle who's my godfather. He was a he was a cop city cop and you made it to Detective captain. So he was a he was a real good mentor to me. My father passed away young so my my uncle kind of stepped in with a lot of stuff. So I would say my Uncle Mike, the chair was the biggest influence on me becoming a cop.

 James Geering 06:21

And how old were you when you lost your dad?

 06:24

I was probably I was probably 30. So I wasn't tool. But he was he was such a young guy because he had us young. So my father is probably 52 When he passed away. So my, my uncle stepped in for a lot of stuff.

 James Geering 06:36

So you mentioned about playing football. Talk to me about the sports and athletics that you were doing during the school age.



06:43

So football was my really first sport, you know, like any kid football, baseball, street hockey, but football was really my first love at the time, you couldn't play until you were maybe the fourth or the fifth grade. And I took I was a smaller kid, shorter kid, kind of on the small side. And then I met a football coach by the name of Joe Walsh. And I think he kind of at the time, I was probably when those angry kids get into a lot of fights at school, almost constantly, we moved from a city to a smaller town and in the city. All the kids fought all the time. It was just kind of a rite of passage, then we move to a nicer town where the kids didn't really fight. So we kind of made my brother's kind of made a name for ourselves pretty fast for getting into fights and that type of stuff. But, you know, I met I met coach Joe Walsh at a young age and I just immediately fell to football was a lot of contact, a lot of hitting, I was able to get out a lot of frustration. The team camaraderie was wrath of Adams and something I really loved giving it to football. And then it was just from there. It was all sports. But we grew up in the area where there was a housing complex. So the same kids played football, baseball, hockey, basketball, whatever the season was. Back in the day we got, we woke up, we got thrown out to this mystical magical place called outside and every kid got thrown outside, you didn't get to stay inside. You were thrown outside. We had the same time to come home, which is when the streetlights came on. And you know, we just played sports all day long and did all the other kids stuff that I wish they I wish they did now, but I think I think some things were simple back in the day, but we had a pretty good group and a housing complex because all the kids, you know, if you were the catcher in baseball, then you know you were the center in football, you were the goalie and street hockey, if you played shortstop, you were the shortstop pitcher, and just kind of the way when you're the quarterback in baseball, so everything kind of lined up. So it was pretty cool.



James Geering 08:40

So it seems like a lot of people that grew up in an area where, you know, as you mentioned, they could have gone the good way or the bad way. Sometimes the family home is already intact. And a mentor is in addition to that sometimes whether it's a loss of a parent, whether it's a parent being gone a lot, the mentor kind of steps in what kind of magnitude did Joe feature in you staying on that correct path?



09:08

It was just a super strict football coach and he just held you in timeout timeless at a young age, just to be accountable like you. You know, you don't walk up to the football field with your cat with your parents carrying your football equipment. You carry your own stuff. If you were 10 seconds late, you were running laps. You know if you jumped offsides, you ran a lap but he just he helped each other you held everybody accountable. And he was uh, you know, he's a solid coach. But he was one of those coaches that a lot of times coaches want to coach their own kids and he did but he never picked his kids for the all star team. His kids were good athletes, but he never put them you know, he never made them captain or anything. He always picked other kids that probably needed it. So he was just, he's just a really good, really good mentor for a lot of young kids.

 James Geering 09:54

Now, what about career wise, were you dreaming of law enforcement in school, or was it something else?

 10:00

So I wasn't I was believing in not at my first year of school. I was a journalism major and my whole my whole life, I was going to be a sports writer, and football on the baseball coach, actually. So my my major was journalism. I went to Salem State College for my first year and my minor was actually coaching was a minor. So I was going to coach football and baseball and, and that was going to be it. So that was my plan going ahead. And it just really just got sidetracked one day, and I realized my path was totally different.

 James Geering 10:30

So tell me about that day, what was that pivotal moment.

 10:34

So I was, I kind of started to look at the field of sports journalism is, it really is it's few and far between, if you're gonna go to school like Emerson, like there's only a couple of really good schools to go to, if you want to go work at ESPN, you have to be super cute, handsome, tall, 10. very articulate. And those jobs are very hard to come by. And I and I wrote for a newspaper for a while, and I realized that report is, even though you get to go to all the games and stuff, they really literally don't make any money at all zero money. And I was never looking to get rich, but I just figured that maybe I should look at some other stuff. And to be honest with you, I just took it on a whim, I went down and took the police test. And at the time, it was really hard to get put on, like you had to have city residents, you had to test really high on the on the test, even to get looked at and I really just did it. I was 20 years old, I had I had the Saturday off from school, and I said, you know, I'm gonna just go home and take the police test, and just see how it goes. And my grades weren't really good in school, I think I really thought I was in school to lift weights and play football and hang around with my friends. So I didn't, I didn't really put much of an effort into school. I thought that was going to play division one football, and then I stopped growing in about the seventh grade. So a five, seven, I realized I wasn't gonna play pro ball at Division one. So I didn't really put the effort in in school. So I graduated really near the bottom of my class. But then when I took the police test, I scored a 99, which was really, which was really high at the time, and I ended up like second on the list. And then they call me right afterwards. So that's the day I took the test and I aced it. It kind of got me thinking like Well, I'm not really I'm not really a smart kid. But this seemed to come pretty easy for me. So I'm like maybe maybe my path has been off a little bit.

 James Geering 12:29

Now why why please. So when you said you went and took the test, what was it about that

profession when you weren't exposed to it younger in your younger years that drew you into uniform?

 12:40

So I think, I think back in the day more, or maybe the now but back in the day. A lot of ex jocks that were really into athletics became cops, like the captain of the football team, captain of the wrestling team, they all went down and took the police tests at one time, that's kind of just the way it went. Either we got people that really athletic or we got people from the military, that was mostly what police work was, was made up of. So I really miss playing sports in a hurry. It just kind of was over one day. And then I missed the camaraderie I miss hanging around with the guys and you know, drink beer, hang around with your friends, you know, talk shit have a whole bunch of fun, go do you know, challenge each other physically. So all that stuff from athletics, just seemed like it was going to be kind of in that police field. So I kind of got into the field thinking, well, this is kind of like playing sports, I get to do physical stuff. It's different every day, I get to hang around with my friends. And that was kind of the draw in the first it shifted that, you know, obviously as time went on, but that was my initial draw was wow, this is kind of like being in the locker room with the guys and having fun and going to do cool stuff. You know,

 James Geering 13:44

when you watch ESPN now and it's an hour of three or four dudes screaming at each other. Do you miss sports journalism?

 13:51

I don't. I don't really, because you know, it's, it's almost I really thought it was honest. But it's really almost like a it's almost like WWF wrestling now approaching my age, but it's almost like who it was. I feel like it's scripted. I feel like everybody has a role. And now when I listened to it, I'm like, well, that guy's just saying that for this reason. And now this guy is gonna take his role and jump in and he's gonna be the he's playing. We're playing good cop, bad cop over here. And it's, it doesn't seem so genuine anymore. So I'm not really a fan of it even talk radio. I listen to it on the way to work, but it makes me want to drive my car into because it seems it seems very seems very fake to me now.

 James Geering 14:31

I was just getting my hair cut, then it's a place called Sport Clips. So you know, it's my own fault. It's called Sport Clips. But the whole time I was getting my hair cut there was that going on? And I was just thinking, can you just jam those clippers into my throat and I can just end this now.

 14:46

Oh right. It's painful. And it's just people just nicked up. You know, one of the guys from the

Oh, right. It's painful. And it's just people just picked up. You know, one of the guys from the Patriots got arrested for two guns at Logan Airport and he's a good player, but it's just back and forth and both sides and of course they of course politics comes into it right away and then I'm then I'm totally out because now it just becomes a political issue. I'm again, and now I've left the conversation for good now. Well, speaking

 James Geering 15:06

of that, we're gonna get into the divisive polarization from the media when it comes to policing, when you first stepped in before we even get to your training and all that out of the area. How were the average police officers received by the community and also via the media when you first entered the profession.

 15:30

So I think it's always gone in spurts. But when I first got into it, I am a big fan of looking professional and uniform. I don't like all these new tack vests, and clubs wearing shorts and bicycle shorts and baseball hats. I'm an old school guy like I like, I like Adam 12. You know, the cops show up and uniforms, which I'm polished look good. And that was kind of how it was when you just tried to look at when you came into work. A lot of it was about command presence. And how you talk to people. When I get on the police department was very limited training. They basically just assumed you knew how to talk to people. And the training I got was man I'll tell you about that was just been it was I was 20 years old. It was bare minimum. But the media was good with us. And they just it was a it was it seemed like it was a very well respected profession. And you felt good given uniform and getting out of the car and talking to people and community was really pro police at the time. And the media seemed pro police at the time. But again, it's always coming on in spurts. It's like one day they hate us one day, they like us. And they like us and they hate us. And I've even seen that change. I've even seen a change in an eight hour shift where something kicks off. And I'm like, wait a second. We're just high fiving the neighbors two seconds ago and now. People are anti police. So it does it does go in spurts. But definitely when I get on it seemed like a very more very well respected profession.


 James Geering 16:55

Yeah, I think I saw the same thing when you know, everyone was holding the line during the beginning of COVID without any PPE in any immunization and it was literally the click of a fingers and now the police and fire medics and nurses are selfish murderers and not getting the job. Well, those selfish murders were there. Were you hiding in your house? And now all of a sudden they're demonized. I mean, personally, that's my personal opinion. I think that's disgusting.

 17:19

Yeah, it was rough too. When we have a really good, we have a really good relationship, at least in this city with the fire department too. So we do a ton of training together. And, you know, they kind of go through the same stuff, but it's even now. The fight upon was always well

respected. I tease a lot of my friends on like the, you know, America's heroes and stuff. But it really is I think that I think the two best jobs in this on this planet is fire department and police department but they deal with a lot of same stuff now. So even that those guys things that they had to deal with everybody loved the firefighter, but you see it you you see in your profession now. I mean, firefighters getting shot at you know, we're teaching classes now fire as a as a weapon, because people have started fire so that they can ambush firefighters on like, ma'am, if we're going to stop going after firefighters, we get medics we got real problems, you know,

 James Geering 18:07

yeah, what exactly. And you look at the list. I mean, we've had so many people shot the door, and it's something that I to this day, now I don't wear a uniform, doesn't matter where I'm going, I still knock on the door from the side with the war between me because you know, you obviously are maybe going into a domestic dispute. We're just going to a medical call, but we have had men and women murdered that are simply answering, you know, a seemingly harmless 911 response.

 18:31


Yes, sir. And that's it's really on the uptick to I don't think that's that's changing anytime soon.

 James Geering 18:36

So at the front door of your department, talk to me about fitness standards, and also the kind of defensive tactics elements to your initial training.

 18:46

So initial training, you mean from like the academy on or

 James Geering 18:49

Yeah, yeah. When you when you first entered the profession? Yeah. So when I first

 18:53

got on the police department, there was there was limited training, you went to a basic police academy, but that was young when I went on. And you went through a maybe 900 hour Police Academy, and it was the basics for the hours of firearms, for the hours of self defense, defensive tactics. You know, I had to run every day. You had your criminal life. So you had your all kinds of staples, and then you would get out after about a six month Academy, then you would get assigned to your police department, and they would do what they call field training. But back in, you know, back in 1988 1989, the field training was we didn't have a lot of these tools. We didn't have tasers and boiler apps and all these sexy gadgets we just had. It was

sticks and fists back then. So they pretty much gave you keys to the cruiser. I think my field training officer, I probably rode with them for maybe about three shifts. And back then the field training was like a punishment. So the guy I rode with and he was he probably wasn't a bad guy but he was kicked out of the drug unit. I think he was kicked out of the drug unit for stealing. So So for punishment, they say that you right With the fucking new guy, you get the new guy. That's your punishment. So I walk in 20 years old, not really knowing what I was doing, you know. And this guy's like, I ain't riding with the new guy. And they're like, well, you're riding with them. And it's kind of a bad start, you know, the guy doesn't want to ride with you. So we basically drove around for three nights. Then I rode around with another good guy for two nights. And then they gave me 20 years old, they gave me the keys to the police car and said, Here's your radio, here's your gun, and, you know, go catch bad guys up cause if we call you on the radio, go go on calls. And that was kind of the training back then it was pretty, it was really minimum as far as field training.

