

ROBERT IRVINE

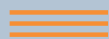
MAGAZINE

Nothing Is Impossible

YOUR BEST YEAR EVER!

Exclusive Interviews With:

- Arnold Schwarzenegger
- Deepak Chopra
- Lewis Howes
- Gary Sinise

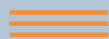


TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE

27 Ways to Reach Your Goals



THE RETURN OF FAMILY DINNER



GET YOUR BODY BACK!

Workouts, Recipes & Motivation to Shed Holiday Weight



REAL AMERICAN HEROES

Brave Vets From WWII to Iraq Share Their Incredible True Stories



LESS STRESS NOW

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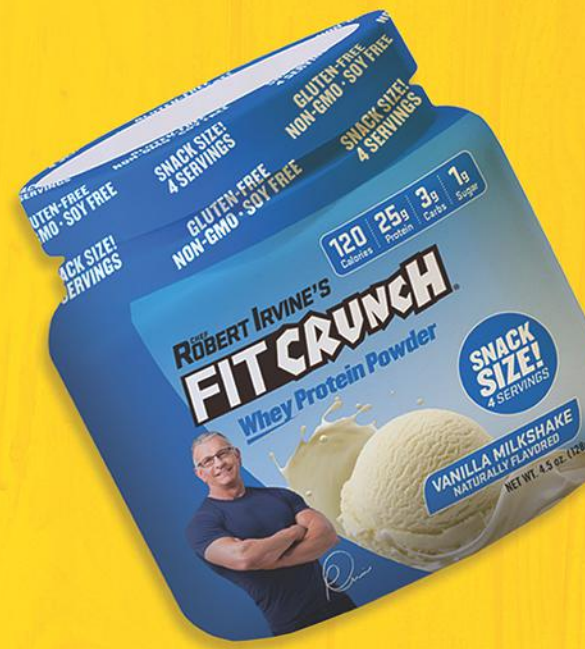
ROAD RULES

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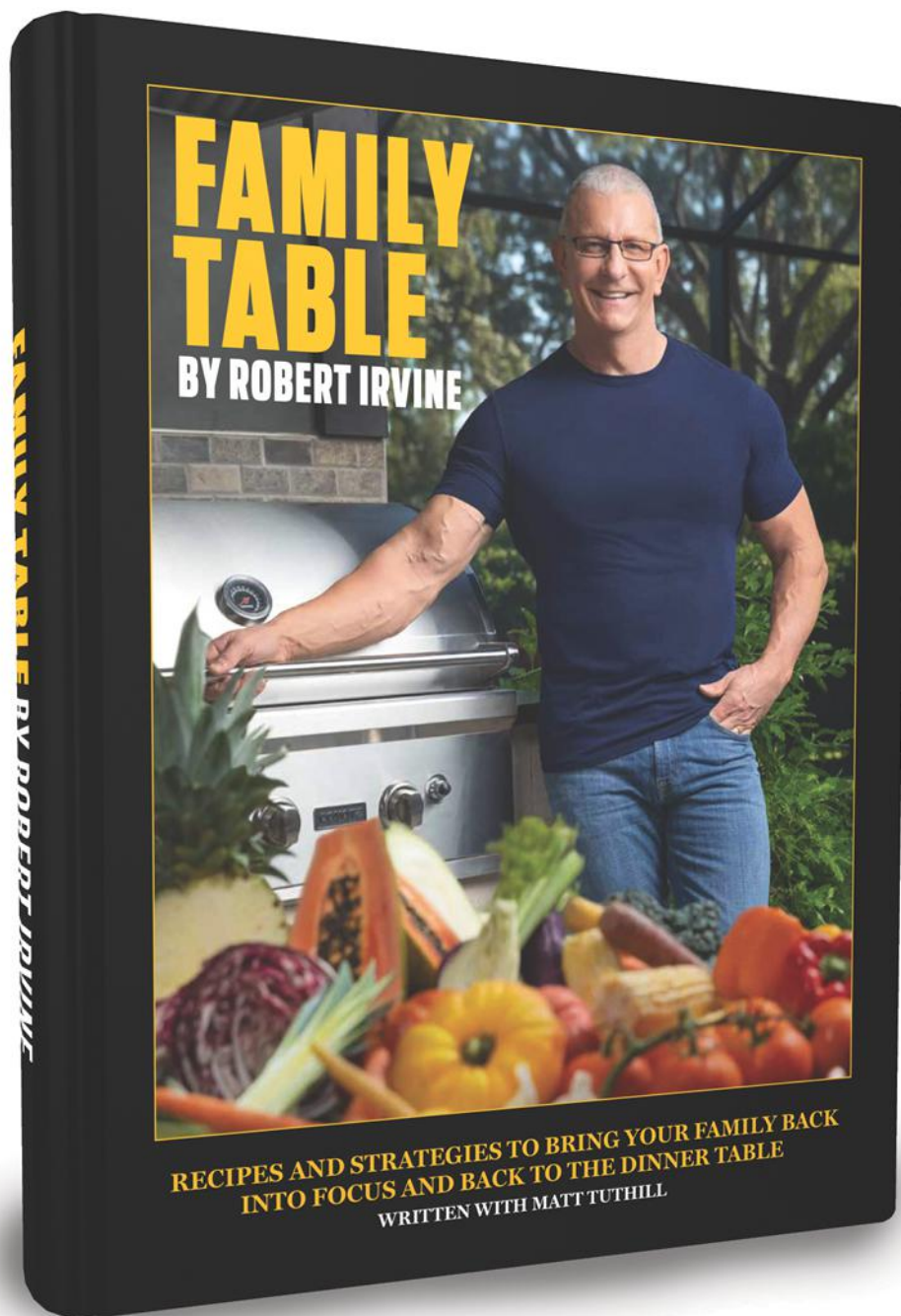


