

Katheryn Basso - Episode 770

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SPEAKERS

Katheryn Basso, James Geering



James Geering 00:00

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 Katheryn Basso 03:20

I believe so. You know I I've been very honored that a lot of the people in this community have been opening up their networks to me, you being one of them. So I really appreciate you having me on.

 James Geering 03:33

So Miguel, people heard this name. He's the mysterious man wearing a marine uniform that I've taken about three years trying to convince to come on himself. He's sent so many other amazing people but I still yet to get him on so I'm going to put that out there to shame him when he listens to this. All right, well then the very first question where on planet earth are we finding you today?

 03:54

Today I am in northeast Nevada. We have a ranch out here that serves as both a training facility and a home to a nonprofit called torn warriors. It is a balmy 30 degrees right now. We've had a few beautiful days to 65 and then the next day it snowed so like everyone in this latitude we're very very tired to snow and we're very ready for spring

 James Geering 04:26

I won't show you the view outside my window then here in central Florida

 04:31

yes thank you i every single time i i post videos or photos of the feet of snow I always get my East Coast friends letting me know it's it's at in sunny here. It's beautiful here like Thank you. That's super helpful. Really appreciate that.

 James Geering 04:48

Well, South Florida just got battered by storms so they had flooding and all kinds of stuff down there. So you know we each have our weather traumas once in a while. So you talk about ranch. I would Let's just start the very beginning of your timeline. I know farms are involved in that. So talk to me about where you grew up. Tell me about your family dynamic, what your parents did and how many siblings

 05:13

out man, we're going back. Okay, so I grew up on a farm in Charlottesville, Virginia. And there were no other kids around besides my brother, my sister, and myself. And so we grew up pretty close. I also grew up very close to the baby cows, which is why to this day I can't eat veal. Had

close. I also grew up very close to the baby cows, which is why to this day, I can't eat veal. Had a lot of chickens, typical farm life, it was amazing. The peace, the security, the freedom, I knew, pretty much immediately that that was the type of life that I wanted to end up with. After all of the craziness that I chose to do, grew up in a wonderful loving home. zero complaints. You know, it's a very unique world to live in when you have to entertain yourself, you know, outside. And I know, unfortunately, that a lot of kids these days don't have that opportunity here. And I'm very blessed that the kids in where we are, have that same opportunity. It is a amazing way to to understand what this world has to offer on the freedom and the farm side. And, yeah, so I ended up going to the University of Virginia after high school 911 hit when I was a second year there. And I decided that all of the plans that I had for that life would be put on hold while I joined the Marine Corps. So after college, I went to Quantico and went to OCS and became a second lieutenant and started my

 James Geering 07:05

microRNA the military lineage goes back to you know, your father and grandfather. So talk to me about their service. And I know your dad was was Vietnam as well. Did you as you progress through your adulthood recognize some of the costs of war on your own family when you look back now.

 07:24

Definitely on my grandfather's side, and nothing against you know, my father's service at all, I he had a very low draft number. So he ended up in listing so that he could choose what he was going to do. That allowed him to go to Germany. So he spent his time you know, during that Vietnam, Vietnam War area in Germany. My grandfather, however, in World War Two, he was one of the first platoons over after the atomic bombs. And every single person in his platoon died of cancer, including him. He lasted he was the last one. But the cancer just rattled his body. And unfortunately, they did not get the type of respect that they were do that correlation between, hey, I'm in radiation filled land, I'm, you know, he used to talk to me about how the soles of his boots would would melt as he was walking. All of that stuff is horrible. And we can obviously correlate that to this is really bad for your health, but at the time, they did it. And that honestly brings me back to the pact Act and what Congress is doing now for the G watt veterans, and those currently, and because we do have a lot of our friends who either have cancer or died from cancer, so the fact that Congress says recognize the toxins at work, you were exposed to is is extremely important to this generation of veterans. My father in law

 James Geering 09:04

ended up getting compensated but he was exposed to Agent Orange had cancer several times now, I just had Amy Laura on the show who's actually she's a marine as well, I'll make sure I'm open I'm getting that right. But she was in camp lagoons if she would have been a marine when the contaminated water was there for everyone to drink and she's literally in basically in pseudo hospice now. And then you hear about the burn pits and then there's I've had guests on talking about the Flores doctrine. So one of my guests his Richard his his case was actually denied. And so you've got you know, as you said, like almost 100 years from World War Two now you know, at something and the same thing seems happening over and over and over again and it's one thing throwing money at these poor men and women but obviously the goal

is to a try and avoid combat as much as possible but be actually give them the correct protect Action and the correct equipment. So that you know they survive a tour in Afghanistan, right, but end up dying from exposure to burn pits.



10:08

Yeah, it's, we're learning a lot. And I feel like we're finally relying on the experts to provide that information. Like I get it in the military, right? Like, you have a mission, you have to do it, you're not thinking about 15 years down the road, 10 years down the road, you're thinking about completing that mission, making sure you're there for that, that man or woman beside you, and just doing what you're you're asked to do, right. That's what we sign up for. That's what we're trained to do. And so it really falls on the leaders, it falls on the leaders to say, hey, maybe we shouldn't have had people monitoring the burn pit, maybe we shouldn't have exposed all of these people to these extremely harmful chemicals, instead of just saying, hey, this needs to get done. We need leaders to step up and say, let's think about this first. I remember the water in Iraq, when I was there, like it, it always tasted funny, because it was, you know, these nasty pallets of bottled water that were left out in the sun, baking, you know, in all that plastic was just seeping into it. And it's just like, okay, it tastes funny, put a hydration pack in it, so you don't have to taste it anymore. And, again, we got the job done, but at what cost? And so I do I put it back on, you know, the officers, the leaders, the decision makers, to really think about what they're asking these young servicemembers to do, because they're going to do it, and they're not going to think twice about it, because that's what we've trained them to do. So it really just falls on us. And it is about prevention. Right. It's about ensuring that and that goes to everything, not just cancer, not just exposure, you know, the the gear that we're using, you know, let's let's make sure that that fits correctly, let's make sure that it's not causing injuries, let's make sure that we're not having to medically retire people at 10 years because their back is so messed up, their knees are so messed up in their hips are horrible, and they can't even run anymore. And, you know, we see that just across the board on retention and ensuring that the servicemembers are treated like weapon systems mean Nyko, the uniform that we use, that is the cheapest material known on the planet, right? We have been using that forever. We have as a textiles person, I can tell you, we have evolved so much from Nyko. Get we are still using it. The same can be said about all of our gear. So if we know that there's better stuff out there, we know that there's better stuff out in the commercial sector, then it's really dependent on those leaders to say the servicemembers that I'm investing so much money in, should be able to be retained, because we're not injuring them, because we are giving them the best material, the best equipment out there.



James Geering 13:04

Yeah, I agree. And I think the fire service suffers from that, too. I mean, we, it will be game changing. If you literally had gloves, I'm sure there's all kinds of you know, materials that are used in What do you mean your glove, we have gloves, but as they're almost like pillows that you strapped to your hand when our actual gloves, you were with our bunker gear and we go into a fire are so thick that you can barely even manipulate like a knot. So if you're thinking about searching and trying to find, you know, is that a person is that a piece of furniture, I mean, we literally have just got this big old padded thickness on our hands. And you talk to people that are in, for example, the space industry, and they're like, oh, no, we've got all kinds of textiles that can withstand, you know, crazy heats and all these kinds of things. But you

know, we're still wearing the same things. And I talked about this a lot, the helmet. There is such an evolution in the technology for firefighters helmet and the heads up display. But there's this kind of, I mean, really, it comes from vanity that there's this refusal to let go of the American fire helmet, which is heavy, it's bulky, it's you know, it was literally invented in the 30s. And people are hanging on to that, like, that's tradition, you know, instead of the leaders of the American Fire Service going, that is fire service history. And it's a beautiful part of our history. But it's leather, it absorbs all the carcinogens it's heavy, it gets knocked off the moments, anything hits it. This new helmet that they have over here is the same helmet, same kind of helmet you wear on a motorcycle, you can tumble and ragdoll and it'll still stay on your head. It's light and it's got all these features built in. And this is the problem is that what I see in the fire service is that kind of ignorance is resisting. Some of the technology is actually there. So whether it's the financial side or or basically the egos it is preventing us from being at the top, performing as well as we can and also making it far more dangerous for All men and women.



15:03

So when I, I briefed leaders on ensuring that women have the female fit and female sized gear, uniforms, clothes apparel. And I always start off by by talking about the standards that women are meeting and exceeding. And the standards that some women can't meet in order to get into these Combat Arms rooms, or these units that they're they're trying to go after. And I talked to them about reference, you know, okay, you have a woman on a rocker on and you're like, she's really slow. Okay, why is she slow? Is she slow? Because she's been trained like a man? Is she slow? Because she's wearing boots that are fit for men? Is she slow? Because her shoulder harness is so wide and tall for her torso that she's holding it together with her arms, so that she can run? And how much faster would she be if she could actually use her arms? And she ran? How much faster Could she be if she had boots that were actually fit for her feet? And same thing with accuracy, right, these plate carriers that we're wearing, they cover in our shoulders. And so that butter, that rifle is not sitting properly because it's competing against a strip of nylon. So you see these women and you watch them in that part of the rifle starts slipping down towards their bicep and wonder they're not accurate. Right? No wonder they're, they're having trouble with all this. They're they're running around and, and gear that looks like they're like they're wearing their daddy stuff. And it's dress up when they were, you know, eight. And you have to wonder how much better they can be how much faster they could be a much more accurate they could be if they actually wore the gear that fit their bodies. And at this point in 2023, there's zero excuse for it. Right, it is a basic requirement by doctrine for the services to equip their service members. And by doctrine, they should be able to do that as a basic requirement. And instead, they are cutting corners, they are trying to make things easier for supply for contract officers are they're just ignorant of the fact that women have different body shapes. I don't know that part. But the point being is, you know, they, they really need to step up and say, Okay, if my unit is going to excel, and be that weapons system, if that man is going to trust that woman next to her, and if she's going to trust Him, they need to have the very best that I can offer in order for them to get that Mission complete. And that includes gear that fits that includes apparel that fits. And it's just a it's a very strange argument to be fighting, especially in 23. Because, well, of course, that makes sense. Right? Like, I'm not going to put somebody you know, in Syria, and they're distracted the entire time, because they're fiddling with their gear, like that is a liability to that person. And it's a liability to that, that man and woman next to them. So why wouldn't we ensure that the service members who are willing to give their lives who we've invested so much, and who we're trying to retain, aren't given the very best? And I don't really have the answer to that. I don't know why.