J James Geering 20:36

When you look back at your first, let's say, year, were there any calls where that lack of training almost got you killed or someone else?

o 20:45

I, I definitely. I definitely probably viewed the job differently. Like, I probably had a little bit of an edge to me. And I was trying to probably make a name for myself. So I'll be honest with you one thing, and I'm not really proud of it, but I probably turned instead of turning something a non-compliant person, I'd be pretty quick. It would probably turn pretty quick into use of force versus today. It would be totally different household that the 20-year-old me was totally different. How I handled calls. But yeah, I definitely didn't know what I was doing my could think of my first arrest. It was up on 114. And I was all excited. My first big pension. I didn't think was anything big. I think it was stolen license plates or stolen car or something. No big deal. So I arrest the guy. My heart was pounding. My palms are sweaty, I think I barely got the handcuffs on him. And then I put them in the back of the cruiser and I locked the door. I'm like, This guy's not getting away from me. And I locked the door and I closed the door. And the keys were still running and the cruiser was running. He was in it. He was laughing at me the backseat. Now I had to come on the radio and call the station. I'm like, Yeah, I locked myself out of my police car. And the bad guy is in the car. And he's laughing at me. And it was about 15 minutes before somebody got to me. So it was my first big pinches. Like, I locked myself out in the car. So I really, I probably wasn't shitshow my first year on the job. So I started to kind of figure it I think it takes about five years to learn the job anyways, but 20 years old without much life experience. I think I was still living home with my parents. So it wasn't like, wasn't like I had any idea what I was doing.

J James Geering 22:20

Now, when did you start the path towards SWAT and special operations side of policing.

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So that was that was probably that was easily the best thing to happen to me, because I'll be honest, when I get on the police department, I don't wanna say I was disappointed. But I was kind of disappointed because I expected that everybody was going to be going to the gym and working out and hanging around together. And I really expected this camaraderie. And I'll be honest with you, it wasn't there. On a day to day basis, I found myself pretty disappointed. I was like, wow, you know, this guy is trying to make Detecto that guy's on the sergeant's list. This group of guys doesn't like that group of guys and all this stuff. You heard about the Brotherhood and the thin blue line. Like it was bullshit. It was not it just wasn't true. It really everybody was kind of you had a clique that you had to join. You're either a malcontent, or you're a golden boy. And it was it was different, you know, and then I was only on about a year. And I, we had a SWAT collagen in the city, I was working at the time I was working, and it was a really good one. It was a it was a barricaded person with a gun and was extended call out and I was there. And I remember watching all the SWAT guys roll up at the time, there were a lot of a lot of whom are mostly Vietnam vets. And those guys, to me, were the best cops in this in the city. They were just, they treated everybody with love and respect until you brought violence to it. And then they handled it, you know, they were really good cops. And I watched them on this call. And I was like, That's it. For me. That's like, that's, that's what I want to do. And I pretty much made my mind up that night that at the time I was like, well, maybe I'll get into the Police Athletic League and coaching. And once I was out with those guys, it was instantly drawn. I'm like, I'm gonna I wasn't a great shot when I get on the police department because I didn't have much time on the gun. So I'm like, Alright, how am I gonna pull this off. And I'll be honest with that, I grabbed the case of ammo, and I shot constantly and I trained and I'm like, I gotta get on the SWAT team, that's going to be my one goal. So it was really just that call it watching those guys and the professionalism and in the restraint and the way they went about their business it was it was just exactly what I was looking for.

J

James Geering 24:26

Well, even though we're not deep in this conversation, yet that glimpse that you have at that time reminds me of a phrase that you know people use and I think it's spot on, you know, walk softly but carry a big stick and having that training and that physicality in your back pocket and it's almost a deterrent so that you can de escalate with your words and with sometimes with your kindness and compassion and less like you said a line is crossed and then you switch from one mode to the other. So what was it that you're seeing when this man and what was it that gave them this? The confidence and the strength to be kind and compare Originally,

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25:01

it was almost like they had this. And maybe it was some from some of the time in Vietnam, but they had this reverence to human life. And I just found was, was like riveting for me, they just, they really, you know, priority life, they cared about innocent people and they care about protecting each other. But they also, they also had a caring compassion for the subject or suspect they were dealing with, but it wasn't like you would see on TV with us watch shows up, and they're gonna be crashing and banging and like, they try to preserve life. So I always heard, protect and serve my whole life, you know, Adam 12, protect and serve. But it really is protect and serve and preserve preservation of life is really the core component of Swat. And it was so much it was so different than what you thought from the movies like these guys were there. As forced mitigation, they were there to figure out how to solve problems and not take a

life. And that's, that's really what that's really what's why there's been a boat from me, they, you know, having a plan. And it's almost like this confidence that you have, when you're working with people that know the job and people that you care about, there's a level of confidence that I think mostly police officers, a lot of times we make decisions based on I'd say probably 95% of the time, it's based on emotion, and 5% of time, it's based on logic. And I think when you can breathe and focus and make a plan, and you know, oxygenate that blood and get yourself thinking, and not just coming up with a plan A but coming up with a plan A, B, C and D, the calls just go very well. Everybody is in everybody's calm, nothing sets people off. And it really just comes down for for being well trained, and being in good physical shape. And just the way you look at the big picture, they their stress level seems to be I don't want to say flatline, because your arousal is definitely up. But they have this level of confidence that they're able to see the big picture, not this, this, this internal, like small focus. Yeah, I have a big focus on the big picture, if that makes sense. No, it

 James Geering 26:56

does completely. So when you walk in from, you know, the regular street cop into this new group, talk to me about that shift, you know, that you saw with the men and women that you're working in that team, and then the evolution of your own mindset and skills.

 27:12

So we're considered a part time team. So we this team, I'm on covers, like 64 cities and towns in Massachusetts, you know, you have you have Boston, you have Western, but then you have it's made up of a lot of smaller cities. So we cover we're a multi jurisdictional team. So we all have jobs within our own police department. So you could be working narcotics, or gangs or like a my department, I'm in charge of training. And then I would just go to swat when we had calls, we would train together all the time. And we would go on on columns. But the rotation is really slow. So once you get on the team, you start really slow, like anybody that thinks they're going to be crashing and bang and a year on the job. It's just not happening. So I was I almost didn't get on because I was blown my interview because I was trying to come off. I knew I was young, and they didn't really take eyes as young as I did. And I had done pretty well in the police academy. So I kind of brought that in, I kind of went in there with maybe a little cockiness, saying, Listen, I graduated first in my academy, I was first in PT. So I wanted the guys to trust me. And I think I probably put my pants on the interview because some of the guys knew me from working with me. But some of the older guys were like, Yeah, this kids, this kids are golden boy. And he's an individual. He's not what we're looking for. So they took me they did take me on. But when you you have to get all votes. So at the time, we had 25 guys on the team. Now we're up to 40. But we all were capped at 25. So you had to get 25 votes out of 25 people. So if two guys didn't like you, you were screwed. So the guy a couple guys vote for me. And they brought me on but they brought me on super slow. So I drove the van for a couple of years. I had every I took every job, crappy job I could just to get on the team, I became a tear gas guy. Then I eventually moved up to the breaching team before I get on the entry team. So it was probably a five year rotation of training my ass off. Before they started to trust me on Good job, which was really good for me because I was able to, I guess break me down, they really broke down, they really broke me down the ground zero again and built me back up. But I went from being an individual and wanting to do cool stuff and get commendations and that changed my whole mindset and I just decided that it was way cooler to be pot, like a small fish

in the big pond. I wanted to be part of a team and be the best team that I possibly could. And that's what that's what those guys did. They took me under their wing, they broke me down and took me on super slow and I really didn't do anything. My first five years on the team before I started getting Do cool shit, you know?

J

James Geering 29:48

Now what about the culture within the team? You know, there's there seems to be especially when I speak to people in your community, a division between a regular police officer and special operations when it comes to the Mount firearms training, fitness standards, you know, etc, etc. But when you look from the outside looking in, it doesn't matter if I'm a regular firefighter paramedic, or a hazmat tech, we're still going to the same cause we still should be held to the same standard. So what what did you see as far as the difference between the people within the teams and the culture that you'd kind of just come from as a regular police officer?

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30:24

Yeah, so the culture is, as a regular police officer, you know, that probably one of the great, I guess, misconceptions is, you know, we always hear based on training and experience and, and officers are so well trained. But you know, some of the one of the missing links on this use of force stuff is police officers don't get the training that we probably should, you know, we get very basic minimal training to determine a lot of this other stuff is going to be self motivation, like a lot of training, you have to seek out on your own, which is a lot of the guys that work tactical did, they would seek out training on their own. But from Allied offset, you really get the basics, you don't have to pass a physical fitness test up this way. You just have to maintain fitness for duty. And that's very, that's very subjective. And then the firearms training is you have to pass a qual twice a year. And the qual isn't like you have to score an 80 out of 100. And I could probably take a 17 year old kid off the street that's ever picked up a gun and train him for an hour and he could shoot an ad like it's just, it's all combat shooting from enclose so and you only have to shoot twice a year. So they don't hold you to a super high standard. They don't hold us to a super high physical fitness standard. You're in service training, every officer has to get for the hours of in service training a year. But the training is, it's pretty minimal. It's for you know, you gotta get CPR training, first responder, basic criminal law, basic constitutional law, and then they'll pick a topic like, you know, hate crimes, or dealing with elderly or dealing with psych, Psych avows, that type of stuff, but it's only a 40 hour class, and then everything else is really on your own. So to maintain certifications of police officer, the standard is not super high. But then, you know, if you're, if you're assigned to a specialized unit, like SWAT training is every Wednesday, we have to shoot 100 instead of an ad, and you really held you really held accountable, like if you're, if your attendance isn't good, you're gonna get called out, if you don't shoot 100, you're gonna come back next month and try to shoot 100. But it doesn't matter if you're the most highly decorated guy on the team, if you don't hit the standard, you're out. And we have to pass a yearly physical fitness standard. And it's not super hard, it's not Navy SEAL difficult. But you certainly have to maintain the level of proficiency physical fitness wise. And you know, you have to turn in your personnel file to make sure you're not calling in sick, or you're not going out with injuries and stuff. So it's really two different worlds. But again, when you go to your own, when you're going on call you're going on

call sick have, you could be going on call with a guy who's got all kinds of training and experience and real world experience. And you could be going on a call with a guy that you know, watch Netflix for eight hours and variances radio, it's just the way it goes.

 James Geering 33:13

How is that received within the SWAT community the the kind of polarizing standards in the regular community because again, I talked about this a lot. It doesn't matter which one of us is called at some point, a firefighter is going to be called to climb 2030 stories with 100 pounds of gear. And then you know make entry and do a search and pull someone out maybe have to extricate them all the way down. Again, a huge, huge, you know, level of exertion level of fitness level of strength. And it doesn't matter if you're special ops or you know, paramedic or EMT, if you are wearing a firefighter badge, you might be one of those people that scored so for me, the opposition of fitness standards in first responder communities is absolute insanity. Now you are held to a standard in Swat, how is that perceived that they're not outside of Swat?

 34:06

Well, it's difficult because well, you know, we're all friends. We're all brothers, we work together. But you know, you're always wishing cops. They say cops hate change. And they say same thing for firefighters. Right cut. Cops hate change, and they hate the way they are they hate. They hate change, but they hate the way things are. So that's kind of true. But it's, it's I guess it's true because we're comfortable. We're comfortable with the status quo to a point sometimes, you know, people get nervous with change. But then on the flip side of it, we always think things could be better. And I think that's where we're at is we have to hold each other accountable and make things better, like with the we're all going on the same type of calls. There's some phenomenal patrolmen out there that go on the same type of calls. And if we have time, I'm going to talk about some of the high profile incidents that we've been on. That the SWAT team got all the accolades And it was the guys in patrol, just the land patrol guys who did unbelievable police work. So, and those guys step up time and time again. But overall, we just probably need to increase the standards and and get everybody on the same page because we've been trying to swat is kind of a weird thing because at the time when it started it was, you know, when Daryl gates started and SWAT teams from LAPD in the late 60s. It was for specialized type calls. And now it's kind of gone back where we're saying, listen, they have a specialized training, it needs to be in patrol as well like how to handle active shooter how to handle suicidal barricades, how to search a building. So at the time when SWAT developed it was to handle these specialized calls. So now guys on SWAT teams and saying, Listen, we need to take all these tactics and teach them to patrol. That doesn't mean everybody in Patrol has to be a tactical guide. But all these lessons learned and having a plan A and a plan B and A Plan C, and D escalation and force mitigation, these are all things that we need to get into patrol as well as increase the physical fitness standard and increase the firearm standard. And again, it's really is about raising the standard versus lowering the standard. The problem is now with some of the police reform stuff is we seem to be lowering the standard. And it's frustrating for a lot of us that really care about this profession. Because we're like, man, we're lowering the standard. This is not the time, this is the time we have to train everybody up and use this as a as example to, you know, taken some good things about police reform and realize that we need to up our game rather than lessen it.

J

James Geering 36:39

Well, I want to kind of tangent on what you said. But just before I do, just make sure I don't forget, as far as the SWAT medics in your department have those police officers are they from the fire side.

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36:50

So they're from the fire side, we've we've experimented a couple of times with different ones when now we just have our own medics. So we've we put them in a tactical environment more than we used to like dropping them into a warm zones and stuff. But when I first got on, we tried to use police officers and it just didn't really work out because they weren't SWAT officers, they were police officers that were medics and they were good. But they weren't really mission specific. So you'd be you'd be calling from medic, and they'd be out there arguing with some of the industry or we'll be like medic, and then they'd be out there, you know, arresting somebody for trespass. And we're like, No, we need the medic. So that didn't really work out so well. And then we we switched to using firefighters and medics. And it seems to, it seems to be it seems to be working out much better for us now having pre determined medics.