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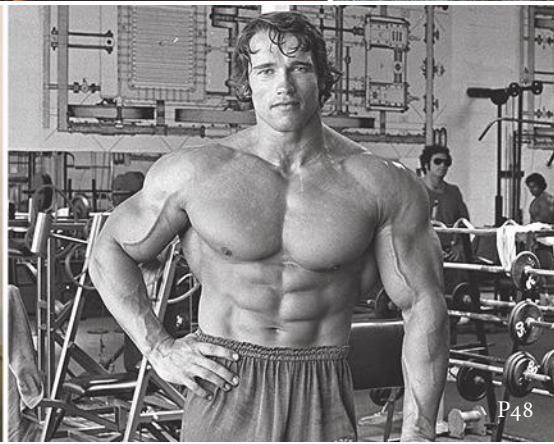
ALSO AVAILABLE AT [AMAZON.COM](http://amazon.com)

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Readers reach out with their burning questions, and our experts oblige; plus, inspirational quotes you'll want to tape to your mirror.

Don't Just Get By. Thrive.

I want to help you live the best life you can imagine.

WELCOME TO *ROBERT IRVINE MAGAZINE*. I created this publication as a new way to connect with you and share information and inspiration to make your life better.

This is not just a recipe magazine, nor is it a fitness magazine. It is a magazine that begs you to reimagine fitness as it pertains to the whole person—and aims to help you foster better health of spirit, mind, and body. So, yes, there are recipes and workouts, but there is an even greater abundance of stories that motivate and inspire. Many of these come in the form of features written about some of our very bravest men and women in uniform. Others come in the form of interviews with people at the peak of their professions—and with some of the best self-help and work-efficiency experts in the world.

We do this regularly in the digital version of *Robert Irvine Magazine* (robertirvinemagazine.com), but the special edition you hold in your hands represents the very best of what we have to offer. The feature well is bursting with stories and interviews that really excite me, from the profiles of Army Ranger sniper Nicholas Irving and Medal of Honor recipient Woody Williams to the interviews with Gary Sinise and Arnold Schwarzenegger. They are not just compelling reads but contain great lessons that will inspire you no matter where you find yourself in life. We've also included a pictorial that gives you a window into my life when I tour with the USO. Outside of my family, giving back to our nation's military is my No. 1 passion in life. You can read more

about what I do on that front—and make a donation to the cause—at robertirvinefoundation.org.

As you find your way into the Live Your Best Life section, you'll see interviews with Lewis Howes, Gordana Biernat, and Deepak Chopra—three of the smartest self-help experts in the world. Their words aren't just encouraging; they speak in a way that offers real, actionable advice that you can put to use today to improve your life.

No matter what obstacles you're currently facing, quitting is the only surefire way to fail. Victory could be right around the corner, and you'll never know how close you were to making it if you quit now. I want you to win in every facet of life. Begin by taking care of your whole self: spirit, mind, and body. This magazine can help you get there—and offers a lot of fun and delicious food along the way.