 James Geering 18:38

Well, you mentioned about your granddad serving in World War Two, I want to go reverse engineer for a second as far as women in the and I'm using air quotes, male roles. Obviously, today, there is no such thing as any role anymore. You can offend someone these days. But you know, the traditionally male roles up to that point. So obviously the quote unquote, men went to war. And then now all of a sudden, women are in all these positions that before were deemed wrong for them. And you had Rosie the Riveter and you had that whole movement. And then we get to the 1950s. And it's all women belong in the kitchen again, through your eyes, what how do we shift so, so extremely back the opposite way from kind of Victorian times back into the 50s. Again, when there had been so much empowerment in, you know, the role of women, whether it was directly in you know, like the resistance in France, for example, whether it was in the support role of all the other areas that that facilitated us winning the war.

 19:41

That is a very loaded question. And I think a lot of it comes down to power. I think that innately humans desire power, and that desire leads to conflict, and that desire leads to wars and that too desire leads to a lot of bad things. I think after World War Two, the guys came back. And this idea of them losing jobs or losing independence ended up creating this very conservative movement that women are homemakers in housewives. And again, like nothing against the women who choose that, right, but it needs to be a choice. If, and I, I had a lot of friends who were like, my, I cannot wait to be a mother, I cannot wait to stay home and raise my kids. And, you know, that was what their desire was. And I support that just as much as that little girl who says, I can't wait to join the military. I can't wait to be a firefighter. But we have to give them that choice. Right, we have to have that opportunity for both. And there's room for both. Just because a woman is choosing to become a Marine doesn't mean that there's some guy somewhere that can't be a Marine. And so I think that the fault of society is that a lot of these people are seeing this as a zero sum game. And instead, they need to focus on enlarging that that pizza pie, right, and lording that, that opportunity base, because we should be we should have the choice. And if a man wants to stay home and raise his kids, he should have that choice as well. Right? It's just that society has deemed that as not a manly thing to do. And instead of us criticizing either one, we need to create an environment where that choice is allowed for, for both sexes.

 James Geering 22:06

So you went on a podcast? I think it was a few months ago now. And it was a fellow veteran, I think she was in the army, and it was talking about female warriors. I want to give credit to that podcast. You remember the name of that one?

 22:18

I don't. But she was amazing. And so get out. And now I feel

 James Geering 22:26

well ask you this question. Because I've listened to someone on a podcast, I always want to credit because I'm usually adding on some of my questions are coming from the responses before. In that conversation, you basically spoke about how overall through your military career, you hadn't really experienced sexism, but then the transition out into the, you know, the the non military world, you saw it a lot more. I, you know, I'm just posing this again, this could be loaded, I guess, term was loaded. But through my eyes, I wonder if it was our veterans from World War Two that were the push behind that. Or if it was actually the men that never served stayed at home, that were behind that narrative, and the men that came back and got so many other things they were just trying to take care of between their ears and their family, that they weren't really aware of this kind of sexism going on and regressing the women's role.

 23:23

So when I was at one of my duty stations, I was giving a tour to went to World War Two veterans. And when they were amazing, amazing to talk to you amazing conversationalist. And the first question I got from them was you aren't wearing high heels? And I was like, Yes, sir. That's, that's correct. I were combat Olds like everyone else. And he's like, Are you a nurse? No, sir. And I'm not a nurse. He was like, Are you a secretary? Say, No, sir. I'm not a secretary. And that to me was it was not sexism, middle, that was education. Right. And he had served with women, but at the time, women could only be nurses, or they could be typewriter secretaries, et cetera, et cetera. And it was those women who paved the way for the next generation of women to keep fighting to open up more jobs. So we are standing on the shoulders of those women who volunteered during that time. I believe our culture is constantly adapting and growing. It's a living, breathing thing. And with that, we are learning. You know, I don't believe in canceled culture because there's no way that someone at the age of 18 is the same person they are at age 48 or 50. We have to grow. Right? We have to. And as we are exposed to more things, that is what gives us that information education. The sexism that I did not receive during the military was because the Marines I served with, we're used to serving with women, the officers I served with, started as second lieutenants, we are at TBS together, right, men and women right next to each other, that exposure, educated them, and inform them of their beliefs and their attitudes.

 25:38

The when I got out, I can't say the same thing about every person that I've dealt with

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the men in a male oriented industry, who are not used to having women there are going to treat me the same way that they believe they've experienced in the past with other women. Is that right? Absolutely not. But I'm giving them the benefit of the doubt benefit of the doubt that they are ignorant because they have not been exposed to the correct

 26:15

20:13

examples of the capability of women. So it's, in part, it is absolutely exhausting. But that is why representation matters so much. That is why we need women across every industry. Because it's not just

26:41

the woke culture, or, you know, whatever people are complaining about these days, right, diversity hire, or all of these absolutely horrible things. It's the fact that representation provides a different perspective, diversity provides a different perspective. If you have entire table full of all the exact same white men from Nebraska, they're all going to have the exact same opinion. You throw little me in there, guess what, I'm going to see things through a different lens, and thus, I'm going to give you a different perspective. That is what makes women in these environments so great. A lot of times, men have never been exposed to women, CEOs, women, vice presidents, women officers, you know, women's senior leadership, senior NCOs. And once they are, then all of a sudden that attitude changes. And once the attitude changes, the behavior changes. Once the behavior changes, then all of a sudden, they're like, oh, man, I was very sexist. And now I'm not. And so I, I don't understand completely. And I know that there are women's studies groups out there probably listening going, this is exactly why we fell back, you know, in our equality movement in the 1950s. And I apologize, I should have taken that that course in college. I don't know why it occurred. But I do know that we can start pushing forward back into this, this world where, and again, it what bothers me with some men's definition of feminism is that we all hate men, and we want to be better than men. And that's not the case, especially today, we want to be right next to you, alongside you working on the same problem, brainstorming, giving you a different perspective, you know, making the world a better place as equal partners. And I think we can get there. We just need to start cleaning up these little things like ensuring that women had the same opportunities and that women have, you know, female sized and female fit equipment in order for them to do their jobs.

J James Geering 29:09

Well, I agree completely. I was talking to Meg Tucker, who I know you're friends with as well. And you both spoke at the symposium which we'll get to and she was talking about training the female athlete and the differences and it was it was fascinating. And I said to her, I mean I've witnessed you know, chauvinism in the fire service. And most, most people in the fire service are amazing, and they're completely accepting because they're not Dick's but you know, you get that chauvinism. But the crazy thing about the fire service is when we're actually at a fire and we're wearing all our gear and our mask and our you know, our tank is on you only have one prejudice, you can see who can and who can't. It's that simple in there. They might be male, female, black, white, gay, straight, you know, whatever. But they either can do the job or they can't do the job. So to me, it was always the great equalizer. And even if you take for example, What should be an annual fitness standard? It's a hose. It's a ladder. It's a mannequin, you're not trying to get someone to deadlift 400 or carry a 200 pound ruck. 20 miles, you're doing realistic firefighter tasks with the tools that we actually need to do the job. So if you can reach and hopefully Excel that standard, then you're probably going to be a great firefighter. So that's what's so crazy in my profession, is I mean, I've seen it I'm not I'm not blind. I hear some of those comments. But they're unfounded. Like I said, the only prejudice in a profession where lives are at stake is can you or can you not?



30:36

I, I absolutely agree with that. And I think even having this debate is a privilege, privilege of a peacetime. Like look at Ukraine, no one is arguing whether or not a man or woman can do it. Right. They are asking their citizens to take up arms and fight against an invasion by a massive superpower. No discussion that we've been having. It is, can you or can't you defend your country and defend your family? And so just the very fact that we're having this debate in our culture, just the very fact that we're having this debate in our society, just shows the the privilege of peace that we're currently living in, and that piece is on the backs of the men and women who fought for that piece? So it's almost ironic, you know, because the women were fighting as well. And now it's, well prove that we can do it. Well, they've already done it. So let's just keep moving forward. Yeah. Well, I



James Geering 31:42

mean, you especially listen to some of the most iconic stories of World War Two, their female French resistance fighters and Russian female snipers, and you know, all these, these incredible women, but all of a sudden, no, you can't do the job, you know? So, I mean, I just find it ridiculous, am I the right size to do a role within the military that a linebacker would be much better suited to do like carrying around a 50 Cal and a whole bunch of ammunition? No, my 170 pound frame is not the best for that. But am I going to be good at a different, you know, something else instead? Absolutely. And that's just that you said, diversity, diversity of body types, and diversity of personality types. You know, there's times where I've gone on a call, and someone's been irate. And I've been the right fit and managed to de escalate and get that person to go to hospital. And there's been times where I've gotten a call, not three days, anything wrong, but my skin color, tone, accent, whatever wasn't the right fit. And someone else on my crew was the person that was able to facilitate that, to me, is the beauty of diversity.



32:42

Absolutely, it's, it's imperative. And I don't know, where the narrative switched, where all of a sudden, you know, women can't do this or shouldn't do that, or they're unable to. But, you know, I think it's dying. It's dying slowly, but I do think it's dying. And I'm really looking forward to next generations of military coming in and, and being able to have doors open and pass paved, and, you know, all of these things that weren't available, or that would be a huge fight for us to be like, Oh, no, go ahead. You're the 100th person 100 women to do this. So we know that you can, and we welcome you. You know, like, I can't wait for that. Yeah,



James Geering 33:36

I just hate the fact that the whole transgender issue was such front and center when you know, it's such a minut part of this whole conversation, should people be advocated for absolutely, in my opinion, should be there competing alongside the genders that they've become rather than what they were born as? Or should we have a separate group where you've transitioned and that's your bracket that you're in. Now, that seems a pretty simple solution to me. So we can

fucking move on with this whole thing. But it also seems to dilute so many the important topics. I mean, the fact that we had, you know, multiple mass shootings the last few weeks and people are more concerned about who's on the Bud Light can is nauseating to me.

 34:17

Yeah, so there is a committee called dacoits, the defense Advisory Committee on Women in the services. And I was talking to a former member, about Kadri clothing about women in the service and what they need. And she's like, you know, we I was part of the group that brought this up in the 1970s. Like, we argued that women needed female fit and female sized equipment, body armor, and apparel in the 1970s. And I was like, well, that doesn't make me feel any better. Right like that. That doesn't make me feel good at all. And And she's like, unfortunately, it seems in our jump for equality, they have largely ignored what women need, and skipped to what transgender needs. And, you know, again, inclusion, equality, I get it, and Congress can fight over what federal dollars is going to be paying for what? That's not my concern. My concern is, can you do your job? Can you do your job effectively? And what can leaders do to ensure that your job is done effectively? How can we train you to how you need to be trained? And how can we equip you, in order to be the very best weapon system that we have, so that America's military can remain the best in the world? That is the biggest concern. So yes, you know, we need to ensure that we are treating everyone with respect. But we cannot ignore this huge problem that we've had, since the 1970s, at least, at least have been officially discussed since the 1970s. That still haven't been addressed appropriately.