J

James Geering 37:38

So there's a spectrum of dynamics within that relationship from the firefighter medic that actually goes through law Police Academy and is carrying all the way through to I mean, basically they're in the cold zone. So a long way away and really not not equipped. So just just there as an extra kind of med box to respond if needed. And then everything in between of all the different dynamics that you've been exposed to what is your favorite kind of role for that firefighter and Medic to be in?

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38:09

So I love the I love the integrated response we've been we've really been Santa, we got a big grant up in Massachusetts to really get the police and firefighters training together which, which I'm a huge fan, that active integrated response I like and you know, we'll do we'll do things one way for a while, like this works pretty good. But then something pops. And as long as you have no ego in this business and you say like, Hey, there's a better way. So we've really changed that. So I'm at Columbine, obviously. And then it's changed for us over the years, but with the firefighters and medics now, even in the last year, we changed we would always go, you know, we always go the police officers go downrange. When it's when it's a cold zone, we'll we'll start to bring in our firefighters and medics. But we don't do that. Now. Now. Now what we'll do is, and I love it this way. I think it's it took me a minute because I was always, you know, the first couple offices in the building are going to be the contact team, they're going to try to make contact with the threat and they're you know, I was always taught we're going to be stepping over people. You know, it's not a rescue mission, you need to go downrange and stop the killing and stuff the bad guy. So it seemed to work. But now we're really teaching if we get into a building, and there's no driving force, and we have victims down, we're going to start to save lives. And so it's going to go, you know, stop the killing, stop the bleeding and then rescue. And that's really what we're pushing down. So if we if we clear into a building, and we

don't have a driving force, and we don't have gunfire or reason, driving us ahead, then we're going to pose and start to tie tourniquets and get the firefighters and medics into that warm zone. And it took a minute to get everybody to buy into it and I totally get it. I have firefighter friends that were like eff that I didn't sign up for this. But when you put it in context and say listen, if this was your this was your son or your daughter, would you want everybody looking for the bad guy or do you want them to Trying to save lives here. And we really switch gears with it. And I love the way we're doing it. Now, I just think it makes a ton of sense to me. And when you look at some of the data, in some of these active shooter events, we're almost Chasing Ghosts, like everybody's looking for a bad guy, maybe whether he got out or he escaped, or he's on a different floor. And we're letting people bleed. And it makes sense to me that if we can start tying tourniquets, and stop the bleeding, and we shouldn't be doing that, so that's kind of what we switched to. And that's what we do now. And I think it's, I think, it's just way better. It took me a minute to grasp the concept. But I think the data is there that if we can get people extricated out of there, and then save, and that's what we should be doing. And we'll, you know, we're not going to put people in harm's way. But, and then if we're treating people and there's, there's a change in the condition, and we have a reason to push on them, we'll, we'll hold security on the firefighters when that will always leave team members with the firefighters, but we're going to send officers downrange to to kind of solve the problem. But I kind of like the way we're doing it now.

J

James Geering 40:59

I've had firefighters I've worked with even just doing what they call the safe training, which was the kind of you know, you go with the team, they'd stack on there, they'd be covering front, back and side and you go in, you know, package your patient, and they'll get scared and then you drag them out. And the number of people in this last apartment was not exactly a great example of fired up passionate firefighters anyway. But that would say this is not my job description. And I would argue bullshit, you signed up to save lives. Now you're not running into gunfire like you know that epic scene in platoon, you're making sure that as you said, it's a it's a warm zone, and you're trusting the other men and women in uniform that around you. But yeah, it's a dangerous job. And if you, you know, are gonna just let an elementary school kids bleed out because you're too much of a pussy to do your job, then maybe you need to look in the mirror and ask yourself, should you be wearing that badge in the first place?

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41:51

And and that's, that's policemen and firefighters as well, you know, the, when we first started doing the active shooter training, guys are like, Well, I didn't sign up for this. I'm like, Well, you did. And I hear it all the time. Even in the police academy people like, you know, officer safety is, number one concern is going home at the end of the day. And I'm like, No, it's not, that's bullshit, because, like, these people didn't sign off this priority of life as innocent people, victims, and people that didn't sign off from this. So officer safety actually comes second like, or else we wouldn't even go downrange. And so, you know, like, obviously, I'm not gonna get into certain maybe certain events that took place, but there's been a couple of active shooter and one went very bad. And one went very well. And I love I show the differences when I teach them like you see the difference between people that understand, like you got to you got to make a plan and go downrange. And it's the same way I have a lot of close friends in the fire department that are, they're rock stars. But the unions up here are very strong in northeast.

And a lot of it is like, whoa, you know, that's not what I signed up for. But I never understood with the firefighters. So I'm not afraid to get shot that I am petrified to run into a burning building, I think you can people crazy, I don't know why you would ever run into a burning building a building that's on fire. So I have mad respect for the firefighters. But I'm like, wait a second, you're gonna run into a building that's on fire. But you're, you're free to get in thing. But we'll put some security in there with you. So I don't really understand it from the police or the fire side. Like, you know, I'm not looking to leave this world early. But you know, there's worse ways to leave this world and protecting somebody and protecting somebody that needs you. So I always give the police and fire together. But I don't agree with that. And I get these arguments for both. But you have to we all signed on for this and you signed on to do a dangerous job. And I think that's why people like me, and you have inner peace that hey, you know what, you're doing a job for the greater good. And whoever plays it will play. But I think that there's a lot of people in this profession. Certainly not everybody, but I think there's a good group of us that are drawn by that bond of you know, doing a righteous job, get your lunch feel going to work and doing doing a righteous job for the greater good. I think the lovers still believe that.

J

James Geering 44:04

Well, just to add on to that the men and women I know that wouldn't blink an eye before going into a scenario when they've assessed it. And it's a warm zone and it's a calculated risk are the same ones that are training diligently the same ones that are working on their fitness because they understand how dangerous this job is. And that more often than not the ones that say it's not in my job description are the ones that watch eight flicks earn eight flicks watch Netflix for eight hours. So really, you know what I've seen is the ones that actually understand this job know how fucking dangerous dangerous it is, and are training diligently because we know that fires are dangerous. We know we could get creamed on the side of a highway extricating someone from their car. And we know that obviously we're you know, we're not too fond of bullets in the fire service. But that's why you do this you know this. The training with PD that's why you can learn about weapons is where you go take some classes yourself even though you're a firefighter so you can understand how to make in a way and safe and understand, you know how ballistic vests work and don't and just educate yourself on that side. Because we can't be naive anymore. I mean, I've been I was a firefighter 14 years started in oh four, actually my first apartment. So I started the fire service when mass shootings are already happening. So it is a part of the modern day fire service.

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45:23

Yeah, and it's so with that, I just had a fire agency of this way. And I just knew the deputy chief and they called me up and they said, Hey, would you be interested in coming in and train the whole fire department, and just one day training block of, you know, some some control and restraint techniques dealing with emotionally disturbed people. And then we did a block on edge weapon defense. And then we did I actually did a block on that duty to intervene, to kind of, you know, less than the fair between police and fire understanding what this duty to intervene law means, which is, which is we have to intervene if we see an excessive force. So I did a whole block of training. And that went great. And I gave the chief credit, to put in some extra training for his guys just in, in, in, in the, in what we do so and then some ways they can handle stuff. But as far as training, police and fire, so I kind of thought about this years ago,

and I bring this up, I've been lucky enough to train cops from and I'm really just been sad and training firefighters recently, but train cop from here out to California and Colombian National Police Canada. So I've trained cops everywhere, and I decided that there's a, I call it the 70/20/10 rule. So 70% of all people in your profession at the fire department and 70% of my profession, they do the job, they're good, they're going to show up, they're going to come to work, they're going to answer the radio, they're going to do what they're supposed to do. And they're going to do the job, they're not gonna come into work every night with a with a firecracker under their ass and, and try to set world records, but they're going to do the job. So on the police department, if they have to answer 10 calls and write 10 tickets, that's what they're gonna give you 10 They're not gonna give you 20 They're not gonna go out and make 10 arrests, but they're going to do what they're supposed to do. And that's most people in your profession of my profession that I That's my opinion, after 35 years as a cop 70% of us do the job. 20% Are you guys that play shortstop and bat cleanup, those are the guys that they can retire and they don't want to retire. They they they train, if they're supposed to shoot twice a year, they shoot 10 times a year. If this poster shouldn't ad and they shouldn't 96 they go home and drink in the dark because they're so pissed off. And they go the rage and next day, when they're exhausted, they're gonna go work out and go for a run and train. And those those are the guys that and both are professionals. Those are the guys who want to go on calls, right? You say I want to go I want to go on a call with that fucking guy because he's going to take care of business. If I'm in shit, that's what I want to see coming. That's the guy I want to go through the door. When I'm when a building's on fire. Right. So that's, that's what we 20% And those yourself meet motivated people that they just believe in the mission so much that you don't have to motivate them. And what does that leave 10% And we both know what the 10 percenters right, I call them. Raj retired on duty or the malcontents or the people that just don't they just check out and sometimes those 10 percenters are guys that people did. They get the job at one time, and now they're frustrated. But that 10% is where all our problems come from. And law enforcement. They're the ones that get us into trouble. They're the ones that become national news or SEC case law. But I think that's only a small portion of it. So any training that I do now, I've always heard my whole Korea, we train to the least common denominator, and I get it, I've heard it. But now that I'm old, and I'm fussy, I'm like, well, like who the fuck said that, like, who set that standard? Because that means I have to dictate all our training to the temper centers. And I'm not that good that I can take some guy or some female offset that doesn't give a shit and get them switched on. For whatever reason. I don't blame some of the people on my friends, right? They're switched off. I can't get them switched on. I don't dictate my training to the 20 percenters because those guys are already shit hot all the time. They come in locked in, they come in ready to go. They're in shape. They're smart. They read case law. So I direct everything to that 70% Because those are the show me guys, those are the guys when you say hey, let me show you some cool stuff with the baton or let's win some firearms drills, those 70 percents, they come to training and they're like, Alright, I'm gonna do what I'm supposed to do. But if you show them cool shit, then they're like, hey, that class was that awesome. And then, you know, then they push the envelope, and maybe they come in a little bit more motivated. But that's kind of what I found is that 70/20/10 rule. And that's big departments at small departments. That's fire services. I think we're all kind of wired the same way. I strive to get people into that 20% range, but I'm okay from the 70% range. If you're in the 10% range, I'm sorry, like, I just don't have a lot of use for at this point the world the profession doesn't need it. We need to get better and sometimes we got to cut some of our way out Have you know?

J

James Geering 50:00

So that's a perfect segue to something I was going to read you I was Father's Day, this year, I took my son to watch the new Spider Man film, The quote is the policeman of, I think, when is her name? He's, he's a cop. And she says to him, you're a good cop Dad, you put on that badge and carry that gun, because you know, if you don't, someone who shouldn't? Well, that's that 10%. So, a little while ago, you said about standards being lowered. Talk to me about what I mean, let me preface this. I've worked for arguably one of the best fire departments in America and one of the worst. So I have an interesting kind of perspective of, you know, do's and don'ts that we say, and the the department where the bar was held extremely high, and they would lose 25% of their probationary class through attrition. If you couldn't reach it, thank you for trying, and good luck with another department. There, that bar stayed high through the ranks, they had, you know, great engineers, captains, chiefs, etc. When I saw the other side of the spectrum where the bar was in a trench, it was the polar opposite. So this expectation that I see with departments by lowering standards, you're going to get more people, I call bullshit on that. Because to me, what I've seen on my own eyes, is that departments are revered, that have these high standards are the ones that excuse me, the ones that have people lining up outside the door. So talk to me about your perception of this lowering of standards, and what that's going to do to the number of good police officers or firefighters in uniform through your eyes.



51:41

Yeah, so it's, it's heartbreaking because, you know, people people believe in this job, and they see the profession going a certain way. And some some of it's our own fault. Because, you know, we tell everybody, the job sucks, because we're frustrated with police reform. So we do it to ourselves to a point but when we started to lower the standards, it was never the hottest thing ever, but like you say, You people want to work. People want to work for a professional organization. I think the cops do want to be held accountable good cops want, they want good cops want accountability. They want a high standard, you know, they want good training within a department. So when we started to lower the standards to put you know, Greg Brady from The Brady Bunch, put, you know, put somebody in the suit, that's what we're looking to do. And we're catering to the eighth place trophy stuff. And it's it, you're seeing good cops retire, which we never had before. Like that never happened, like you came into this job. I don't know what the numbers are now, but it was you had to work 32 years on the job and be 55 years old to pension out Max pension. And it wasn't even a question like you people knew their retirement day, but everybody was gonna stick around. But now we're having good cops just walk in off the street and say, Yeah, you know what, I'm gonna go do something else, I'm gonna go into the family pesticide business, or I'm gonna go cut lawns, because I don't I don't need the bullshit, but it has a trickling down effect, you know, and so that instead of recruiting good offices, then you lower the standards, and people just goes into that. People just say, yeah, it's all bullshit. And then they don't hold each other accountable. And then you're getting people that sometimes we're getting people in this job, they just, I mean, the physical fitness standards are fine. If you saw it. James, you'd be you'd be mortified. We just keep dropping it. So let's change that. Let's change the push up test in the setup test. And let's give people more time on the run. And just to put bodies and I get it, I get that we're in a, we're in a tough situation, because we need bodies on the street. But we don't need the wrong bodies on the street, either. You know, so it's, it's a tough one for us right now. But I agree with you lowering the standards, is not really not really the answer. But I'm not sure they know what the answer is.

 James Geering 53:53

So what have you seen? You said, as you touched on 30 plus years of policing? What have been the contributing factors that have led to lowering standards and led to more and more difficulty hiring?

 54:16

First off, we're not really getting Nah, not really getting the numbers. So I think maybe, so on my city, we might have, let's see if for I think, one of those sites so we'll have like 400 city residents take the test. And I think after police reform, there was like 41, so you're not really getting the numbers before you would get a 99 or 98. You die in the list, trying to get a job. And now they're making it down to the 70s in the 80s. So part of it is a numbers game people. I don't think the captain of the football team was not coming in to take this test. He's gonna go into computers, or computer science or go do something else. So first of all, not really, we're not really getting the numbers. That's first and foremost. And then the back GRANT checks probably used to be more strict, you know, now, like, you have to have a track record of employment, and good work record and showing up to work. And what I see now is because we can't pass everybody over, we got to hire somebody. So now, if you jumped around and had nine different jobs, that would be a game changer before now, they'd be like, well, at least he's working. Or if you had bad credit before, you weren't, if you had bad credit, the police department was going to hire you. And now today, there will probably be like, Well, everybody's got some stuff on their bad credit reports, you know, so that's kind of where it starts. And then we get right into the physical fitness standard. And then that that's where again, that where we get into the used to have to be strict on the push ups sit ups mile and a half. And then they just lowered from, you know, we see us a cooper standards, I guess they still do, but you know, it's gone from 50%. And well, let's, let's make it 40% of the Cooper standards. And then it's like, well, let's make it 30% To get into the academy, and then for the to graduate. So that's kind of where it's, it's gone to, but I'm hoping that I think the pendulum is starting to swing back, I think we're starting to get more people take the test, I think people are starting out, hopefully realize that it's a good job. And we need more, we need good cops out there. So I'm hoping I kind of feel like the pendulum is swinging. I don't want to get my hopes up. But I think we're kind of taking it back the narrative a little bit. So I'm positive that we're going to maybe improve, but I really don't know, it's, it's kind of a slippery slope we're at right now.

 James Geering 56:37

So I want to get into the use of force and other areas that you've become an expert in now. But you before you touched on some of the career calls that you were giving credit to some of the line officers. So if you wouldn't mind again, lead us through some of those calls. And, you know, add in the validation that maybe wasn't acknowledged before.

 57:00

I think I can talk about one one high profile event was obviously the Boston Marathon bombing, falling into the wild a time incident where the the two suspects were apprehended. So I was I had a special reaction team. I'd like an eight man team and a big cat that was in the Boston

area that night. So we responded, We were involved in it. But if you watch the movie, so there's a couple good. There's a good documentary out there. There's a Netflix one manhunt. It's really good. It probably is. It's probably the most truthful one I've seen. It really gets into the dynamics and, you know, some of the conversations that were had. So that was a really good one, but they made the movie Patriots Day. And you know, a lot of the accolades went to the SWAT teams because you know, the pictures and the videos. It's, it's sexy to put pictures of the SWAT guys out there. But I'll tell you what the guys that did the most on that were a couple of him in Vegas from the Watertown police department a couple guys in patrol, some of them were friends of mine. They came to work that night and everybody was on high alert. And the just the strangest thing I can tell you you know for me as a firefighter sometimes sometimes you just feel it in the air you know and and the city was shut down and we were searching for these guys around the clock. And it just was that night we just knew something was gonna happen it's hard to explain but I had eight guys with me in a in a bear cat were like tonight tonight like something it's gonna happen tonight for sure. And you know, the patrol guys in the surrounding towns, we're all kind of on high alert as well, but they're going into a chase and I am a huge gunfight running gunfight with these guys. And at the time, they didn't even know they either was a carjacking and they were involved in the huge gunfight and these guys were throwing bombs at them pressure cooker bombs, and luckily they were blown. If they would have placed them the officers would have been in trouble but they were stupid enough to throw them so when they hit they blew up rather than out so they're kind of probably saved the cops lives but those guys those guys shot till they had no ammo left and then it turned into a hands on but the from start to finish that why the time incident with the apprehension of the first terrorist 100% patrol and if you see the clips, you would think it was all the SWAT teams because everybody all the SWAT guys were running around. But that was a couple guys in patrol that really answered the bell that night. Every time we get a chance to plug those guys they did they did epic police work. And even during the gunfight they weren't even really quite sure who it was and then afterwards they figured it out. But that's just an example these these patrol guys show up every time and I always said at the patrols the backbone of the police department. And these guys always everybody wants to be a specialist I want to work swat at Windward gangs I want to canine and the guys that show up and just answer the bell and patrol sometimes they just don't always get the credit. That was when really good incident. I saw that patrol really stepped up.

J

James Geering 59:47

Well firstly I watched manhunt only a few weeks ago and it was incredible. And one of the things that I don't think was reported or maybe it was I just I just didn't come across it was after that massive fight. And they were about had to detain his brother he ends up getting in the car and running his own brother over so, you know, this was the level of just extremism and I would argue pure insanity that these these two had at that point.



1:00:12

Yeah insanity and then you know these these were just these were just bad bad guys and there was another incident I'll just talking about again same thing you guys have patrol did a really good job so right after the Columbine incident in 99 I believe so we started to train up. We started to allow time to swat we've got to train patrol guys to do more tactical stuff. So when we first started to teach in service veteran officers about this active shooter response because

in Columbine, you know they did at the time they did what they were taught and trained to do, which is contained it, stabilize it suppress overreaction, try to develop intelligence and force a peaceful surrender and wait for Swat. That's, that's what they did at the time. That's what we handle this call. So after Columbine, we said, Listen, we have to train patrol guys to use tactical type operations. And at the time, it wasn't received well at all. Like, we were like, Oh, you guys a bunch of high guys. And, you know, you just want to talk about swat and, you know, do all the cool stuff. But that's not foot patrol. So at the time, it wasn't received very well. And then as we're teaching it, legitimately a mile from the location up in Wakefield, we were teaching active shooter training. It was day after Christmas, I think December 26 2000. And then I won't mention the guy's name, but just referred to as a medical event of the Wakefield massacre. This guy went into Edgewater technologies, and just started shooting people. And when it was over, he killed seven people, but the call folk SWAT came out and because of the intelligence is always going to be off. So we were called, we were told there were two shooters, there were three shooters because it was so much carnage, they didn't know how many shooters were in the building. So SWAT was responded, and I was one of the first guys here from Swat. But I tell you, the guys from patrol, and the guys that they crushed that they went in there and they stopped a lot of they probably saved a lot of lives. And what happened is when when Michael got done shooting, he sat down on the couch and took a little bit of a break. And, you know, his story was he was his soul he had he was born without a soul. And God told him if he would send him back to kill Nazis, and then he would give him a soul for killing Nazis. And it was all a ploy. I think that was just going to be I think he had researched insanity defense ahead of time, I think he was just pissed off that they, they garnered his wages. But whatever reason he went in and started shooting people, but the patrol guys did exactly what we're teaching them to do. It was like one guy working the detail and another detective and two patrol guys. And they formed the Forman contact team that went into the foyer. And right when the subject suspect was taking a break, they apprehended him real fast, and that person had, he had rifle, shotgun, plenty ammunition. And it's a bad day because he murdered seven people. But the carnage would have been way worse. Except the patrol guys, they didn't wait. They don't wait for SWAT and this was relatively new. This was 2000. So this active shooter response was really new. And these guys did with their training, we train them to do this, Hey, listen, we're gonna pack up instead of contact him. And then they apprehended him. And again, same thing, all the news clips I saw was all the SWAT guys running around. I'm like, wait a second, those patrol guys, those guys took care of business and they were shit hot that day. Like they answered the bell. And they probably saved a lot of lives that day. And, you know, I'm not sure that they got the accolades, because again, patrol doesn't always get the respect that they deserve, because everybody's looking at make some kind of a specialty job.

J

James Geering 1:03:39

So I had a unique insight into school shootings, or a potential school shooting when I took my son back to school after a medical appointment, just an annual physical. And just so happened right when I was at reception, dropping him off. They got a code read. Now they've done drills before. And I think it's heartbreaking for a parent to hear their children talking about how they rehearsed for their own murder in school today. But you know, they taken the training did seriously and the door closed behind me and this is sorry, Mr. Guerin, we gotta go. And it was almost like a supply closet room right behind the desk. And so even though it was a credible threat, but it never materialized, it was a pissed off x of one of the kids, mothers who said he was going to come in and shoot up the school, I believe. He never, he never actually showed up. But I saw the vulnerability of these teachers, there was no communication, and it doesn't you can communicate. So the only people I think that were really communicating with the

outside was probably the principal and, you know, maybe a handful of other people. So the rest of the school is just sitting and waiting, you know, and these children have no idea if someone's going to burst through the door and you know, so it was it was a really interesting perspective, being a first responder but seeing it from completely the other side of the glass. With all of these, these atrocities that we've seen, you know, you have some that went very, very poor Like Parkland or valley, you had some that we've seen where the SRO elite immediately went towards the danger and neutralize the threat. What are some of the principles and philosophies that you talk to agencies laws about school safety in 2023.



1:05:17

So a lot of is preparation. And again, people don't, it's fearful for people, I totally get it. And I totally get it. It's a scary thing. But for me, so much of this stuff is about preparation, right? Like you don't want to be the, the body can't go where the brain has never been. So like, a lot of it is preparation right down to, again, I've we've all heard the arguments that we should train school safety fire drills, and yet, people don't die in school fires, but we, we prepped it, and nobody really lost their mind about it. Because we say this is just preparation, if something happens, everybody knows what to do. And you almost have to make it a, you have to make it a part of your like, situational awareness, you just have to make it part of your daily life. So with the schools with the teachers, I think it's okay, when a teacher sets up their classroom, I don't know that it should be such a bad thing that when they set it up, they set up their desk, and they have a parachute cord. And they attempt to tie off the door and it's in their top drawer. And they have a glass breaking tool from Home Depot. And they have a flashlight and they put the instead of putting their desk on the fire into the room, put the desk near the door. So they have to secure the door then they're pushing the desk, a foot rather than 40 feet across the door. And then you know making sure you know how to work the windows and, and kind of just going through a a visual like visualization techniques. If something bad were to happen, what would I do, I'm going to do this, this this. And then you you rehearse it mentally a few times, and you prepare for and you set up your classroom when you go to set up your classroom for the day and you put out your crayons and you and your pencil sharpener. It's okay to prep for I think and I don't think I'm a crazy person that you just prep in case there was a hostile intruder, what you would do because I think some of the lockdown stuff, it certainly works in, you know, however you want to call it run hide fight, deny defend list is every analogy, everybody's teaching something different. But they're all teaching the same thing which is locked on if possible, get away if possible, and then fight and use these use tools or whatever tools you need to hide coffee barrels, backpacks, whatever you need to saw. For me, it's a lot of it is about preparation with what the schools and even the businesses in town is just having, you know, having some preparation having you see defibrillator is now in every buildings, right? Almost every building is gonna be defibrillator Why Why can't have a walker with stop the bleed stuff. And tourniquets again, I don't think that puts me as a crazy person. But people don't want to have the discussions. But it's like emergency break glass, what's wrong with having emergency break glass, and then you have some preparation, if something happens that you know what's going to take place, and then the police and fire work. And it's a combined effort so that people understand, listen, we only have to really, we don't have to survive for two hours, we have to survive for like seven minutes, because a police department and fire department is going to be coming in here crashing and banging and so this is not a long mission. This is what I'm going to do in the next five minutes to survive this event. And again, it's a fine line because you want people to be prepared. You don't want people be triggered or freaked out. But I think the preparation is key. And all of us working together is a key as well.

 James Geering 1:08:30

Now what about from the deterrent standpoint? To me? When you hear the psychology a lot of these shooters I had the tenant Colonel Dave Grossman on a couple of times. You know, a lot of times when they're actually approached with true resistance, they give up sometimes they're killed obviously but but a lot of times they're they're kind of shaken out of that psychosis and then and then they stop. I for me personally as a parent in Florida, the the armed police officer the armed SRO is a great deterrent. I hear a conversation of you know, every teacher having a gun all the way through to no guns in the school whatsoever. Where's that kind of happy medium through your eyes?