 James Geering 36:24

Well, I want to get to the problems that you had in uniform, and then obviously, your transition to creating the solutions. But before we do, let's kind of go to the other side. So I know when you were in the school age, you were actually looking at the sports medicine side. So walk me through those studies that you mentioned 911. You know, how that changed your thinking and then your journey into the Marine Corps specifically?

 36:47

Sure, yeah. I was a huge soccer player. I played soccer since I was six. I was ready to play college soccer. It was I played year round, indoor soccer in the winter, like I came from a soccer family. So it was just a huge part of my life. I got severely injured my sophomore year. And I had to do rehab in our sports medicine clinic. And absolutely fell in love with it. So I was there every day for I think, like two months. So I got to see all the injuries come in and what they were doing to help the injuries and the taping and you know, it was just very acute medicine. So I was like, Hey, I'd like to do this. Can I be a part of your athletic trainer, you're soon athletic trainer. And so they brought me on and I did it. Obviously off, you know, not during soccer season, but every other season. I was there doing athletic medicine, sports medicine, I was trainer, I ended up being coming the head trainer, I interned at ACU Center at UVA my senior year. And I was like, This is it, I cannot believe that somebody gets paid to do this. This is what I want to do. I'll go to UVA for four years. Take the test, then go to Europe, get my physiotherapy degree and, and be an athletic trainer for some European football. That was



James Geering 38:24

the way you say soccer when you played here, but you caught it the correct term when you were overseas. So



38:31

like, my brother's a huge Liverpool fan, and so we have to, he's corrected me once or twice. And I do respect all the cultures. Inclusion. Exactly. So that that was it. You know, my first year I was at Q center, you know, just doing very minimal things and, and still loved it still couldn't wait. And when 911 hit that there was a huge change. I couldn't imagine spending my life with very privileged athletes forever. When I felt like I should be doing another act of service. Yes, my grandfather served my father served. And my dad always instilled in us that we needed to protect those who can protect themselves, which made me huge anti bully, by the way, like is a trigger for me. Somebody starts bullying me and it's the only thing that really sets me off to this day, by the way, so don't bully me or bad things will happen. So you know it was this This weird debate, like my entire life had already been planned out. I worked my ass off to get to the mercy of Virginia. And that was the first step to this path that I had already decided. And I just couldn't, couldn't stand, I couldn't continue that it was just this feeling I couldn't get over. I was part of our search and rescue team at UVA, the Blue Ridge Mountains Search and Rescue Team Burma. And they had such an amazing attitude towards medicine and towards life. And, you know, the, their motto was so so others may live. And I, I found so much contentment, and satisfaction and working with them. And when 911 hit, and I knew that, okay, well, what's that next step? You know, how can I serve? How can I make a difference in this world? Because we just got bullied, right? We just got bullied, and I hate bullies. So yeah, I've knocked on the door of the Marine Corps ROTC. And we had a very long conversation about why and what was required. And you know, I, they were kind enough to let me work out with them. I still wanted to be a college student. I didn't want to go the ROTC route. So they just work me into shape, which was great. I needed it. I had zero idea about the military. So I had no idea what the difference was between an NCO and the CNO. And all these acronym that I didn't quite understand and these initialisms and, and, you know, I was completely lost in the sauce about everything. And so it was, it was tough, like, I had no idea what they were talking about half the time. So it was a huge shift. And I remember having to tell my parents, like after I signed up, knowing I was going to go to OCS, the OCS route Marine Corps requires all of their officers except for the Naval Academy to go to Officer Candidate School, even if you're an ROTC. So I knew that that was the path. saved up, I was like, How do I tell my parents, right, they were my biggest cheerleaders, they knew the path I was going to take. They were my brothers excited to go to the Premier League, you know, and that, obviously, that was gonna get tickets were, you know, 10 years down the road. And so it was just, it was a interesting dilemma for someone whose parents were so encouraging throughout her entire life. That Hey, by the way, this thing that I've wanted to do since I was a sophomore in high school, I don't want to do it anymore. And instead, I'm going to sign up to go to war. And my dad, of course, was super proud. My mom was like, Absolutely not, like too late. And I remember, the day I got commissioned in Quantico, there was a small break between, you know, the morning and the actual commissioning ceremony. And we all went out to lunch, and my mom pulled me aside and she's like, Honey, if you have any doubts, if you do not want to do this, I've got the car and we can just go and I was like, Mama, like, I love you. But we're going to get this done, and we're going to do it and you're going to, you're going to see that it's okay. And she ended up being

ridiculously proud of me and putting, like my daughter's armoring, you know, sticker on her car. And you know, she was she was very happy in the end, but yeah, it took it took some time for them to get used to it.

J James Geering 44:06

Now, how much did your soccer and your search and rescue training factor into your success physically in the marine on ramp?

i 44:15

Yeah. So I think as any athlete knows, anyone in the currently serving military it really helps if you are an athlete prior. The training the pain, like the mental control that you need. That is great. Land nav, it is completely different doing land navigation in the military than it is in search and rescue, search and rescue, we focus more on orienteering. So you can read the terrain really well. And land nav, it's just point A to point B, go right as fast as you can. And if you're going over cliffs, you know, oh, well just make sure you get there, you know, ASAP. So that one took me a little while able to get used to, I wasn't used to getting timed doing land navigation, it was just, you know, a lovely point A to point B in a roundabout way, by the way, look for small things, right look for people. So that took a bit of getting used to, but everything else, I think growing up as a soccer player kept my body ready for the demands. Now, my body still broke. And I'm, you know, I had hip surgery when I was 35 the gear was not fit for me. And that's what caused all my injuries, like so many other women who were medically retired and who had to get out. So that's one of the reasons why this is such an important thing for me to be fighting for right now. You know, there, I can't squat, I can't do lunges. So I am modifying all of my workouts around a very painful hip that I cannot get replaced for another 10 years. So, you know, it's, we talk about veterans, and we talk about the problems after the fact and pain management and suicide. And, you know, a lot of that has to do with loneliness, and, you know, traumatic issues that they dealt with while they were in. But a lot of it also deals with pain, like they just can't handle the pain anymore. So if we can stop the pain from happening to begin with, you know, again, like, you have all of these, these effects that if we can just prevent them, then we don't have to deal with the aftermath. The VA doesn't have to spend millions of dollars, Congress can stop creating options about reducing or disability payments, you know, like, there's just a lot of things that we could do to prevent all of this stuff from happening.

J James Geering 46:57

When we talk about diversity, one of the most proactive solutions that I've come across is and I've talked speak about this a lot, because this guy deserves the recognition. But a friend of mine, Chris Hickman started a firefighter mentorship program here in Ocala, where I live. And what they did is basically they have training, they have equipment, all these young men and women have to do is physically get to this fire station, and they will train them for free, equip them. There are scholarship opportunities at the Fire Academy. And then the other end of the Fire Academy, the local departments are just crying out for responders. But what I realized is when you remove the barrier to entry, and especially if you go into football teams, softball teams, CrossFit gyms, you know, places where you would find motivated fit young women, for example. That is how you create diversity you find you go into an underserved community, and

you find the people that would be the best fit for that profession, you don't just scoop up a bunch of people because they have this chromosome or, you know, whatever it is to check a box, you empower the people in that community and you ask them to rise to the bar that you've said, and then they become yet another incredible Marine, firefighter, etc. So with you, when you made the comment, you should be an athlete before you enter the military. What can we do better, as far as inspiring so many of these great female athletes in each of the countries listening to, you know, create that understanding that you can be a police officer or a firefighter or a Marine, you know, this is an option for you.



48:32

It, it's really interesting, when you were talking I was thinking about this symposium that we had in March, I had mystery ranch as one of my panelists, and I was telling him, you know, a lot of the pushback that I get is that women are only 15% of the customer base and for vendors to create and spend our detainee only 15% of our customer base, it's a bad business plan. And he his response really surprised me. He said, That's on us. If women are 51% of the population, and you only have 15% Because hikers are the same firefighters are the same. You only have 15% of that as your customer base, then we're doing a really poor job attracting that group of people into this hobby sport profession, etc. And I never really thought of it that way. But he's right, like it's on the people who have been in the people who are currently serving the hikers. You know, all of these people who enjoy what they're doing to share that with the population that is still trying to figure out what to do. She haber in her in her opening speech. She talks about you know, having a ladder but pushing it down for that next woman to come I'm up, you know, instead of us just keep climbing, no, we make sure that that next person is pulled alongside as well, so that they have a pathway up. And it, it's so important to be able to be open to mentorship, and to be able to ask our answer those questions that people have to expose these professions to the different communities, because there will be that crazy person who wants to become a Marine officer, somewhere in a high school, who at a time just wants to conform and not, you know, make a huge fuss, or that police officer or that firefighter, and they need that opportunity to actually talk to one or to go in train. We talk about this all the time in terms of training, like you see the women, CrossFit. And I point them out every single time some guy says a woman isn't physically fit enough to fill in the blank. It's like, are they not physically fit enough genetically? Or are we not training them? To do their profession correctly? And I think that is a huge difference. So I agree with you, like we we have an obligation now as firefighters as as police, as you know, federal law enforcement, Secret Service, as military to, especially in male oriented occupations to reach down and create an environment where girls, young women can or young men to, you know, come up and say, hey, I'm interested in this. Tell me more.



James Geering 51:47

Yeah, especially with the CrossFit. I've done CrossFit for 15 years now. So I've got to see, you know, just this amazing metamorphosis and I would say it was one of the movements has definitely brought, you know, the the potential physical ability of the female gender to the forefront of the the men of the world, because you cannot go into a CrossFit gym. You know, unless you are a competitive athlete in the CrossFit space and not have women in your gym that kick your ass and certain workouts. And I go to jujitsu school, and I get choked out by people that are you know, better than me hands down. And I'm not even talking like black

belts, I'm talking about, you know, my belt a little bit higher. And so, you know, of course, not everything is raw strength. I mean, goes back to the transgender argument, of course, there are some genetic elements that if you're at the absolute extreme, there's a little bit more strength, a little bit more speed. I mean, that's kind of a, you know, a fact as well based on time based on, you know, actual weight lifted. But we're not talking about the extremes we're talking about, can you do this profession, and that's not at the 99th percentile, it's further down, where most of us, you know, I'm not this giant, you know, beast of a man. But I was able to be a great firefighter, I'd like to think for 14 years. So, you know, like you said, it's not the person, the skin color, the gender the sexual orientation, is the desire and the the the environment. Are they being trained? Are they being empowered to believe they can do it? And are they the right fit? Because the other beautiful thing about a mentorship program as what happened with my my bonus boy, my stepson he to participated for a bit and was like, the fire service isn't for me, and he ended up becoming a mechanic. Beautiful. That's also a huge positive result of this mentorship program. Can you is it the right fit? Do you want to put the work in to become a marine or a firefighter? No, okay, beautiful, then you're taken out the pool as well, which is another positive so that we can attract more people that are the right fit.