 1:09:10

Yeah, you know, I do. I do like a police officer in every school. I work for a city, that the mayor is really big on school safety. And every school in the city has a police officer armed and assigned to it. So I'm a huge fan of that. I think in this day and age, a police officer should be in the school. And again, they can make all the political arguments. It's a deterrent for sure. Because you know, I think it was was it? Was it the Pulse nightclub where he looked at one location first and there was too much too much security and went to a different location.

 James Geering 1:09:39

Yeah, it was my first year it was Disney Springs. And then he packed up straight away and went straight to Paulson executed you know, 10s and 10s of people.

 1:09:49

Right. So I think that I think it's a good turn. I'm a fan of police officers in the schools with a firearm or retired military. I'm okay with that retired firefighters. I'm okay with that. I don't love I don't love the fact of and I don't want to turn this mindset. I'm a second amendment guy I don't like in terms of political debate. I think everybody has a right to have a firearm, I'm okay with all that stuff. But I don't love everybody carrying guns. I don't love the let's on the teachers let's I'm not doctors what's on the pilots only because more training goes into it, then we do. I teach firearm safety courses. And we talk about guns when we have them shoot a paper target. But there's a whole nother dynamics to deadly force and using force and having that gun out in a tactical environment. There's a whole separate, probably six month class, you get teach on human factors and human dynamics. So I don't know that I want people just running around with guns, there's, there's a lot of training that goes into it, not just the physical part of being able to do a target, but the mental makeup of having to take somebody's life if you need to, and what to do before and what to do after and visualization techniques that come into play at all. I see both sides of it. I'm not 100% against it, I'm gonna say My personal opinion is I like military firefighters, police officers with firearms that have that have additional specialized training, not just this is a, this is a safety course. And this is how to shoot paper. Does that make sense? No, it

J James Geering 1:11:17

does completely. And we're gonna unpack that whole, you know, stages of force in a moment. But just before we do, I've worked in agencies that worked extremely well ftpd, you know, with each other and then also work well with the counties and cities around them. Anaheim would be a perfect example of that. And then I've worked with some that the moment I've literally called for help, and there's a dotted line in the road. And they're like, oh, that's the city, it's not our problem, kind of response. So what have you seen as far as the importance of that communication between neighboring departments and agencies, and our ability to actually be effective in some of these shootings that we respond to,

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you have to check, you have to train together. And more than anything, it's, it's for those relationships, it's and I can see this firefighter, I can see this cop from, you know, we surrounded by some smaller towns, but okay, I know this guy, I've trained with this guy, we know how we're gonna go about our business. And again, we've really, we really move full speed ahead with this up in Massachusetts, and just doing the drills and training together and forming those relationships. So we know kind of what we're going to do so like, well, that's what the fire departments, it's so simple, it's like, Listen, if we're if we're a rescue Task Force, Chuck, James, James, you got you got, you got bodies, I got security, like, I'm not going to tell you how you do your job on rescue and who you want to treat and how you want to tag them. If you want to get the bad guy out before a cop, because the bad guys injuries are more severe, you make those calls, and I'm not gonna argue with you. And you're gonna rely on me to get security. So I have to trust you, you trust me. And again, state police, you know, federal guys, we have to train together so that we're not. And I bet on those calls, too. I've been on those calls where it's, it's called the PP game, right? Everybody's taking their PPE out and see who's bigger, and shit doesn't get done there. And actually, it's, it actually makes it worse. And we're wasting time when we could be doing other more productive thing. So it's like time management, time efficiency. So when you have those, when you're training ahead of time, and you have those relationships ahead of time, and we know right off the bat, James, you got fire, you're doing this truck, you got security, you're doing this, you know, I'll control tactics, you control rescue, it works. And I think when you do have an event, I think it's proven that that stuff will work. And you've seen some of the some of the locations where it worked out. It wasn't necessarily the people that work together, but they've they kind of had their roles and everybody stayed in their lane, and they they played a way more successful than some of the ones that didn't go so well.

J James Geering 1:13:51

Well, you touched on a moment ago about the warriors of having a lot of civilians walking around carrying guns, and we see it in law enforcement as well. You know, the more training as we discussed at the beginning of this conversation, the Vietnam vets the more training and exposure people have seems like the less likely they are to go to lethal force. So from the defensive tactics, tactics and kind of martial arts lens now, what has been your evolution on that side in the 30 plus years of policing you've been involved with?



1:14:23

So the de escalation stuff seems to be like a hot topic, but it's always really been about force mitigation. And I would just say now, it's a little bit more scripted. And now people are understanding the escalation is it's physical, but it's also verbal stuff. People hate the escalation. They think it's verbal, fucking wizardry, or magic words and stuff. And it's not it can be words, it can be active listening skills, but it kind of starts off in your response right off the bat. So I think they just they, they kind of changed. For me, it's always been about good. It's what's good police work. So back in the day, it was called verbal judo and then it was called verbal defensive influence and, and communication, karate, all this stuff and everybody just wants to spin it. Now the big one is called ikat. And that stands for integrating communication, assessment and tactics. And that's the no big one because IACP perfect, like I cat is the way to go. And I don't disagree, but it's just, it's just where we've always done stuff to a point, it's just putting a spin on it. It's just using good communication skills and, and good tactics. But where it's evolved is, it's less black and white. I think now we try to teach people to more having emotional intelligence, which kind of added emotional intelligence to our training and critical thinking versus when I first became a cop, it was. So you even hear today, you hear like, was it a good shoot or bad shoot. And I'm like, we need to stop saying that because no shoot is good. If we're if we really believe reverencing human life. And preservation life is important. And how to fine after we call something a good shoot, it's because you know, when there is it's still James, it's a family tragedy, like somebody still gave birth to that person. So he still had loved ones, or she had loved ones like, it's still as a family tragedy, these mental illness calls where somebody gets shot, it's still as a family tragedy. So we need to stop calling them good and bad. First off the bat, but, and it's about force mitigation. So before it was always, we had this like use of force continuum. And I don't dislike it. But we're trying to get officers away from the use of force continuum, because the use of force continuum means if he's, if He's resisting, I get to do this, I get to use this tool, if he's assaulted by use this tool, if he's a deadly force, I use this tool. And we'll teach him more proportionate force and critical thinking, because just because somebody's you know, it has to be proportionate to the threat. So I'll give you example. So if somebody if I get a call for an armed individual involved in a stabbing, so I show up, and I'm by myself, and here's a guy in the middle of the road, he's 22 years old, he's 200 pounds, he's agile, and he's got a, he's got a samurai sword. And I'm, you know, 2015 2025 feet away, I get behind cover, I start giving verbal commands, and he rushes at me and I have to shoot them. It's reasonable, it's legal, it's within policy, but it's also proportionate. So the totality of those circumstances is proportionate to the threat, right. So now, if I get the same call a person with a knife, and he stabbed somebody, but now the stabbing is it's a, it's a homeless person that stabbed his other homeless person, friend, and the person is conscious and alert, and they're calling the fire department. So the stabbing is not a real bad stabbing, it's like a superficial one. And then I get there, and four other cops show up. And now the suspect is 67 years old. And he's a homeless person. He's a point to seven blood alcohol, and he's waving a knife in the street. So now we show up. And back in the day, it would be well, he's within 21 feet away, he's poses a risk. So now it's, it's reasonable to shoot them. So we switched out of that years ago, and honestly, back in the day, that would turn into a shooting. And then they would say, Well, he was 21 feet away, he poses a threat, he had the ability opportunity to cause death or serious bodily injury, it's a good shoot, and then the end of the day, and I'm not saying that was right or wrong. I'm just saying we could be better. And the better is today, that second guy doesn't get shot, because we show up and we go okay, let's think critically, hey, let's control our motions. And let's go okay, you get a shield over there. Mike, you get a shield. Billy, you get less lethal when he got I got a taser. Okay, you are lethal cover. Who's going to talk to people, James, you're going to talk to people, you do the talking. And let's try the freight train this guy with the shield. And let's try to use a 40 millimeter. And

let's go force mitigation. Let's try to let's try to not shoot this guy. And that's kind of where we're at now. So with our use of force stuff, it's about force mitigation. So everybody thinks the law changed with use of force. It didn't. It's just, we have to, we have to be better explained and a wise, you punch that guy square in the mouth. Okay. It might be reasonable. But why did you do it? You hit that guy with a baton. People think we can't use batons any more. You can, but why it has to be reasonable. But it also has to be proportionate. based on severity of the crime. This is something poses an immediate threat to his office to see if you or others is he actively fighting or resisting? And it has to it has to be ethical as well, not just use of force continuum. So I think that's what we really try to teach now is emotional intelligence, critical thinking, no the law, but stop using these use of force continuum is to isn't I get to chat. You know what I mean?

 James Geering 1:19:42

Now I do compete and it's so refreshing to have someone with your story career with with the positions that you've held to keep talking about kindness and compassion and preserving human life because this is something that I've seen, and we get a very unique view through the eyes of a firefighter and a paramedic, but So many of the desperate people whether it's magnet manifesting through addiction, homelessness, prostitution, violence, gangs, etc, reverse engineer to that little toddler, they were never dreaming of being a gangbanger when they were, you know, watching Barney the Dinosaur. So, what are you seeing through your eyes over the last few decades of the mental health crisis, you know, in this country, because whether it's you know, that's the social media element, the the ease to ease of division that we saw, especially over the pandemic, whether it's the obesity through my eyes, it seems very evident that is behind so many of the problems that we're seeing, but I don't want to load the question what what is your perception of the Mental Health element through over three decades of policing?

 1:20:51

Oh, yeah, it's so we really, everything was really the bad guy does this, we do this and that mental illness is a real problem in this country. It really is. We had a couple of big state hospitals that let out and anybody that thinks the mental illness issue is bullshit, it's not I will tell you that you're just not informed or it was taught to you not the correct way, because mental illness is a real problem in this country. So we deal with right off the bat you have you have criminal, non criminal. So those are our interactions, we deal with people in crisis all the time. And right off the bat, I want to know, crime or no crime, like, because it's done to kind of set the tone even. And that's what patrol are. That's what SWAT you see right off the bat. What is a governmental interest in this case, and if this is somebody stopped taking their medicine, like, at the end of the day, most people suffering from mental illness, when they're when they're right, and they're on their meds, they're good people. And when they're not, it's usually good person having a bad day. So again, that goes with that emotional intelligence, you show up on a call, and it's not. When I first became a cop, it was people were either non compliant, they were either compliant, or they were non compliant. It really just it was that simple, James and, you know, my use of force use of force class, I think they were like, you know, if they, if they run from you, they're gonna get slapped. If they put their hands on you and fight with you, it's gonna be a trip to the emergency room. And I'm not saying that was right. But that was kind of back in the day. It was, well, they're, they're criminals. They're either compliant, or they're

not, it's really not that simple. So like, people resist. And that's not to say that use of force is not necessary, because a lot of times it is those these people get to vote, too. However, it's always good when we can show force mitigation like, Okay, you did this, but why but at the end of the day, people fight and a violent and try to kill you or saw you there in a different blend. Those are dangerous people. But people that resist actively resist a lower level of force. People resist for different reasons. There's language barriers. People are afraid of the police. Sometimes that just that happens, people come from different jurisdictions, people come from different countries, where the police might be corrupt. People resist because they're confused. And sometimes we do sometimes people want a knife. And two people want two things with the from the police. They want to know who you are, and what your business is with them. So if I'm, if I'm gonna rescue, we need to be better saying, James, you're under arrest. And this is why versus we automatically go hands on it's okay to do that. But people want to know their business or people resist sometimes because it confused. But at the end of the day, people resist sometimes because they suffer from mental illness, whether it be Asperger's or medicine. So we need to find ways to control and restrain people and still understand the big picture, you know, so a lot of times now we teach subject or suspect, and the use of force isn't different. But the way you handle a call is different, if that makes sense. So if you just beat up your wife, and I'm like, James, you know the deal. Put your hands behind your back, you gotta go to jail. That's the way it goes. All right, and you need to comply, and you square up and you take your shirt off, you're like, I'm not going and I'm like, put your hands behind your back and you're like, No, give me up. Let's go. Like, you're gonna go to jail, and you're gonna go to jail. Because it poses an immediate threat and it's time for you to go to jail. Like you don't control when you're going to jail. Like you're going to jail. I'll try to talk you into handcuffs, but it's not going to be it's not gonna it's not a social experiment. I'm not gonna spend 20 minutes trying to ask you to put the handcuffs on you committed a crime and you're going to jail. And that's where it goes. Now if I come to your house, and it's a we'll call this section 12 or pink paper, a psych eval. And you're like you called your sister in Kansas, and she says you're suicidal. You're like no fu I'm not going it's the way I handle the call is gonna be different because there's gonna be like, Listen James is Option A Option A is do me a favor, come down the stairs. I'm gonna have the ambulance roll up. You're gonna climb in the back of the ambulance. No stress here. There's no cut charges don't reason the police as because we have to make sure you go for your own well being. No, I'm not going I will listen, is there anything I can say to get you go to that ambulance? Like, I'll follow you up. I'm going to try to talk you into going I'm not going to use force as fast, because there's no governmental interest. You're bad. You're a good guy having a bad day. And I don't need to turn this into a use of force. And I'll be honest with you, most of the time, when you map that out and you breathe, and you don't react on, you're going to jail and you're going to hospital you say, No, I'm not. If I can just breathe and go, Okay, I use a lot of times, you know, Lou Holtz, what's important now, so when Lou Holtz coach at Notre Dame had this thing called the win theory. So when he took over at Notre Dame 35 times a day, his players all had to say, what's important now and that means you wake up, bam, what's important now shut the alarm clock. Good. What's next? Get out of bed this to what's next? Make a good breakfast. There's three what's next, make your fucking bed this for. So get your playbook. So 35 times a day they had say what's important now and take the next step. So I use that for like, police work. I use it for Swat, I use it for training, which is focused on what's important. My ego is not important. This guy says no, I'm not going. Instead of saying, Hey, you see the badge, motherfucker, I see the badge. You see the badge, I told you you're going, I'm not going to handle a set of subject the same way. I'm going to handle you as a criminal. So now I'm gonna say hey, listen, what's important now, what's important now is I don't want to turn this into a 20 page use of force report. While it's important is this guy needs to go to the hospital and what is going to take to get me there. If it's a psych eval, and he says I, the CIA is tracking me, I want you to put tinfoil on your head. And guess what? I'm going to put tinfoil on my head to get you in that

ambulance. If he says I can't step on the floor to walk out there. I'm gonna say what do you need me to do? Sir, put towels down, you know what I'm gonna do? Instead of me saying old school Chuck and saying I'm not putting towels on That's absurd. You don't want to do today, I'm gonna put the towels down. Because what's important now, get this guy in the hospital, not my ego, not my feelings just get take care of your business. So we really tried to work it out into all the use of force up even all the way up to deadly force, you know, we try to, we try to use distance space barriers, you know, and slow down the pace when we can now we always can't do that, like at the end of the day. That's where the misconceptions come out with de escalation is, I say this all the time. The bad guy gets a vote too. So we try to when we can, if it's tactically feasible and tactical safe to do so. We will try these techniques. But sometimes you just gotta go to work and take care of your business. And it's that simple, because the priority life is innocent people first, in protection of the community first and then protection of the subject to the suspect.

 James Geering 1:27:35

We talked about use of force. There are some very obvious cases recently, we have the George Floyd incident we have the subway, choking recently with the marine. What is your perspective of the tools that you feel should be used if well trained, versus some of the tools that have been taken away and maybe the danger that that's going to create our perfect example I've do jujitsu, myself and the rear naked choke when used by the right person that understands it, I would, I would argue is probably a very good tool to restrain someone and put them in the cuffs. But I'm also not a police officer. I'm a firefighter. But when I hear more and more and more of these things taken away to me as a martial artist, the same way as the removing canine programs, I see more people getting hurt and killed not less.

 1:28:27

So yeah, it's again it's a tricky area because more tools that you're proficient with the the more tools the better. So I think there's ways that the chokeholds was a big thing up this way. And you know, I'll be careful what I say because I have to but like at the end of the day LBNL lateral vascular neck restraint. We we can't teach him we can't train them and we never could LAPD banned them years ago so but the way it stood was deadly force was not tool specific. So if you were if your immediate defensive life preservation of life immediate defensive life self defense defensive another life in peril, then anything was reasonable than any tool of immediate means was applicable but it'd be I run you over to my police car because you're pulling out a gun from behind your seat so that was always a case but when police reform they really big up here in banning chokes so I get it. It's the way the law really reads is at any level it's banned, could have could have possibly been overturned one day with with when a case comes up, it could the problem is for it to get overturned.

 1:29:45

The job and then you fight for the job and then maybe somebody finds it was constitution reasonable because your life was in peril. And then it becomes a law but right now they're banned up here. So For the chokes, I get why they did it, I understand. But if you have that skill set, it kind of goes with preservation of life. So if you came on a call, I'm screaming for yelling

for help. I'm gonna give me some backup up here. He's on top of me. And you get to that call in, there's a person on top of me. And they have both hands wrapped around my firearm and they're trying to disarm me. And I'm like James James. He's got my gun. He's got my gun, he's got my gun. That's a deadly force confrontation like either either he's starting a gun collection, or we're fixing to get shot. Very simple, right? So now you have a decision to make this people around, you have a decision to make. That's that could be you wouldn't be justified to shoot that person. If you feel my life is in peril. So now you go, Okay, I'm justified to do a contact shot. But I'm worried because Chuck's on the bottom, I'm worried about these innocent people around. I have some skills in Brazilian jujitsu. So I'm just going to put, I'm just going to tap him out. So now you go to a chokehold and you pull them out. Now, if you did that in Massachusetts, you're gonna get fine. Like, that's just the way it goes. Now we're going to Stanford, no, we're gonna say, hey, wait a second. Like, that's preservation life. But my argument for that, to save your career would be like, okay, James had a decision to make. James could have taken James COVID on a contract shot and shot this person square in the face, James could have taken this guy's life. However, James being a reference to human life guy and the preservation of life guy, he made a decision. Instead of taking this person's life, James didn't feel like this guy should lose his life. Because he's making bad decisions. On this day. He's drunk, he's trying to attack a cop. So James says, I'm gonna put him in a choke and I put them asleep. And now this guy, you wake them up, he goes to the hospital, you preserve my life, right? You preserve innocent people, because you're not pissing rounds downrange. And who else's life did you preserve the bad guys, the subjects. So yeah, so the suspects life is now preserved. And now he lives to fight another day. So we have these arguments, it's going to be like James could have taken this person's life. Instead, he saved his life, he preserved his life using less force, and then you're still gonna get fired. So that's the problem. And I agree with you is we got to find a way to not take tools away the chokes, I think I'm just gonna take the high road and see we'll kind of see how it plays out. But as far as jiu jitsu goes, where we're trying to add that I just did the first, I get a lot of young DT instructors now. So I oversee use of force and defensive tactics training for 357 police departments and mass. So I've looked at, I've looked at Georgia, and New Jersey has begun to the BJJ stuff now. So we're trying to add it into the program. So my goal is I just did, I did a 42 person class, defensive tactics, 12 day class, and then I added a five day. So I'm not gonna call Jiu Jitsu. We call the ground defense, and de escalation. And that's really what it is. And but it's all the stuff you do, James, it's, it's ground control, it's breathing, it's some control restraint holds, but we stay away from the neck, and everything is really about body positioning. But a lot of stuff I see with cops making bad decisions on the ground is because they panic on the ground, and they stopped thinking. But if you're breathing, and you're thinking and you're thinking logically, and you got that BJJ background, I think a lot of it is just controlling your stress and your arousal when you're on the ground. So we've added a lot of that stuff. So I think moving ahead a mass, what we're looking to do is add some add more BJJ into the Basic Academy, and then roll with other specialty training, we're not going to ram it down cops throat at the service level, to make it mandatory, but we're going to do is try to roll them out and get cops involved in this is a skill set. So that's kind of my vision moving ahead is just bring more skill sets into that. And again, sometimes it's just what you call it. Like, if, if you're on top of me, you grabbed my gun, you know, we're gonna have to use body positioning and stuff. And so the color camera or something like that, so we just have to stay within our legal guidelines. But I think that the state has been really good with letting us bring some BJJ stuff in. But I think it's another option you don't have to do BJJ but more options. You go with the baton, you go with your taser, you go with your hands, you go with the pugilistic and you're good with control and restraint. I think that creates a safer officer and more physically fit officer as well.

J James Geering 1:34:24

Now, one thing I've observed in a lot of the schools that I've trained in is a lot of us and to be fair, it's just a small space and there's a lot of people who's very popular now but a lot of us start on our knees. What about the application of wrestling and judo? Kind of coupled with jujitsu? Are you seeing some of the? It almost seems like because jujitsu is a very sport focused thing as well. Sometimes we're actually kind of getting further away from the kind of grappling skills that you would use in the street or in uniform.

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Yeah, so we still we really separate the two Between fighting for sport and the pavement arena because to two entirely different things, even if you can just keep teach some basic wrestling skills and sprawls if you can teach sprawls you already putting the guy in a position to succeed and stuff. But yeah, I'm a big fan of, and I don't do BJJ or I've tried to take a ticket some programs I've taken dance LeBrons identity several, he was an original UFC guy. He's great. I've taken some of the Gracie stuff. So I tried to I tried to take a little bit of boxing, a little bit pugilistic a little bit of wrestling, and I tried to put a package together, that's what's always worked for me, so that people just aren't getting caught in between the sport world and, and the pavement arena because it is to two entirely different things. But I think the more the more you can get police officers back into going hands on with people really got away from it the last few years. With the with the young recruit, I always say if you can if you can get them comfortable. Even if he's even if he's a victim of bad parenting, never played sports, never left the house talked on his phone all day long. If you can teach him comfortable talking to people like you got it, we got to get people comfortable communicating and not just talking on the cell phones, these, these younger officers don't have that skill set because they social media, right? So comfortable with communication, comfortable putting the hands on people, right, you're going to have these close interactions like you like you know, you're going to be having a more personal Of course, reaction with somebody who hates you was trying to kill you than your your loved ones. So comfortable with communication comfortable with putting the hands on people comfortable with pain. You know, being it's a contact sport, and comfortable with righteous violence, not comfortable with violence I got, I got beat up in a court case. And they said, why don't you just to be comfortable with violence, I said, I don't I teach and be comfortable with righteous violence, it's two entirely different things like if you've never been in a fight in your life, and a police baton is made of steel, I gotta teach you how to hit somebody with steel pipe when you have been hit with them when you have been an altercation. So those four things I think are really the key physically fit physical fitness is a big thing. And then, you know, comfortable putting their hands on, you know, people can basic control and restraint stuff and not this, we can't go hands on with people, there's a hesitation to use force and hesitation to go hands on with people now. And everybody wants to use these gadgets in these tools. And I'm going to tase him from afar, and I'm going to use a ball wrap. And we keep coming up with these gadgets, rather than just teach old school stuff, which is how to talk to people and how to control people physically. It's not I don't think it's difficult. It's like that how we're making them Island is.

J James Geering 1:37:34

or speaking of that, sadly, some videos have come out from the UK, who's just you know where I'm from originally. And it seems like the the British police probably have, you know, very little

training, but also are having a lot of their ability to go hands on taken away based on the way that these scenes are kind of unfolding. So through your eyes, whether it's here in the US or overseas, what are the dangers of them constantly stripping away the type of person that you can even, you know, arrest or intervene with these days.

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It's just it causes one, it's not safe for the public. It's just it just isn't. But it's not safe for the officers to have this hesitation and hesitation to go to go hands on with people like we're always now. We're always just creating space and trying to go to these tools. And I would argue that, again, I think the time is a good tool, taser, these are good tools. But we're almost going back. We're almost going back to the 60s where everything is going to be like batons and like tasers from afar because of people don't want to go hands on but I'll be honest with you, I've been tased before, it is not a pleasurable event at all. And I thought I had a high pain threshold. And I've been teased multiple times and I think it's horrible. Like, it's a painful thing in the world. It's like 30 years of marriage wrapped up in the five second right. And if I can go hands on with a person and not tase them, I don't like to teach people and I've teased a bunch of people I don't like it when my tears I'm like bro, please please listen to me. This is not gonna be a pleasurable event. Do you do what I asked like, I rather go hands on with the guy and not tase him I'd rather go hands on than then when a person with a baton because they just decided to fight the police on that night. So you're almost you're almost having this over dependency on some of these long range tools versus just going in there and putting your hands on people like Prakash and putting the hands on people forever. It's okay sometimes sometimes by me just coming in and putting my hands on you it will prevent the use of force. You know,

 James Geering 1:39:40

when I hear of you know, the push to the less lethal option, and we heard the word tasers I always think of Orange County Sheriff's deputy Brandon coats and he was very, very close to my neighboring station I would go to sometimes it literally just sat with the crew got a call when out, there's a traffic stop. And then they got a call, you know, a minute or so later officer down and he was found shot to death with his Taser deployed. This is what worries me about this constant push for the less lethal, you know, as we just spent a whole hour and a half talking about why you should have those options and the physicality and the tools to not go to lethal force. But what worries me is if you're constantly deterring, you know, when that decision needs to be made, maybe you know, that's kind of stifled by all the kind of red tape around that decision, God forbid, you have to make it.