53:54

Hi, saw reminds me of Instagram rail I was watching from Joe Rogan. And he was talking about how I don't know if upset is the right word or disappointed, but he disagreed with the fact that the White House had all women's Secret Service agents. And his point was, you know, he loves women, he loves his wife, he loves his daughters, but he can beat the shit out of all of them. And I think there's this misconception that women in law enforcement, federal law enforcement, local law enforcement, you know, firefighters, military, whatever, when they are approached with an enemy, a bad guy, you know, a suspect, an assailant, et cetera, that all of a sudden they're in the Octagon and they have rules to follow, you know, in terms of, you know, growing strikes, no. eye gouging, you know, All these things that, you know, pound a pound, they've got gloves on, they've got mouthpieces in and there's a referee. And this misconception that pound a pound, a woman is not going to beat a man that way. And what is upsetting about that is two things. You know, one, you're in a street fight for your life. Right? There are no rules in that. And at least in the military, we were taught these combatives you know, I'm going through your groin, your throat or your your eyes. This is my life. I'm not going to make sure that things are competition legal. And, you know, shout out to our combatives instructor John Garmin, down at crucible in Fredericksburg. I think they even have shirts that say nothing, we teach this competition legal. And I remember we're doing you know, we're doing combatives and it was close quarters day. And I was partnered up with children's probably 595 10. But just all muscle, like zero body fat, all muscle. And we had our mouth guards in and, you know, we actually have rules, no eye gouging, no fishhooks. And he's like, Alright, we're gonna put you in a hallway and we're gonna turn off the lights, and you guys are just gonna, you know, you're gonna go at it. 70% So, you know, we're, we're in position and my colleagues like, I want you to go 100% Like, dude, I'm not I'm not going to 100% on you. And he's like, no, no, go 100%. And so I started out at 70. And he started screaming at me to go harder. And in we ended up you know, I put everything that I had on that guy. And I walked away with Bruce hands. Right? I walked away with an injured wrist, I walked away injured. And it was there's zero way that me as a five foot 320 pound girl can fight this guy in a fair fight. But that's why we have technique. That's why we have the new rules of combatives where if it's my life versus his life, I'm going to do whatever I have to do to survive. And if that means that I am kicking you in the groin, throat punching you or popping your eyeball out, guess what? That's what I'm doing. No, I'm not waiting to tap out an armbar the second misconception is

that we don't have equalizers right? It's not like some guy is running up against to the White House and Secret Service is taking out her service weapon, putting it down and being like, alright, let's fight and see who wins. You know, we're not going fisticuffs. You know, the the reason that these these women are trained, the reason that they have tasers and pistols and equalizers of such, the reason that they understand technique and are trained in that technique, is to be able to defend themselves their position to do their job. So yes, I get it. Joe Rogan, you can beat me up. That's great, you know, in a refereed fight, with gloves on and a mouthpiece and I'm guessing I'm not going to last long. You know, but the moment that I first kick your kneecap in and just take my nails and rake them across your face, then we can have a conversation about who is going to come out on top. And in a fight like that.

 James Geering 58:52

Interesting. Yeah. I mean, it's I think that's the other thing, like you said, there are tools that we use these days. I mean, look at wars, it's now shifting to robots that we talked about before we hit record, the creepy AI as listening to this whole conversation and taking notes right now. No offense, AI, please don't zap me. But yeah, I mean, you forget like there are some incredible some of the best competitive shooters on the planet are women you know, and that is a tool as well. Now you know, if you were just thinking about creating a line of pure muscle mass then it would be nothing but six foot five giant dudes protecting the president but it's not the you know, you look at the your average seal or delta guy or shs human, they're not these monsters. They're actually kind of, you know, mesomorph. So the kind of the middle athletic group. So there is this kind of fallacy that you need to be this giant now there are pros to being you know, a 250 pound six foot two, dude, for example. Yeah, but they're also cons. If you're in a foot pursuit, how long are they able to maintain chasing someone who just snatch someone's child? You know, so I mean, that's the problem with this diversity thing. You can't be my own. Pick and go with a stereotype. There's a reason why those women are there, they obviously, you know, got to the point where they were unable to be at the tip of the spear. So it is it is a little ignorant to kind of go back to that and but it's the separate conversation with a powerlifting competition, you know, a male and a female, that's that's different entire conversation there, the man is going to same exact skill set, a male is going to be able to squeak out a few more pounds than a female, but that's not what we're talking about. That's not a marine or a firefighter. It's a whole different conversation.

 1:00:38

It's always funny, you know, you see all these means saying, you know, just and it's usually bashing officers, and I'm, I married an enlisted guy, so former enlisted guy and just wanna throw that out there not getting court martialled. So I am constantly dealing with his friends who love to make fun of the fact that I'm an officer. And, you know, a lot of the memes that they sent me usually are around like, oh, just because you can get a perfect PFT score doesn't mean that you're a great leader, or you know, just because you can crush, whatever physical requirement doesn't mean that you're a good leader. It's like, okay, well, you can't have it both ways. You can't say, you know, just because this dude is the most amazing physical athlete doesn't make him a good leader. Got it, just because she can't deadlift as much as he can. Doesn't mean that she's not going to be a good leader. And so I, again, yes, it goes back to diversity, it goes back to perspectives and leadership and the capabilities that each one of the service members brings to the fight. And so it's just very frustrating to see this old school

mentality of, you know, women can't drag a guy out of a burning building. Women can't, you know, arrest a suspect women can't do a 26 mile ruck march. You know, all of these things have based on these capabilities of what well, one? Yes, they can. They've done it. They have been doing it for a very long time. So now what is your argument?

 James Geering 1:02:23

Yeah, exactly. Well, I want to get to what you're doing now. So I know the origin story of the kind of the genesis of your business now involved, excuse me, revolves around a knife. So let's talk about that story, and then walk through your transition out and into what you're doing now.

 1:02:42

Sure, my, my lucky knife. When I was second lieutenant, I went and bought a knife. And it wasn't anything special. It's not like a cursory eat or Strider knife, or, you know, one of these \$500 knives. It was just a simple knife that fit my hand. And I carried with me everywhere. You know, in uniform on deployments, I was a East Asia fayo. So it traveled to all these different countries with me. And it was just this. This piece of me that gave me a little bit of comfort, familiarity. And when I was in a military training exercise, you know, I was running through the woods, we had to wear all civilian attire for OpSec reasons, obviously, and I had a pair of pants that I bought from REI, and they were female fit, obviously. But they had like four pockets. And the front pockets where these angled, very shallow pockets, but they were the only thing available hiking pants that that fit me. So I stuck my knife there and we were running around, and I stopped and reach for my knife and it wasn't there. So it had just popped out somewhere along the path. And so one yes, heartbroken at this knife that I had so much history with was gone. But two, we were eating Mr. Reese the whole 45 days. And I had no way of opening up my memories, because I didn't have an extra knife. Yes to his one one is done. learn that the hard way. But luckily a colleague there had those keychains Swiss Army Knife keychain, and so he gave me that so for the next however long I always like sewing open my memories with a little mini saw. But that night, I ended up creating the first iteration of the boundary designing that Back with pockets, female fit, durable pants that could last 45 days in the field without getting washed. You know all of these things that that I needed that the current market didn't have. So once I ended up getting back to the unit I remember going to supply and being like, Hey, can I get female specific fit on all of these things? At this point, I was in a SOCOM unit. So I just assumed that SOCOM with all this money, we'd have female fit stuff. You know, Marine Corps, we'd be more with less. I never expected to have anything that actually fit me there. But again, SOCOM lots of money. So the supply guy was just like, Hey, I can't give you something that doesn't exist. No one makes female specific anything. So you know that, that pissed me off for many reasons. But I was still in, I design these pair of pants, and I really wanted someone to make them. And so I was able to work through a a prototype, and I went to some pretty high industry leaders, some very successful industry leaders, said, Hey, I need you to make these pants. And they're like, there is no market for women in the tactical space. One actually told me I will never make female anything. And I just again got pissed off. Like, it wasn't a disappointment. It was just that I am your customer. Like I'm asking for this. I, I need this. And, you know, again, they're they're focused on that 85%. So I ended up saying, screw it, like, I'll do it myself. I was able to partner with first beer for the first year. They kind of kept me under their wing kind of introduced me to the industry, this insane military, industry of apparel, and gear.

And then I ended up going off on my own to really pursue not just the apparel side, but you know, this mission to ensure that women have everything they need to excel in this occupation. So, yeah, we we ended up learning a lot. It's not a great industry to be in. It's very cutthroat and they still don't take the female warfighter seriously. So it's, it's definitely an uphill battle. It's definitely a challenge. But you know, these women are amazing and just absolute badass is and it is a disservice that they are so underserved in this market.

 James Geering 1:08:13

So let's elaborate on that a little bit. We talked a little while ago now for example, about the body armor and I was even asking you about the kind of Boadicea style bust you know, if that was even a possibility because, obviously, we're all different shapes and sizes, even within the same gender were anything from you know, skinny as a rake, which I'm not too far from through to the linebacker they refer to and everything in between, but then anatomically and physiologically, you've got the female form, which again has to diverse spectrums. So what was some of the you mentioned the kind of the injuries and the health issues as well as the performance side? What is the detriment that you found in the field yourself and the women that you spoke to, as far as wearing male equipment on the female body?

 1:09:02

So well, we can start with physical first. You know, if you can imagine your 170 pounds, I'm guessing you're quite tall and lean. So if you can imagine wearing like a 250 pound, you know, man's pants, and then cinching that belt down so that it doesn't drop. You know that that's basically what we're dealing with here. You know, a lot of these women are choosing pants, especially that just fit their hips, which, if they're meant for men, that means it goes straight up. And so they are having to deal with, you know, this incredible waist gap, extra three to four inches, you know, in their crotch. You know, the leg. Legs are way too wide. They're just dragging a lot and that's making them very slow. The blouses are fitting their their breast size. So you get you know, someone who might be five one but they have had to wear an extra extra large blouse, in order for it to button over their breast size. And so that shoulder seam is halfway done or bicep, and it's not making their, their body armor fit correctly. You know, the helmets are, unfortunately not not fit for hair. And so you you have you know, all of these, these issues with the hair situation with helmets. And luckily the army has come out with their age bracket, which has been a little bit more comfortable for for bonds. But even to this day, you get in the prone and that helmet just goes right over your eyes. And it they they're dealing with, you know, migraines and hair loss because of their their hair standards, which, you know, all of our armed services are loosening up those those hair requirements, because of all of these issues that these hair standards are causing. And then you go down to these paths, and the torsos are too too long for a lot of these women and the harness, shoulder straps are too wide. And so now as I mentioned before, they're they're using their hands to pull in their straps, that that low torso hip is it's not sitting correctly. And so there's a lot of pressure there, they're having to torque their bodies in a way so that that C spine loses that padding. And then you know, the boots, you know, we're still getting issued men's boots. And women's feet are not just a smaller sized men's feet. Because of the our pelvis and the queue angle of our femur, our feet are shaped and sized differently to distribute weight properly. And so putting us in a male last is causing you know, these knee problems, these hip problems, these ankle problems and Achilles problems. And so we're having a lot of, of injuries based on just the simple fact that

we're in the wrong gear. And then this false sense of security because our body armor is just hasn't fit. You know, someone whoever made this decision, just erroneously assume that the shorter a woman gets the narrower her shoulders and the smaller her boobs. And that's just clearly not the case for so many of us. And so what you're seeing is, you know, these women who are sitting in a convoy are sitting down and body armor is either jamming into their thighs, cutting off circulation, or jamming up, you know, their chin so they can't see. So they're either taking the body armor off so they can function, or they're losing feeling in their legs, so they can't ingress egress vehicle very well. So all of these, these things are making it it's almost detrimental to their capabilities. And then if you want to talk about the cognitive issues, you know, this when they're on their ex, and they're fidgeting with their gear, because it doesn't fit. Well, now they're distracted, and they're not focused on the mission, they're focused on the fact that nothing fits them, you know, that things are flopping all over the place. And, you know, they're just trying to make the best of the situation. And they found that, you know, this, this cognitive dysfunction limits their ability to shoot, move, communicate, you know, so a lot of the times, you know, people are like, well, you're just complaining because it's uncomfortable, it's uncomfortable for the men to First off, if it's uncomfortable for the men, you have that power to get better gear, so do it. But to it's not just about discomfort, right it is about ensuring that we are that weapon system that you trained us to be and that we are as fast as possible as accurate as possible. And that we're not going to be getting injured in five years.

J

James Geering 1:14:00

Now you mentioned the the pants that you lost the knife on were civilian pants, Rei talked to me about the the uniform and the pockets for for the actual, you know, when you were deployed. I mean, I've heard you talk about using a pocket for a tampon for example, something that a man wouldn't really think about you know, maybe it'd be a cigar or something. But um, you know, there's these are real things. I know you're on your website, you've got hygiene in the field, a blog about that. Well, you know, as a man, you're not thinking twice about, you know, how do you match right in the middle of war, for example?



1:14:34

Yeah, so we designed the Valkyrie based on all the problems that we had in the field. So everything that we did was solution based. We have God 1111 pockets back welt pockets are fit for in four mags. Majority of people put their cell phones in. But we chose bellowed cargo pockets. So you know the big thing now especially for men are these low vis cargo pockets, which are technically just welt pockets, right, they, they go up against the skin, they they go inside, we went the opposite route. As you know, women's thigh shapes are all different. And we wanted to make sure that no matter your thigh size, you could still use those cargo pockets. So for a lot of women, they're in these low vis high speed, tactical pants, and they can't put anything in their pockets. So we wanted to ensure that that that wasn't happening for us. The tampon pocket is essential for hygiene, because if you can imagine all the crap that you put in those cargo pockets, right, you're putting bras you're putting like just disgusting things in there. And you don't want to have a tampon mixing in with lead and bras and all of that. So we just had a separate pocket to ensure that women stayed healthy in the field. We added waist gussets to our waist for that extra bloat that we get every month. So you know, a lot of times in many women, you know, this is not uncommon for women, they'll understand this, but they buy what's called period pants. So if as a designer, if you are 27 inches in your waist, you know,

three, three weeks out of the month, but one week out of the month, you are 3132 inches in your waist. Like that's a huge difference. And I need to be able to count for that. And so we put extra stretchy material to waist gussets in for for that stretch. We put a very extended crotch gusset with that stretchy material to add in movement to make the squat proof a lot of women are blowing up crutches are in the range. So we needed to make sure that that didn't happen for us, especially when you're out in the field. We also created it the pant with a mid rise instead of a low rise. And this was it's probably the most interesting debate that I have. So women are typically more comfortable with a not like super low rise, but with a lower rise everyday chant bed breasts like pretty much under their belly button. And I first made the Valkyrie like that. And then I put a gun belt on and tested it and ran around and did crazy things. And that gun belt started going up to the most narrow part of my waist. So every single time I stopped, I would have furrific cameltoe. And I'm just like spinning all this time, like pulling my pants, you know, my thighs, so like, have some relief. I'm like, Okay, this is not going to worry my

J James Geering 1:17:48
discretion for the enemy.

o 1:17:51
Oh, god, it's so uncomfortable. So we knew that it needed to rest on top of the hips because of that. And I actually ended up talking to a few cops. And I asked him what, but pants they were. And they're like, Well, we were the men's pants. And I said, Well, you know, these very popular vendors, you know, made specifically for you have women's fit pants. Why don't you wear them. And they're like, they're not squat proof. The waist is so low that I can't squat down without showing my butt crack. And that's one thing I definitely do not want to do when I'm on the force. And I was like, Yep, totally get it. And you know it. Unfortunately, this idea that it's more comfortable if we make the rise lower, has somehow infected or infested into a lot of the military clothing now. And so women are choosing that, that man's fit, because someone who didn't know what they were doing, who had never been out in the field who who knows, and said, Oh, for women like this lower right. So that's what we're going to make these tactical functional pants wear. Suit. It's

J James Geering 1:19:04
interesting because you talked about the footwear earlier and taking gender out for a second. Through my career in the fire service. There was this kind of again fallacy I'm assuming from people that really didn't do the job that a firefighter not in the fire. That's a whole different set of equipment and footwear, day to day wearing our blues suited and booted that we needed to have steel toes and steel shanks. So you end up with these incredibly heavy stiff boots and most of my career I just shifted to regular sneakers and we get told off Oh, you need to change it. Okay, put them back on since they're gone. Take them off again, because there wasn't going to be any change in their mind. But it was lunacy to me like you watch an officer and a foot pursuit. You know, should you be in flip flops? No. But you look at a lot of the special operators. They're not wearing steel shank steel toe cap leather boots, they're wearing the light, you know, almost like the longer and called sneaker basically, because that's what actually works.

So it's funny how, you know, there's such a disconnect between some of these designers, and what we actually need. And the missing part is simply having the humility to say, what do you need, give me your input, what works, what doesn't work.



1:20:19

And I will say, that is one great thing about not knowing anything about the clothing industry when I first started. So, you know, here I am pissed off at the world. Because I was told I was basically invisible, and that my needs didn't matter. And I decided to start this company, yet I knew nothing about the clothing industry, I knew nothing about design. And I couldn't even so it sounds like a button, right? So I ended up getting this amazing design team out of Chicago, and they are designers. That's what they do. And our conversations typically go like, I need to solve this problem, you figure out how to do so. And that is what directs all of our designs. And they'll push back and be like, This is not industry standard, or this isn't, you know, what we typically do, this is not what looks good. And I'm like, got it. I don't care. Like the reason that industry standard isn't working, is because they're not being functional with their clothing. I don't care how chic we look like I don't care if you know, that design is going to be on a runway somewhere, what I need is this to be functional. And I still don't know all of the lingo. You know, I'll tell them like we're creating this executive suit. And, you know, I'll just sit there and be like, we need to be able to do this. And I'm like, pushing my arms in front of me, like I'm hugging somebody, and they're like, You need a hug someone and I'm like, No, I need to tackle someone, I need to be able to tackle someone in a suit without the shoulders ripping. And I need to be able to, you know, move my arm from from down below to up above my head. You know, without things going all crazy and weird. Like I need to be able to have full mobility and function in my clothes. Let's figure out how to do that. And it takes a very long time. Because most of the things I'm asking you for are, we've never done this, you know, we have no idea. Let's try, you know, three or four different prototypes and three or four different ideas to find the best solution. And again, that goes back to a lot of it comes down to fabric, let's have the best fabric so that it can move. So that it can be wicking, so that it doesn't wrinkle, so that I can run a marathon in the suit, throw it in a suitcase, fly six hours, pick it up, and it's good again, you know, so that these guys don't have to find a dry cleaner in in Cambodia?



James Geering 1:23:05

Well, I've even found that as on the civilian side outside of my uniform. You know, I did martial arts for a long time. And back in the day, it was taekwondo. So I used to envision if anyone ever attacked me, I would kick him in the head. And then obviously, I realized now that most combat is gonna look very different than that. But it kind of illustrated the point, I'm driving along, and I do see smoke coming out of a house or there is an upturn car, or, you know, someone says something, seeing my wife and as being aggressive, like, outside of our professions, or regular clothes also need to allow us to do certain things. And you know, we talked about five leaveners, one of the companies that sponsor the show, and I wear a lot of their stuff. And I'm a man. So obviously, it's you know, the design is aimed primarily at my gender as well. So that's helpful, even though I'm six foot tall than 170. So finding that length, and that waist size, for me is actually very hard as well. But I'm choosing footwear and jeans and things like that, that will allow me to chase someone to climb a fence to do whatever I need to do, because it's not just in our roles that we need that I think in every day and sometimes I mean, you watch the dudes that have the, the the jeans that halfway down their legs, whatever people's impression

of that is irrelevant, like functionally, that's a horrible idea, to you know, to escape to fight, etc. So I'm kind of looking at the other way. So certainly in the tactical space that needs to be the case and you look at the locker room of, you know, everyone's favorite athletes, all their stuff is tailored to them. But we got people whose lives are at stake, and they're wearing for example, a missile there's so many of my my sister firefighters, you know, there's men's shirt that's tucked in, you know, and they've got like, two inches of just tuck in their belt and then like you said the pants don't fit. So yeah, I mean, I think it's it's common sense, but I think there really is a superpower though into not being in that industry and come coming at it from a completely different space. And even when I started this podcast, I didn't Google how do you start a podcast? I didn't Google, you know, what questions should you ask any of that stuff, I just listened to people like Joe Rogan. And Tim Ferriss and some other ones, and I really liked the way they do it, I have no idea how to do it. So I'm going to start from scratch and build my way up. So I think from an innovation side, that's exactly what needs to happen. Because more often than not, what's probably happening is one company's copying the next and trying to rival them, and they're not actually reverse engineering to the needs of the person on the street or in the field.