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Right. So a lot of this job is really about tempo. Like when you have time, you know, de escalation. distance plus cover equals time, time equals options, that's fine. And I get it. And I teach that and I think it's good, but it's all about tempo as well, like, you got to know when to you're going to know when to go to work as well. And you have to know when to use deadly force, because less lethal force is not the option everything at the end of the day, like if somebody's life is in peril, like you have to use deadly force sometimes and we can't have

officers running around with this hesitation. So less lethal is an option. But if you're dealing with a if you're dealing with a dangerous, violent, combative individual and your life is in peril, so immediate defense of life, if I have a guy with a knife, I have a guy with a firearm, you're your primary force option is deadly force less lethal is a secondary force option. So when I have that guy that I told you about in the street, that 67 years old with a knife like that is still going to be a gun call until somebody with less lethal gets there and then it's going to be okay, what do you got for less lethal I got 12 gauge beanbag I got 40 millimeter, I got a taser. Those are secondary options. But yes, I panic about this stuff. I have nightmares, and I drink in the dark over this stuff because I see a cops. cops aren't even drawing their firearm out on calls that the the firearm needs to be out, you know, felony costs go up with shots were fired. And I'm watching guys with their guns to host and I'm like, Dude, what are you doing? Well, you know, no, I don't know, please tell me like, I don't want you to die or get hurt. Like, you didn't sign up for that as well. So it's a fine line. But I think as long as you're teaching, righteous use of force, those are secondary force options. But if your priority life is, again, the public and yourself as well, like you can't put your life in peril, because you're breaking out a taser on a deadly force call that less lethal options is always going to be covered with lethal cover, non lethal cover, it has to be that we can't have you know, we do it in these we sit in these scenarios. It's a gun call and the Taser is oh, well, I don't know that the Taser is even has play in that situation at the time. You know,

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James Geering 1:42:44

one more area and I want to get your kind of king for a day perspective in a moment before we wrap up. But something I talk about all the time from the fire service point of view is sleep deprivation. And you know that our men or women I don't know if it's the same as where you are because it seems like the Northeast is the only area that does have more of a normal work week. But most of the US were there working 56 hours a week before understaffing creates an 80 hour week with mandatory overtime. And so I saw it in myself that just the crippling effects you know the inability to almost think straight and remember even where to go to the call no matter get there and function properly. So I look at some of these, you know, one would argue a gray area police shootings, and I never ever ever hear had that person so that had they been forced to do multiple hours. I mean, obviously the level of training is another part of it. But uh, never hear sleep deprivation factor, then you've been you know, an expert witness. And a lot of these things, you've analyzed a lot, you've trained a lot. Talk to me about the the impact of sleep deprivation on the decision making skills, it's putting some of these officers in the situation.

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So huge like elephant in the room, and I'm probably gonna get some of my friends mad at me. And so I went through the I went through Bill Irwin skis for the our use of force endless class, and then went to his 19 week advanced force analysis class, it's pretty, I mean, it's great class vivid get to it, but he really focused on the human factors and human decision making and memory. And it's a great great class but you analyze literally hundreds of use of force cases and I see it around here all the time. So sleep deprivation plays a major major role and up in the Northeast we work too much every single one of us might and I'm guilty as well. So I'm not taking myself out of the mix. Average caught up to working 60 hours a week 60 7080 hours a week and you're almost the studies have shown you almost come into work if you work in that

much and you're not sleeping and I've done it so trust me I know I know I'm off I know my decision making is slower. You're almost like coming to work like a point five all blood alcoholic you almost like A intoxicated person when you're not sleeping, so we work too much up here. The salaries are okay, but there's a chance to work overtime and we all work too much overtime. And again, it's a well rested cop. That's what gets blamed all the time we look at these. They say all the time cops are complacent. Cops are complacent, we get complacent. So I say like, sometimes we get complacent. But now I'm like, is it complacency? Or is it the dude sleep deprived? Because you don't, there is no way you can work that man hours, and you're not getting sleep. And George Ryan yells at me all the time for not sleeping enough. But your decision making process suffers in how you how you handle cause emotionally suffers, how you perceive things suffers. And you're not picking up on those, those pre attack indicators. If I'm well rested, and I've been a cop for a while and I'm talking to you, I'm picking up on my six senses are on high alert, like I'm picking up on verbal nonverbal cues when I'm sizing up, when it's going to be useful for something ahead of time when you're not sleeping, you're missing those things, and your tactics are lacks. So one thing that we don't talk enough about with the use of force stuff is the sleep deprivation, a well rested, cop makes better decisions, he responds faster. He he's gonna make better decisions over the long haul and the cop that's coming in working overnights and details and overtime. And he's he's going to be slow to pick up on threats. And his decision making process stuff isn't I know, I'm gonna get people mad at me. But it's true, we got to get a handle on it. And it's if you had to, if if you told me in like one and 15 seconds, improve officer wellness, it wouldn't be the same things you would say I would say sleep hydrate, change your socks in a decent diet. You know, and I don't meditate because I have a DD but I know meditation is a big thing. Like there's some things we can do to make us way more healthy and that overall healthiness that overall wellness assist in decision making. It assists in officer safety assist actually, in your use of force decision making. I

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James Geering 1:47:04

think we're another area that I think there's also the elephant in the room is mental health. I mean, I've had so many people from the sleep medicine world and neuroscientists, etc, that are like, Yeah, this when you process traumas, when you process your thoughts when your brain literally takes a physiological bath, when you sleep on top of processing skills. So you do a whole bunch of training at the range. If you don't sleep, you don't really get to benefit from that. So in our professions, it seems like both of us, the acknowledged suicides have basically doubled our line of duty death rates. What have you seen through a mental health lens in 30 plus years of the in law enforcement and what uh, what are some of the solutions that you think we should be bringing?

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So it's definitely it's definitely changed a lot. I mean, when I get on the police department, there was no talk of you would never reach out for help. I mean, I went, I was involved in that. That active shooter in Wakefield, and I think I went to work that night, you know, there was no decompression time. If you ever said like, hey, I need time off, I'm gonna go talk to the department shrink. There'll be putting rubber guns in your locker and all kinds of shit. Right? Wrong and different. You know, policing clubs. Humor is pretty, pretty bad. But it's a coping mechanism. I'm good with it. But but it's changed. We definitely got, I think we have a better handle on it. But part of the reason I teach like, I could retire and I could sit home in bunny

slippers and get paid right now. And people like your retire, why don't you just retire? Why are you still here? And I'm like, Well, I still think we got some work to do. And that's which is why I'm still here. But why I teach what I do is I have two of my good friends murdered on this job. Two kids I train one is Ronnie Tarantino was birthdays actually today would have been 50. But 13 of my friends on this job, have committed suicide. So like, that's all I use all the officers survival training we do. And we take it so serious. I've lost two but I've had 13 officers take them on life. So I take it super serious. And we've gotten better at it. We added there's a company called prevalence. I'm not trying to, I don't know if I can mention companies. But there's a company called prevalence out of Utah that I work with now. And they do a lot at the Pentagon. And it's PR Evi, VI, D, and C, but they do a lot with police, fire, and military. And I brought them in and so they do assessment. So I brought them into the SWAT team. And again, the union is a strong opinion when you start to bring in that type of stuff. It people get nervous, like well, what's the end game and I'm like, listen, we just need to take better care of our officers. So they do assessments. So we take these tests every four months. And they either in the green, yellow, red, and then they offer services and it's a great, great, great program. We got a pilot program offered in Massachusetts to State offered to pay it and I figured, same thing trying to host what to a higher standard. I said listen, it's a SWAT team is willing to do it. I would love every police department to take better care of the officers. There's a lot of other good programs out there. But we have to We have to continue to grow in this area. I think it's I think it's grown a lot. But I'm tired of seeing clock's ticking and alive. I really am. It's, you know, it's more, it's more out front now. But we have to find programs and not just right now, we still do a little bit of check the boxes like, Well, we went over this at training, we did the PowerPoint, but we need programs in place like we your office is getting checked on. And we're not worried about losing their gun to their job, because cops don't go for help, because it's a sign of weakness. And they're all inherently worried. They're going to take off the SWAT team, they're going to take off the street, they can't pay their bill. So we got to make it. I always look at it like like we've all had injuries before. So I tore my tricep right off the bone broke my elbow, just a freak injury, but I had to go to rehab for a year. So we rehab our injuries like a motherfucker, when you tear your shoulder or your knee. But it's a brain injury. It's an injury, this stuff, the trauma that we see James has an injury to our brain. And we don't even address it. So we rehab a torn tricep for a year. But meanwhile, you see trauma every day. And we don't do anything to to fix that brain injury. And there's ways around it. There's all kinds of cool stuff out there that I've we've looked at that we like, but we just have to make it more a part of the job and not less such a thing, you know, yeah, no,

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James Geering 1:51:17

I think the brain injury is a perfect description of it. And something that I've talked about when a healthy mind analyzes the behavior of someone who's suicidal, they're like, what's wrong with them? Why can't they just, you know, get over and snap out of it? Well, it would be the same as you jacked up your hip, and over time, your foot has turned more and more out. And someone who's got perfect posture is like, why can't you fucking walk properly? What's wrong with you? Well, you don't even notice it, because it's happened, you know, incrementally. But now our men and women, their brain is so miswired, that biochemistry is so off, that their reality doesn't match, you know, a healthy reality. So they believe that they're a burden to their infant, like to law enforcement state in in Florida here, I think it was last year. And you know, both of them within seven days are taking their lives, leaving a you know, a young young child makes no sense to a healthy mind. But those two people with their unaddressed trauma and the things that they saw in uniform, and organizational betrayal, and you know, whatever else was factoring into that person's Perfect Storm, at that moment, their brains are convinced him

that the world we better off without them. And if we're not viewing our people in crisis, with the same kindness and compassion that you've talked about viewing people that you're trying to arrest our own brothers and sisters in uniform, and we're talking about suicide as cowardly and selfish, we're never going to get put through this, we got to understand that these people are their reality has been completely distorted. And we've got to reach out our arm and pull them back to where they can see with a calm mind again, and you know, pull them from their void. Because, you know, it's all very well saying, think of your kids. Well, they fucking are. And this is the problem. They believe that their kids are better off without them.



1:53:03

Yeah, it's 100%. Right? It's, it's, if you've been in that dark place before, right, like you get it like, and then the one of the biggest thing that irks me is I always say, well, that's selfish, and it goes, hits every nerve on me. And I'm like, You're just saying that and I try not to get mad. I'm like, You're just uninformed. Because you haven't been in that place where you're just, you know, you just want the pain to stop, you want to feel better, and you convince yourself that your kids, you think that you are thinking of everybody, like everybody's better off without me, the kids are better off without me. Like, it's a it's a better way. And it's not they want your life to end. You just want the pain to end and want the bullshit. And so you get in the spa. So when people say like, Oh, Jesus Christ, it's so selfish. I'm like, Yeah, well, I'm, I'm glad that you don't know what it means. But that's not really what it is. It's not a selfish act at all whatsoever. It's actually just the opposite sometimes.



James Geering 1:53:53

Yeah. Well, I mean, what kind of kept me not too long ago, I think it was something that someone said on one of the interviews, were in professions where we already signed on the line saying we would give up our lives for a stranger. So you get to that crisis. I mean, it must be terrifying for these people that actually went through with their own suicide, but it was a selfless act at that point in their reality. And that's what you've got to understand. You've got someone who's already riddled with guilt and shame, and you're gonna call them cowardly and all these things. No, we need to, we need to have the compat compassion and kindness to pull them back from that crisis, and then get them back to where they can think, you know, clearly and go Holy shit. I literally almost frickin swallow the bullet, you know. And then some of these amazing men and women become advocates for it and they tell their stories, and that helps even more people.



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Right, exactly. Now, I agree. That's, like say put putting it to the forefront and talking about it more making it more, making it more normalized. I think it's kind of the key to it. I think. I think we're better at it. I just think we I think we're still scratching the surface. I think we have to just continue to take care of our offices and make them honest and that it's just, it's just tightening up your screws. It's just helping you get your mind right so that you can continue on with this profession that you love to do.



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James Geering 1:55:07

But we have covered a host of topics from use of force to hiring and all kinds of areas. Just before we do the wrap up questions, if you could be king for a day, and change anything or everything about law enforcement, the support from their cities and counties, etc. What would you do to try and help that pendulum swing back to the way it's supposed to be going?