1:25:37

And I think we've been, I don't know the correct word for this, but high fashion dens has, or quick fashion has ruined a lot of things for us. You know, this, this, trendy on trends, sweatshops, you know, get a look. And, you know, it's in your stores, you know, two weeks later, or whatever. You know, my we've got 72 Different sizes for our pants, based on hip, waist, and inseam. And everyone was telling me like, you'll never survive, you'll never survive this. And there's, at some point, there's this obligation to the people that we serve, right? I'm not trying to outfit some some trendy, you know, high schooler who is going shopping every week to find new clothes. You know, there is an obligation that the women that I'm serving are putting their lives on the line, these first responders, the military, and they need to have clothes that fit them in order to do their job effectively. And so yes, 72 different sizes, I get it. But I think we owe it to the women to the men that are willing to risk their lives, who might not becoming home to provide them with, with everything that they need, like you said, like they the very well paid and high, high salaried athletes have everything tailored to them. Because their body shapes are obviously outside the industry standard. And yet, the men and women who are guarding the stadiums or guarding them, or who are willing to run towards the commotion, or in towards the gunfight, are the ones that are suffering the most from what we are able to provide for them. So I, you know, I just challenge this industry to do better, we can do better, you know, and stop worrying about this. You know, this bottom line of how can we make more money? How can we outsource? How can we cut costs? Like what children can we pay a penny a day to put on buttons? You know, we really need to focus on the stakeholders instead of the shareholders of this industry, because these are the people that need it the most. And we talk about this, you know, this idea of patriotism, and we talk about, you know how great America is yet we're not going to to not make as much money, we're not willing to put a little bit more r&d Teeny on designs, we're not willing to get better fabrics, create better fit, do the research, for the people who are defending that. And to me that just that makes zero sense.



James Geering 1:28:42

I watched a documentary it was probably a couple of years ago now, but it was on the kind of

disposable clothing crisis. And that you know, a lot of the donations again, quote, unquote, that we send overseas more often than not, it's almost like a dumping ground because we consume so many clothes, so many cheap clothes. And yeah, there's literally this element. Now we're in I would want to wear the same thing twice, which is ridiculous. And I think we've gone so far from quality. And that's that was what I talked about a lot. Recently. I'm watching the American mall dying. And I think it's a good thing. Because if you think about and I wasn't an American child, but my wife romanticized about being in the mall, but you sift through racks of clothing and you sift through CDs and you're basically there to consume. You know, your Orange Julius and your pretzels, you're just consuming. You're not even really interacting that much. I mean, teenagers, maybe but by the time you're an adult, you go in there, you're just buying a bunch of shit and you're coming back. And now we have these online stores. And I think that's a beautiful thing, because now I'm hoping that these spaces will not go away forever, but they will become communal spaces again, restaurant, butcher, baker, you know, cafes, breweries, whatever it is where people convene and interact and they're artists and again, and I feel like that in the needs to happen also with furniture and with clothing, that you're okay spending x amount of dollars, because you know, those pants are going to be in your closet for a long, long time, because they're well made, they're durable. And ultimately, as you said, hopefully they're they're American, may we start bringing all our industry, not all but a lot of it back and employing our own people. So getting away from that kind of McDonald's fast food, clothing, philosophy, and going back into the kind of the tailor the person who made you your favorite jacket, your favorite pair of trousers that last a long, long time, and therefore can actually be made for you the individual.



1:30:40

Yeah, so when we we first were trying to figure out how to do the sizing system. We really wanted to do made to order. And no one in the US was willing to take this on. India does it really well. And Colombia, I believe, does it really well. But the US was like, Nope, we weren't MOQ we weren't, here's your minimum, you need to purchase it from us. And you know, that's that. And, you know, obviously, as a veteran owned company, keeping everything in United States is extremely important. Not just because you know, USA, but because I know exactly how people are getting treated here in the US as an East Asia fail. I understand the other side of that as well, you know, the sweatshops. And while companies can say that they are sustainably made in an ethical way, like, okay, got it. There, there's just a lot of doubts in that. So keeping things here in the US was extremely important to me. Unfortunately, that skill set left, when we started outsourcing. And we are limited in both domestic manufacturing and textiles, it is coming back. There are some amazing companies out there that I'm currently using, there are some amazing factories that are getting started all around the country. And hopefully, it's going to start bringing more people to do domestic manufacturing instead of going overseas, especially with taxes and tariffs and imports, and all these requirements and delays as a COVID. You know, I'm hoping to see that everything starts turning inward, so that we can start producing everything at an affordable cost. You know, our, our prices are high, and our prices are high, because everything is made here. You know, the buttons are made here, like everything is made here. And that was very important. But it also comes with a cost that not everyone understands. I'm not going to pay \$200 for a pair of pants. Okay, well, one, you can pay \$50 for times, because the quality isn't as good. Or you can pay \$200 This one time. And I mean, I'm still wearing the pair of pants from our very first run from our very first prototype, they even have like, completely different zipper pulls on it because my zipper poles weren't in at the time. And they served me well. You know, and that's, that's a quality that we can produce here in United States. It's just a lot of people are so used to buying pants for \$60

by paints for \$70 because, you know, they're getting the made in Bangladesh and in Vietnam, and you know, nothing against those. Those countries the sewers are phenomenal sewers. But, you know, you're you're just going to get stuck with that quality and then that, you know, a little bit of ethical confusion on whether, you know, some can you smell the sweat and the tears of the child who just sewed that him. So, you know, it is it's an interesting industry for sure. And I hope that it continues to this push of a local and domestic manufacturing.

J

James Geering 1:34:22

I heard Jocko talking a while ago when he started origin jeans about they literally couldn't even find a person to operate the loom that they wanted to use to create their very first denim. And they had to do this kind of search over the certainly the whole state. And they found a guy who was much much older that was then able to start training people and that that was terrifying to me. And it's the same with them. I had DJ van Hassan, he's talking about the kind of the squashing of Native American culture and you think about all the ancient wisdom that will be lost if you know languages and stories are lost amongst that as well. You mentioned about being deployed in in East Asia. So Talk to me a paint the landscape of that, were you able to see the the Indian, for example, arm of an American company and some of these sweatshops are some of these environments that these families are working under.

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1:35:15

And I saw a little bit in Indonesia, and then a little bit in Vietnam. And I think more importantly, though, you, you see it in the markets, you see the rejects, or the, you know, the little bits that fell off the back of the truck. And you're looking at these, and you're like, these are exactly what I would buy in the United States for eight times this amount. And so you just start questioning your own reality of, of how much you added to that. And how much consumerism you are willing to take a part of, and, you know, I'm a capitalist, I love it. But I also do believe that we have a responsibility to make the world a better place, and to not encourage this type of treatment to people. Yes, I do understand. And I get into this argument all the time, that the salary that a lot of these people are paying is good for that country for that GDP for for that, like, I understand that. But the conditions in which they are working, would never fly over here. And just because it is acceptable in another country, doesn't mean that we should accept it here. So you know, I, it's a, it's a very difficult conversation to have, because I am not, you know, I don't want to blast these other companies for for choosing to go overseas. As a business woman, I understand that going offshore is going to be the difference to whether your company survives or doesn't. And I know that there have been a huge push to ensure that these conditions are ethical, and that they are fair. I just know, for myself and for my company, they are not going to be to the standards that the US has. And I don't want to be the reason that again, some some child is putting buttons on for pennies.

J

James Geering 1:37:45

What it reminds me of the drug pro expression conversation, I think it was Ed Calderon I was talking to but when you think about for example, you know, South and Central America, and where there was, you know, the cocaine and the coca plants or whatever it was. And obviously, there's so much corruption around that and all these farmers are threatened. And that's their

only livelihood. And, you know, the argument is, well, if you if you kind of took away the prohibition of drugs, then what would happen to those farmers? Well, they wouldn't be under the watch of some shitbag anymore, because supply and demand. And so they probably grow hemp, or coffee, or tea, or all these other things that you can also grow and make a living. So I think that's the thing with the sweatshop, you can vote with your dollar and say, Actually, I want it made here, or you show me that your factory in Indonesia or Vietnam, is on par with what you'd have in the US. But it's a cheaper, you know, cheaper labor because of the exchange rate or whatever you want to want to present it as, that's a whole different conversation. But if it's just the mighty dollar, then you tuck in the difference between price and cost. And I would argue you can buy a hamburger for \$1. In America, you can buy a big plug for \$2. But what's the cost of that look at the health of this country. So it's not all about the mighty dollar, there's a much bigger picture to how much you quote unquote saved.



1:39:13

Yeah, I really like that price versus cost thing. And unfortunately, a lot of Americans don't even consider it. Right. They don't even it doesn't even cross their mind as they're, they're going, you know, talking on their Apple phone and you know, dealing with their, you know, whatever computers and going to the store and buying all these conveniences. America is famous for paying more for convenience. And they don't want to question why it's convenient for them. And you know, you see this switch a little bit you see these farm tables, you see your local manufacturing coming back and you know, it's it's definitely a positive term, especially with COVID as well. Actually, with how things are going, we're seeing, you know, we were very ill prepared for that, you know, we shouldn't have food shortages here in United States. So, you know, I think this was a big wake up call for a lot of people. On the clothing side, it was a huge wake up call for majority people who went offshore, because they were not getting their shipments in. And a lot of things stayed, you know, out of stock. But, you know, again, there's just, there's a lot of a lot of work to do. You know, there's a lot of capabilities that offshore and overseas have that we don't. And, like you said, we have to get trained by that older generation that that did it before everyone decided to go offshore. You know, and that is a dying art. And it goes down to trades as well. You know, electricians, plumbing, everyone's going to college. Well, you know, they really should be looking at trades as well, because we're running out of those. So, you know, there there is a, a cultural shift that I'm seeing, especially post COVID. But we still have a lot of room to grow as well.



James Geering 1:41:14

Well, there's one more topic I want to pick your brains on. And then we'll go to some closing questions and tell everyone where they can find all the products, but there seems to be a kind of grumbling when it comes to Asia, you know, you've got this kind of Russia Ukraine thing going on, that seems to have spurred fears with China and Taiwan. You have this, you know, this Asian perspective working in East Asia working in Korea. So when you look at that threat, you know, what is the reality for you through your own eyes? Because most of us are so ignorant to any of the politics or kind of the reality? We're just seeing what's pumped through our our news channels and social media pages.



1:41:56

Yeah, so Asian politics. It's like a chess game, or game go for all of my Asian listeners out there are people who've been there. It's pretty impressive. There is a lot of work to maintain the status quo. A lot of work and success is maintaining the status quo. China has been a threat for decades. It's just we didn't really want to talk about it. What I am discouraged about is when we see the government finally doing something say about tick tock, you know, pushing back against something that's Chinese owned. You see all these people talking about, oh, no government's overstepping the government's going to have access to our phones. And it infuriates me because it's like, just just read a book. Actually, let me throw out a book for everyone to read.

J

James Geering 1:43:02

While you're looking that up, I can't imagine the world without people lip syncing and dancing to seven minute sections of music. So we're going to be lost if tick tock goes



1:43:12

alright, everyone needs to read the wires of war by Jacob Helberg. Just for shits and giggles, and then you all can come and talk to me about why everyone needs tick tock. You know, China is extremely advanced, they they have an amazing plan. There their soft power is so impressive. And people are talking about this, this Chinese dominance and the fact that the US is losing its influence in the world. And a lot of that comes down to soft power. You know, if we're saying hey, play with us. But here are the restrictions, especially when it comes to human rights violations, or your you playing with other people that we don't like, right here, all these restrictions. If you meet these restrictions, then we will give you aid, then we will help you out. And you have China coming in saying we don't care what you do as a country. In fact, we're going to bring in all of our equipment so that we can build up your infrastructure so that we can build your roads. And by the way, here's our amazing 5g technology that we're going to work with you to put up all over the place. And for a country that is really not growing because the US is restricting them or because of those restrictions that US has provided. They're not growing because we're maintaining the status quo because we don't have you know, all of these billions to invest in a certain country for that growth. And then you see China saying, hey, we'll do this, we just want to be the one in charge of your technology, you know, as a leader of a country, like, it's kind of a no brainer, right? Okay, fine, come in, build my roads, build up my infrastructure, create these bridges, you know, bring 5g into my country, so that we have internet. Now, do they have backdoors? To all of that? Can they access all of that technology that they just put in? You know, I'm not the one to say. But, you know, if you look at that, and if you believe that they have that capability, and then you look at an app like Tiktok, that in the privacy side, says, we're going to be able to access everything on your phone, you start to wonder, why do they need that access? What are they looking for? Why do they need to know what's on my phone? Do they have access to my photos? And my videos? Are they going to use that? You know, in short, for a young 18 year old, 15 year old, whatever? It's probably not that big of a deal. I know. But for someone who powered for government official, for a government officials, kid, then all of a sudden, well, what can they do with that access? Are you a complete angel on your phone? Do you only look up the Wall Street Journal? And you know, the Washington Post? Are you only taking pictures of your dog? You know, or do you never sign our link up to a certain place? Are you always in the exact same place you're supposed to be? Or are you building up a case that they can use later? It's there, there are a lot of concerns, there

are a lot of fears that, you know, the government finally was like, Hey, this is a really bad thing. We need to stop it. And instead of explaining that to the American people, instead of just saying, here are the threats, they just said China's a threat, we're going to get rid of tic toc. And as someone who is a huge fan of communication, like that's not how you do it. Right? Like we really need someone to explain that. And yes, I get it like a person is smart people are stupid, they're not going to handle it. You need to give us a little bit more credit. You can't just take something off the table and not explain why. So, you know, my biggest thing is, everyone's so focused on North Korea, because they're the ones that make the biggest boom, and China is doing this slow burn. And yeah, we needed, we need to pay attention to that more so than we needed to pay attention North Korea.

J

James Geering 1:47:48

Well, this circles back to your grandfather experience, you know what I mean? We're hearing, you know, little buttons being threatened to be pushed again. Now, when I grew up in, you know, the the kind of tail end I guess, of the Cold War, and I was a was a cause of animation when the wind blows. And it was absolutely terrifying. And it was about nuclear holocaust. When I was a child, you know, there was this very dark television in the UK when I was growing up, including our PSAs. But that is a terrifying prospect. And now, like you said, these egos and I mean, even our own country, you talk about the arrogance of all we won't understand you talk about the lack of communication, there's a virus where this mass, take this vaccine and stay in your house. That that was it. That's what we've got people got, you know, and ended up being the very polar opposite of how you forge resilience and immunity. And mental health is what they were told just order food and they'll deliver alcohol and shut the fuck up is basically what people got. And so this is what's happening when we have poor leadership in our country, too. So we've got this perfect storm of all these people posturing, other countries, these last two fucking idiots that we've had, and I'll say that freely, I can't stand the left or the right. I mean, we haven't had a leader in this country for a long time. And so you've got this complete breakdown. In fact, you've got the division of this country, that deliberate division. So this united front that we would need, God forbid someone threatened, our country has been split now. Well, I'm this and I'm Matt and I'm black, lesbian, Democrat, why can't talk to you because you're, it's just, it's insane. But to a complete layman, like myself, it's just blatantly obvious. And that's what's so frustrating is that people are allowing themselves to be divided and broken down physically and mentally. I mean, physically, if you come to America in 2023 How terrifying is that when you walk into a Walmart? You know, I mean, we're a very sick culture, and that's never discussed. We're too busy worrying, like I said about what's on the fucking Bud Light can rather than the fact that we have an obesity epidemic, a suicide epidemic, and we've got these very, very powerful countries posturing to possibly bomb and you know, kill our children. So I think do I think You know, I hope it's not going to be an immediate threat. But this is this conversation that we need to have. And voices like yourself, the people that are actually understanding this because I don't, but I'm all ears. This is what we need to know. So do we need to be scared now? You know, what can we do to lower that threat? And you know, and then like you said, take away some of this trigger mentality like, oh, you can't take my tic tock. It's, you know, my first amendment right. You know, Ben Franklin fought for Tiktok. No, he didn't. You know what I mean? So actually choose your battles and triage, what is actually the most important thing for your country? Should we talk about transgender athletes? 24/7, which should we maybe address a mental health crisis is included in the execution of our children in our schools? Maybe that's worthy of some conversation as well.



1:50:48

And I think we'd be remiss to not note the fact that we're not the only ones fighting ourselves. You know, whenever there's a conspiracy theories theory that my parents have obviously adopted from Facebook, which is ironic. They're never on Facebook and tell COVID. I always, you know, I tell them, here's the truth, right. But also, please stop giving into the propaganda from other countries. There are brilliant propagandists, and brilliant information operation officers out there from nefarious countries, who are trying to separate us and trying to divide us, and they're doing a great job. And they've got the Twitter accounts, they've got the Tick Tock accounts, they've got, you know, all of these things, Discord accounts, right? They've got all of that, that access to us, and they are pushing for these divisive strategies in order to make us a free country, and they're doing a great job, a great job. So every single time, something like this happens, and someone's going off about some conspiracy theory, I'm like, Stop letting the Russians win, stop letting the Chinese win it and they look at me like I'm crazy. And I'm like, Who do you think that's coming from? Do you really think it's, it's some, you know, brilliant scientists who are being muted by our government, you know, is that what's happening, said, or perhaps it's a bunch of robots controlled by one or two different people who are spreading this information, because it knows it's going to piss you off, and you're going to end up spreading it, and then you're gonna end up believing it and then all of a sudden, they're creating a very divisive, anti government. You know, culture in the United States. Like, that's a beautiful way to beat a country. It's from within, everyone knows that everyone talks about it. But then they turn around, and they do the exact same thing that you know, our nefarious counterparts are trying to get us to do. So it's again, it's it's very complicated. It's very hard to combat. And so I really just encourage anyone here something do your own research. Right, look it up. I Snopes does a fantastic job on most of these keeping up with them. They will say the latest rumor is this, you know, or, or fact check. You know, do all of these things that you need to do before you start just blabbing your mouth and passing on this conspiracy theory. Because we've got, you know, America is an amazing country, and we are an amazing superpower. But we can fall. And we have a lot of people who are not on our side. And unless you recognize that, then, you know, I don't know what's gonna happen to us.



James Geering 1:54:16

Well, that's a mic drop moment there, but I can't drop the mic. So I got some closing questions for you. But thank you, I mean, this is this is it. This is why I enjoy this. I am an English farm boy, that became an American firefighter started a podcast, I am an expert in zero. So it's important for us to hear these perspectives, and you were actually deployed in these regions of the world. You know, and I see this if anyone wants to test this theory, go on Instagram, put up a post and do hashtag Ukraine, hashtag Russia and watch the comments and it will immediately like just all these hateful things. So it's, it's right there in front of us. And the other truth is, then turn off your damn device. Walk outside your front door. Look around, see if there's any missiles there's any race riots. And then just go in your community because that's what you can affect and start mentoring and make your own doorstep better. If we all did that, that would bring us all back together again.



1:55:12

Absolutely great, especially staying with your local community. You know, we got to start somewhere and blabbing off on on social media. You know, social media is good in many ways,

but it is heavily toxic. And it is something that we need to really take a hard look at. It is great to reach people, it's great to know that you're not alone. But the negative side, you know, we all needed to do better.

 James Geering 1:55:40

Absolutely. Well, you mentioned the the first checklist of questions about a book, you mentioned the whys of war. Are there any other books that you'd love to recommend? It can be related to our discussion today, or completely unrelated?

 1:55:54

Oh, I will always throw out one of my favorite books, Gates of Fire by Steven Pressfield, if you just want to feel motivated. And that's just I read that in I think, 48 hours. I didn't do a whole lot. There's two sides. And Beirut rules. That is a very good one. I got that on an audio book, during a drive cross country. And it's just absolutely fascinating, highly recommended. For someone like me, I was born in the 80s. And so I missed the 1970s. Reagan era of issues with Lebanon. So kind of understanding that a little bit better. And then how that has led to our current relationship in the Middle East and our current relationship in with Iran. That backstory is invaluable for all of those who are really interested in that.

 James Geering 1:57:05

Beautiful. Thank you. I haven't had any of our hotkeys to five mentioned but the other two Definitely not. What about a movie and or a documentary?

 1:57:17

You know, I work for complete entertainment. I love a good old Casino Royale. And then the red violin for something that is a very well made an absolutely beautiful. Also very sad. But that's a good one. documentary I might have to pass on on that question. They keep thinking about the Docu series that we need to do. And it's clouding my judgment. But for your listeners, what we need to do a docu series on is women warriors of the world. And we need to highlight all the women around the world who are doing incredible, extraordinary things, especially in male oriented occupations. I remember I had this conversation when Shannon Kent died. People were flabbergasted that she was in Syria to begin with. And I was like You do realize that women deploy and women go to these places. And a lot of the reaction was we didn't. So not just the US, you know, but you've got, you know, the eager troop in Norway, you've got the YPG in Syria. You've got the Charlie Company, Hong Kong, which is anti riot police. You've got these amazing firefighters in Australia. You've got all of these women led anti poaching teams in Sub Saharan Africa. You know, so you've got these amazing women who are focused on anti women and child trafficking in South America. So you have these, these women doing extraordinary things. And we really need to discuss that and see that and understand that. While we might be all over the world, we're actually quite related in both of these same cultural issues in the same problems defeating social norms.

 James Geering 1:59:31

Well, hopefully someone listening will will grab that and run with it. We should see, I think it's a great idea. I mean, I was just thinking when you were talking about women, I mentioned Boadicea earlier, you have Joan of Arc, I mean, there's some incredible female warriors that are all throughout our past, you know, the Amazonian warriors. So it's kind of funny that in 2023, we're we're still in this crazy Malbec. But like you said, I think again, the way that you painted the division through outside forces, I think when it comes Racism and you know, prejudiced when it comes to gender, sexual orientation. Most people are in the middle of like, no issue with it. I think it's these extreme voices that we keep hearing that are the ones that are dividing in the middle of us have to go. Enough is enough. You know, you guys have been the squeaky wheels for so long. This is the norm. We're a community, we're all doing the same thing we all you know, I mean, all over the world. I want to see my my kids fed, clothed, sheltered and grow up healthy. I mean, that's it. It's a universal experience. Absolutely. All right. Well, then the next question, is there a person that you recommend to come on this podcast as a guest to speak to the first responders, military and associated professionals of the world?