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1:55:30

Oh, boy, all right, Ghibli recovered two hours, pretty fast. I don't think we're gonna get there. Yeah, I still think that this is, I think this is still is the greatest job in the world. I think the two best jobs in the world police and firefighters, I really do. And I think that, to get everything back on track, I do believe in the community stuff. But I think we have to hold people accountable. I think we have to make the job. So after again, from a police perspective, from from my brothers and sisters in this profession, we got to stop telling everybody the job sucks. And it's so hard. And it's difficult, because it doesn't suck and we've been handed it's the cops just say that all the time. I heard it from the Vietnam vets all the job used to be better kid back in the day. So we reap what we sow. So we can't, we can't keep talking about how hard the job is how bad the job is. And then bitch and complain when nobody wants to take the job. Because you just told everybody how bad the job sucks. So the world needs good cops, we're gonna go out there and recruit people. And the city has to get on board and the community stuff we have to get out there and educate the public and, and educate rather than do this confrontational, us versus them, we have to just educate the public, because sometimes the public just doesn't know that this is force options. And this is when you can use force and show them the law. And give them some of these scenarios that we're getting into this together. You know, when people come up and you know, ask you and I stole this from, you know, Georgia, and some of the guys in LA when when you were at work, and somebody comes up and they ask you, Hey, what's going on? And I've done it and so they give him some smartass answer like oh, you know, Shark Attack? Or don't worry about this, take five seconds and say, hey, yeah, sorry, we blocking traffic, but we have a mental health issue up the street, sorry to kick you out of the house right now. And, you know, just take a picture with the kid and high five, like, maybe just get into this do a better job of this community based policing as a whole, and not this confrontational stuff. I think the pendulum swinging back a little bit. But I think that I think that most people support the police. And I think that cops have to know that the courts support the police. The public supports police, the silent majority, is just the silent majority is the premise of minorities, usually the loudest, but the majority of people respect you and respect what you do. And just, I think we're in this together. And we just hold clubs to a high standard, stop lowering the standards make it more difficult to get this job when you get there. You know, people should want to train people should want this job like you want the guy going on take the test is like, this is a job I always wanted. And that's kind of how we do it not just, you know, the job has good benefits. You know,

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James Geering 1:58:06

we're just to kind of tie in what we talked about earlier with the ESPN, people screaming at each other one thing that I've said a lot, and Fox and CNN are two examples, opposite sides of the spectrum, same exact bullshit, in my opinion, the screen divided into four. For us, I was arguing and calling themselves news. There's no fucking news on her whatsoever. What has been the impact of the way media has portrayed law enforcement whether blindly support


everyone or the anti police message? Again, now, here we are 35 years later from when you felt supported, what has kind of been the ripple effects are some of that negative reporting through your eyes?

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So there's, there's some good reporters out there for sure. But I think that we have to, and I think, again, we've got a little bit better at it recently, we need to kind of take back our own narrative. So I think we have to have build relationships with the media, maybe, you know, you always gonna have the people that are gonna be anti police. But there's a lot of pro media, pro cop media, people in the media as well. But educate them, but also get into the point where we're controlling the narrative and not just, you know, we'll get back to you or will, you know, we're not releasing that information at this time. I find that the media wants, they want accountability from the police, and they want transparency. And I think citizens want that as well. So I think we say people in the media want transparency and accountability from the police. So we give it to him. You know, we if we can release body camera footage and explain the story, instead of saying, Well, you don't understand that job. This is what we did. This is why we did it. This is what the officers were faced with. I think we kind of get out there with the media and give them the story because I think we both know if you don't, if you don't give them a story, they'll create the story. So we just have to be you know, hold our officers accountable and be transparent. We can I am a fan of body cameras Believe it or not, and Got big up in the Northeast. But I think body cameras is a is a good start. It shows what we do that shows what we deal with. I think it holds officers accountable. I think it holds citizens accountable. And I think it clears up a lot of the misconceptions that are out there. And so again, I probably have some people mad at me for the body cameras, but I like body cameras as well. It really does transparency, accountability, it helps with

 James Geering 2:00:24


absolutely, yeah, it can it can help if you're doing everything right. And obviously you can hurt if you're not.

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Right, bad use of force is still bad. It's bad. It's bad, you know?

 James Geering 2:00:32

Absolutely. Well, I've just got a few closing questions to throw at you if you've got time. And we've been chatting for two hours. Okay, so the first one is, is there a book? Or are there books that you love to recommend? It can be related to our discussion today, or completely unrelated.

 2:00:48

So it's all book, I think Ken Murray training at the speed of light. It's an old book. And it's pretty pricey. It might be hard to find, but it gets into a lot of training and a lot of stuff. I learned it for

pricey. It might be hard to find, but it gets into a lot of training and a lot of stuff. I learned it for science, you know, doing less more instead of doing something for eight hours a day, every year, do it for 80 minutes a day. So that 100 rule, 100 Hour Rule, you know, do something for 18 minutes a day. And that will make you expert level more proficient than 95% of the people just so I'm a big fan of doing more or less. So I stole that from training, the speed of light is good. Let's see what else I like from a perspective point of view the burning shield, I think it's called it was a I forget the officer's name. He just was in mass last week, but these are Jason Schechter, Lee. Yes. I think every cop and firefighters should read that book. Because that guy has a unbelievable perspective on life. And life is 10% What happens in 90%? Will you make of it? I think I think he should address every policeman firefighter in the country is I think the guy's ruining is not really related to what we have today. But he has a really good perspective on life. I think it's really cool.

 James Geering 2:02:00


Yeah, I had Jason on a long time ago, probably about four years ago. And then we met about a year later when he came to Orlando for a speaking event and just just a humble down to earth incredible human being.

 2:02:13

Yeah, excellent. He doesn't think this Gee, I mean, he all you want to do is get back to work being a cop man. And he's, he holds himself accountable for everything. But yeah, he's a good man. He certainly

 James Geering 2:02:22

is. Well, what about a film and or a documentary that you love?

 2:02:28

Oh, let's see. I definitely liked a manhunt. One because I thought it was really good. It showed a lot of the it was honest. Get down in the weeds, it didn't show all peace and love and the cost will get along great with the feds and everything was pretty raw and pretty good. And it kind of spins it kind of spins in that room, how it went down was kind of we talked about how the pendulum swing sometimes in an eight hour shift. And we were you know, we were involved in why the town incident and we were clearing houses after houses and the people are great. Like we would we would give them people options. We'd be like, Listen, if you're comfortable with having your basement, secure, we'll, we'll Button up your house. Or if you want to search it will search it. But that's up to you if you're comfortable. And we're like we're not looking for drugs. We don't care if you have a kilo of cocaine on the table we just kept for looking for bad guys, right? And people like most people, like I think I'm okay, can you just check the outside of the house. But a lot of people were like, can you come in I heard the dog barking. I think I heard a noise in my basement. So we would pull the people out and we would search the house. So when that ended that was one of my proudest moments in law enforcement people were coming out and singing God Bless America and high fiving the police and I left and I literally

woke up in the morning to the news talking about how it was Gestapo tactics. And we shut the city down and we're pulling people out of the house at gunpoint. I'm like, oh, no, like, that's not even close to happen. I'm like it changing. I've seen the change, but not like that. I got this changed in six hours. You know what I mean? It was it was just crazy. So but I think that's a good honest documentary I liked the Pat Tillman story is always my favorite. I'm a huge Pat Tillman story guy.

 James Geering 2:04:09


But speaking of that shift, just for a second, did you ever find out why that narrative changed within eight hours? Like was there a politician or someone behind that?

 2:04:20

I think there was some unethical reporting probably done. I think they were probably searching for people to say stuff. I think because the people I saw were crying and God bless American I have no reason why I was there. And I think they probably if you go interview 10 people, and nine of them say it was amazing moment to see the community and, and police and public safety and fire work together. And then one guy says I was ripped out at gunpoint, they searched my house or shut up my house. The sexy story is the guy that says he was ripped out at gunpoint. So I think there's maybe some unethical reporting. I think that probably was behind it.

 James Geering 2:04:58

That submarine that is basically touring around the Titanic that they lost. And now as we record this, sadly, they're probably dead because the air supplies run out. I wasn't following it, but two stories kind of came up on my, you know, my newsfeed. One was that the steps on one of the guys had gone to a concert and how outrageous people were. And the other one was that one of the people in the submarine says a distant relative of the Titanic. Both of those are complete bullshit, and not a story at all. But that illustrates how people will scramble for anything, just so they can sell their little clickbait article and get their advertising space money.

 2:05:37

Yeah, anything, anything that can make a story. And that's why I say all the time, it's like the, I use the analogy, when I teach you some force to civilians, I'm like, it's like Logan Airport Miami Airport, like, there's literally going to be 1000s of planes that take off, and you're not going to hear about them because there's no story. And then you're gonna hear about the plane crash, or that there's literally 1000s of cops, you know, de escalating situations that doesn't even go to paper every day. And using that, you know, using that force mitigation stuff, but then we get a train wreck in Minneapolis or somewhere else. And next thing, you know, that's the narrative. But next thing you know, all the good police work gets in the way. So it's the same thing. It's like, it's like the plane crash that landed. Now we have a story. So now, okay, that becomes the story. So that's kind of what the reporting goes looking for the sexy story. And that's if you go

to work, or I go to work today. And, you know, I have some guy with a knife to his neck, and I talk him into handcuffs, he goes and gets the help he needs. There's nothing really sexy about that story. But it's something that we do literally every day.

J James Geering 2:06:38

Yeah, exactly. So those are the stories we should be hearing. I try and share as many of the positive, uniform stories as I can. Because as you said, that's what happens every day. But it doesn't make it on the mainstream media, because it's not going to make someone angry or divided.

 2:06:54

You posted a three minute video on Facebook on a firefighter take a knee. And I shared that everyone, all the guys I work with I'm like, this is a cop show, watch if it's like 10 minutes, but I'm like, this is a three minute video that's worth sharing. You know what I mean? Like that is even as a civilian, you could read you could watch this guy's take on mental wellness for firefighters. And you would get it you know, in three minutes, you know?

J James Geering 2:07:17

Absolutely. That was Steve Farina. Amazing. Firefighter from Canada. That was excellent. So Well, speaking of amazing people. Is there a person that you'd recommend to come on this podcast as a guest to speak to the first responders military and associated professionals of the world?

 2:07:34

Probably aren't had the guys I leg on. So you've probably had George Ryan might go to was always been really PD. I'd love to do it. He's on Arizona, but he's always been a mentor to me. He's a he's a true Captain America. He's probably the best club I ever met. He's out in Arizona. He's retired now. But he had a really storied career. And he he taught me a lot about being professional and stuff. And you'll never hear him say anything negative, just a positive guy. But he, he trained. He trained a lot of cops. I met him early on in my career. And I with my job, I've been lucky enough. I've shook hands with six US presidents and the Dalai Lama twice, and the only time I was ever peed my pants like a school child was when I met Daryl gates from LAPD. He's the epitome of a chief of police. And I met Daryl gates one year and my goal, who was in charge of this was him and he's lights out. He's as good as anybody. But Georgia probably get Yeah. I give me his number. And Georgia probably get in touch with him. He's pretty good. He's the epitome of professionalism. I think beautiful.

J James Geering 2:08:32

We'll make it happen. And thank you so much. All right. Well, then the very last question before we make sure everyone knows where to find you and reach out. What do you do to decompress?

uecompress?

 2:08:43

So I've done I've done the good escapes and the bad escapes, I'll be totally honest with you. So the younger version of me did all the stupid stuff back in the day and unhealthy escapes and live fast and adrenaline dump. But you know, honestly, at the end of the day, I go to the gym religiously, every day, like even if it's seven days a week, even if I split up cardio or lifting weights, even when I tore my arm off, I went every single day to get through it. And I just think that hydrating sleeping and going to the gym is my positive escape. So I know I need that all wet all the time. I just kind of realized that my brain is going to be everywhere and I won't slow down and the gym is the only type of gym and believe in all that read the paper like an old person, but he makes fun of me but I read the new every newspaper every day. Everyone makes fun of me because it's the only time my brain clicks off for like, like a half an hour. Otherwise my brain is everywhere. But for me, it's just the physical stuff is really what gets me through everything. I kind of got away from running around while I was at night and all the stupid stuff used to do,

 James Geering 2:09:49

which paper do you trust to read?

 2:09:52

So, you know, the herald the Boston Herald is okay. Couple of the other papers ruff. I try to stay away from the anti police ones. But I just want to read the news. I'm old school. I want to hit a wall. I want to hear Walter Cronkite. Give the news like I want to hear somebody just give me the news. I want to see ESPN. Just give me the news. I don't want your take. I don't care. I don't. Don't give me your narrative. I just want to hear the news. I want to read the news. I want to hear the news and let me make my own decision.

 James Geering 2:10:19

Yeah, absolutely. Well, I'm sure people listening are you know, extremely interested in learning more about you maybe trying to get you to their agency or learn about some of the courses that you talk about? Where's the best place to find you online or connect with you on social media?

 2:10:36

Let's see. I'm on Facebook has just been a tender Charlie by the PUCO had to change my name because just some some negativity came I did a couple of high profile cases, use of force cases and then I didn't care so much, but my daughter gets upset and she was crying and stuff like, I'm going to tell you about Foucault, like the origin of Foucault. So that's under Facebook and then to Chara consulting. To China. Did Shara consulting@gmail.com



James Geering 2:11:09

Brilliant. Well, Chuck, I want to say thank you so much. You know, George was was raving about you. And I obviously know why. But to get some on with your career and the areas that you've become an expert in to give a middle of the road conversation or a kind of perspective on and you know, this kindness and compassion element brought into policing. I think it's been an amazing conversation. So I just want to thank you so much for being so generous. We've been chatting for over two hours now. I'm coming on the behind the shield podcast.



2:11:39

No, I appreciate it. Follow the podcast and I follow some of the guests you had and I'm humbled extremely and I'm I appreciate the privilege to come on and you taking the time. Let me talk about what a great professional what a great job we have the US