 2:00:43

Oh, well, I saw that you already interviewed Kate Payne and Meg Tucker, obviously. You know, so we run a nonprofit for combat wounded.

 2:01:05

It enables them to it's basically adaptive extreme sports is what we do. So I through mechanical modifications, or even human assistance, we allow these veterans to race desert races or to go to shooting competitions. So they'll we have hand controls in our vehicles. So the ones that are you know, amputees can still drive. And then we've got a really great guy who can modify weapons, depending on whatever on that issue that you have. I'm constantly inspired by by all of those. Those people, we have a few you know, that I would be interested in hearing their their side. One teaches wheelchair self defense, which I think is pretty badass. His name is Paul Gardner. So if you haven't heard of him, he's he was paralyzed after he got shot overseas. And he's his humor is remarkably dry and amazing and dark and but he's he's probably the best shot I've ever seen. So just a super impressive guy. And contrail I don't know if you've had a trial on trial lost his his both of his legs in Afghanistan. He's been an integral part of of what we do a huge motivator. And if you want to talk politics, he will gladly talk politics if you so just forewarned. As for women, and the women who inspire me, I don't think any of them can come on your podcast just yet.

 James Geering 2:03:13

Whereas know that when they're ready, when the the handcuffs come off, then the doors always open.

 2:03:21

Yes, and I, I do love the fact that these women, you know, they're, they're doing all of these things, without the recognition and without jumping on social media, social media and, and shouting to the world, everything that they're doing, you know, the they are truly the quiet professionals. So, but all of the women that I know, I inspire me daily. So Lisa Bouchard, she owns Jim Jones. Salt Lake, she is just a wealth of knowledge in terms of fitness and motivation. You know, she she keeps her circle small, so that people can truly get functional fitness and not injure fitness. Right. So. But yeah, I would definitely recommend those.

 James Geering 2:04:21

Beautiful Well, if you're able to help me connect with any of those, I'd be happy to bring them on. That would be amazing. Absolutely. Thank you so much. All right. Well, then the very last question before we make sure everyone knows where to find cadre. What do you do to decompress?

 2:04:36

Two things. Exercise is my main one. Exercise is my mindfulness. It's the only thing that truly gets me focused on breath and my body more so than anything else. To when I'm having a lot of self doubt, I actually watch For isn't too, I, I sit there, and I watch for season two, and it always gets me out of my funk. I don't know if it's because it's distracting my subconscious mind from, from running around like crazy. Or the storyline itself or that it is something that's very familiar and comfortable to me. But it, I find that sometimes watching realistic shows and movies make things worse. I don't want to watch another war movie, I don't want to watch, you know, whatever, I want to be able to completely decompress and get myself out of my own reality and out of my head. And there's nothing better than a singing animated movie to do that.


 James Geering 2:05:46


Why frozen to and not the first one.


 2:05:49


I'm so frozen to the storyline. So Elsa is exactly where she thought that she needed to be. And yet, she felt like she was meant for something more. Right. So she's the queen of an entire kingdom. And people expect her to be happy, right? That is the highest thing that she could possibly be. And yet she wasn't fulfilled. And she knew that she needed to do something else. And I think a lot of times for mine world, you know, being the CEO, the owner and the founder of Kadri. It's hard. And as anyone knows, who's an entrepreneur, things get dark, you make the wrong decisions, and you beat yourself up. And I live in paradise, you know, I live on a ranch. It is my little piece of heaven. It is absolutely gorgeous. And it's everything I could possibly imagine. And yet, I am pushing myself into this dark and sometimes miserable life profession. Because I believe that if I don't do it, no one else will. And these women deserve the absolute best, and no one is paying attention to that. And no one is providing that for them. And I couldn't when I was in, I couldn't be that squeaky wheel. But now I can now I have a voice. Now

I have a purpose. And I am leaving my my little piece of paradise to fight and battle. And, you know, push and push back and deal with the sexism and deal with the ignorance of men and women and all of these issues. And it is a struggle. And so watching frozen to coming back to that. It not only allows me to get myself out of my own head, but it's a nice reminder that she had everything that she wanted. Yet she knew that there's something else for her. And for me, I have everything I could possibly imagine here. Minus a donkey. I really want a donkey. But that's another conversation. We're gonna watch

 James Geering 2:08:24
as well.

 2:08:28
But yeah, it definitely inspires me to to keep pushing.

 James Geering 2:08:34
Do you have children? There's a reason I asked this. It's not me trying to pray. No, I do not have children. Okay, so Joe to Santa, the founder of Spartan made a comment. We just did an interview a few days ago. And he said that owning or being an entrepreneur running your own business is more painful than childbirth. And the reason he's making the statement as a man is that a lot of people who reported that, but the trauma that comes with this business that you're in that mean technically that I'm in, he kind of put that parallel to even worse than what we think of as the worst thing when it comes to the impact on that person. You serve as a Marine, you touched on the fact that you spent time in SOCOM. And yet here you are in this paradise and you're talking about the darkness. Of course, there's incredibly positive sides of the entrepreneurial ship. But have you found you know, that does that analogy resonate with you as it's been one of the hardest things you've had to do even though your uniform for all those years?

 2:09:32
Absolutely. And a lot of that comes to, you know, you're leaving the esprit de corps, the Marine Corps, you're leaving this. You're never alone. Even when I was a company commander as a woman, and was very much alone, right? I'm not going to hang out with my fellow company commanders who are men, and I'm not going to hang out with my senior enlisted and who are mainly men. I Uh, you know, we had obviously rules. And it was very lonely. But I was never alone. And I always had, you know, mentors and commanders and bosses and people who I could say, Hey, this is what I'm thinking, when I had no idea what I was doing. You know, I was like, Oh, this is the way I had them to run and bounce ideas off of I had them to counsel me when I screwed up, and say, what, what should you have done? And have you thought of this? As an entrepreneur, like, it's just me, and I do have mentors, and mainly the mentors there to tell me, it's okay. And sometimes that's enough. Like, it's, it's a for entrepreneurship, right? Like, it's okay, that you screwed up, it's okay. You know, so I do have very good mentors. And in that sense, but this company is going to succeed or fail based on my decisions. And when I

am just constantly going up against the storm of messing with the status quo, that a huge military industrial complex is not want me to do, where leaders and generals, you know, don't want me to mess with it. And yet, I have to maintain respect towards them, right, because they're still my customer. And they're still the ones that I have to sell this stuff to. And convinced that they're women should have it. When I'm fighting up against that, it's, it's overwhelming, and you feel just absolutely alone. Now, sometimes I'm like, Bring it on. Sometimes I'm like, I got this, you know, I've got my own little playlist, you know, my motivated playlist that I go into before meetings, and you know, I conjure up this amazing attitude of absolute incredible self confidence. But there are times when it just like, I'm doing the wrong thing. I chose poorly. I messed up, what am I doing? Does anyone actually care? Am I doing the right thing? Am I making a difference? Why am I going through all of this when I live in heaven? Right? It's both. It is tough, it is painful. I had appendicitis and kidney stones at the exact same time. And while I never want to feel horrible in third world country, by the way. So I don't know childbirth, I don't know that pain. I do know the other two incredible painful things that your body can go through. Think the acute pain is something that anyone can withstand, for certain amount of time. Actually, 26 hours was my time. After 26 hours, I was like, I will do anything if you stop the pain, right? So I knew 26 hours is my limit. But this field that we're choosing this job that we're choosing, it's a it's a marathon of pain, of slow, burning, aching pain, and that chronic pain. At times, you know, and anyone who's suffered from chronic pain, I suffer from chronic pain. Some days, you're like, I got this and other days, you're like, I don't know how much more I can take. And I think recognizing that, especially for these young people who are like, I think it's a great idea to start a business and I'm like, Are you sure? Are you sure? You have to have strategies to to combat that chronic pain to push through to No, tomorrow will be better. I also absolutely believe that sleep, solves 90% of our problems, and gives us a different perspective on the 10% that it didn't solve. So I am all for sleeping. You know what it is eight o'clock, I had a shit day. I'm gonna take my melatonin and I'm gonna go to bed. And, you know, we'll face all of this tomorrow. But without those strategies, and without, you know, without the people that push me to keep going, and those are my customers. I don't know if I would have continued to do what I'm doing.

 James Geering 2:14:51

Well, thank you for sharing that because I think that's an important perspective. And when you listed those things, that's the same imposter syndrome that lives rent free in my head as well. Like is this worth it. But until we stop burying firefighters and police officers and you know, members of the military as well as everyone else, then yes, it is, you know, because I could, you know, stop this and just do some quote unquote, regular job and just not think about that anymore. But I can't sleep at night if I do, you know, so I totally understand what you're saying. And that's the thing One day, you'll stand on the other side and go, you know, fold your arms and go, I did it. And then maybe you'll burn your frozen to DVD and find something else. But yeah, I totally understand it well, so for people listening, you have the Valkyrie pants, you have a rashguard, you have a shirt you're working on on a suit, where can people find all the products.

 2:15:42

So contrary, clothing.com offers what we have commercially available, we have about six other designs that are specifically available to our military and government officials. Those are by contract only. And those are not available for for commercial sale. So if there are any women

out there who are interested in getting their unit, some some products, and not only do we have those available, but we can also make you whatever you need. And that is one thing that I learned about this industry, like it seems so complicated, and when I was in, but we can literally make you anything that you need. So email contact form is on the website. If you're on social media, I'm at tawdry underscore clothing. I'm also on Facebook, somewhere not on there often. So I apologize if I don't get back to you within a few weeks. And yeah.

 James Geering 2:16:49

Now when you say the the government side, does that include police and fire?

 2:16:54

It does. And we're working on a way right now to you know, I hope within the next year or two, we can figure out a way to do pro deal for military arts for the law enforcement, firefighters, because we do recognize that you all have to buy your own stuff. And it's not, you know, based on government credit card. So, yes, we have a 10% discount for all of our veterans active duty first responders contact us to verify your identity. And you know, we can try to relieve some of that, you know, us may pain of price.

 James Geering 2:17:38

Beautiful. Well, Catherine, I want to just say thank you so much. We've gone all over the place as well. I love these organic conversations, you know, we did here, you know the bulk of what we were going to talk about, which was obviously the challenge for the female responder and marine and soldier and then the some of the solutions that you're bringing, but even your perspective on Asia and some of the other things that we've discussed have been imperative. So I want to thank you so much for being so generous with your time today.

 2:18:03

Thank you for having me. This was this is really laid back and fun and yeah, it's a very rare treat to have just a very organic conversation. So I appreciate it.