In all my travels, if I've learned one thing about people, it's this: The only limits we really have are those we place upon ourselves. To that end, I say nothing is impossible.

Yours in Health,



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My Keys to Success

What I learned on my way to the top of an ultracompetitive industry can help you unlock your full potential. by GAIL KIM-IRVINE

EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT version of what success means and what it takes to get there. Most successful people, though, have more in common than not. I found that in my professional and personal life, a few key elements are responsible for my success—and can be applied to your life, too. They are:

MIND OVER MATTER

MY STORY: “Mind over matter” is such a well-worn cliché that we take it for granted without truly appreciating the truth behind it, never realizing how powerful the mind can be. When I decided to become a pro wrestler, I simply set that one goal for myself and was determined as hell to reach that goal. After my first weekend of training, I told myself that I’m going to not only make it but also be signed to WWE within a year. I didn’t realize it at the time, but one year was unrealistic. When one year elapsed, it was a wake-up call, but I never changed my determined mind-set and positive attitude. I actually “made it” in two years—which is still very fast—and it was because of the way I mentally set goals.

HOW YOU CAN USE IT: Know that you will have your high and low moments. As the saying goes, “It’s not how many times you fall, but how many times you get back up.” Stay mentally focused, but also be open-minded. Know that there is more than one way to achieve your goals, and the answers often come from unexpected places. I learned my craft through the help of many people, some of whom I never thought I would look to. For instance, my sister has always been into meditation, but I always thought my life was too fast-paced for it and that I wouldn’t benefit from it. She told me that it was precisely because of those reasons that I probably would benefit from it the most. I kept an open mind. When I hit stressful or overwhelming times, I

used her techniques to clear my mind and get myself back on track.

DISCIPLINE

MY STORY: This sounds logical and obvious, but it’s the hardest part for most people. I found that when I became disciplined in most aspects of my life—not just with my craft—success came faster than anticipated. When I knew I wanted to be in the wrestling business, I was going to school and bartending on the weekends, making great money at a nightclub where I was comfortable. My co-workers



Setting high standards for yourself will make you a winner at home and in your career.



were like family to me, and I always had fun—maybe too much fun. Typically, I would have a few drinks and stay out late. I soon realized that it was sidetracking me, not allowing me to get where I needed to be physically. I was exhausted. So I made the conscious decision to quit my job and leave my comfort zone. I found a restaurant/bar where I could still make ends meet but where I knew I would be focused. I saw improvements quickly and got myself into a disciplined routine of sleep, working out, and eating right. When that one thing got on track, the rest was easy.

HOW YOU CAN USE IT: A lot of my friends had FOMO (fear of missing out), which often cripples discipline. I had it for a long time and found, in the end, all I missed out on was sleep and a workout. You can still go out and have

fun. Just don’t let peer pressure distract you from your goal. I finally reached a point in my career where it was more important to study matches than go out for a drink. When you set a goal that you’re passionate about, find a way to weed out the excess in your life that doesn’t contribute to that goal. You’ll be shocked by how much falls into place.

ALWAYS SET NEW GOALS

MY STORY: I believe in setting new goals in every aspect of your life. Whether that is in fitness, relationships, or your career. When it came to fitness for wrestling, my goals were always to be physically appealing and toned. Then I wanted to be strong and well-rounded in the ring. Toward the end of my career, I set new goals of training for the health and well-being of my body and changing all my training techniques to prevent further injury. All these factors played into the longevity of my career.

When it comes to my marriage, I think that as the years went on, both Robert and my priorities shifted. When we met, I was at a selfish point in my life. I was career-oriented to the point that it consumed my life. I realized over time that it truly wasn’t bringing me happiness and success, so I shifted my priorities and set new goals for myself. I wanted to have balance in my life, and finding someone I loved and cared about made achieving that balance a priority. Not only did these new goals bring me success in my relationship but in my career as well. What’s more, being happy in your relationship can give you the confidence to accomplish more in other areas.

HOW YOU CAN USE IT:

Don’t rest on your laurels! Once I reached my goal of getting signed to WWE, I knew that was just the beginning. I had reached my goal but knew I still had a lot to learn. Throughout my 17-year career as a pro wrestler, I was learning every day. Once I felt physically comfortable in the ring, I worked to become a great leader. If I was a good babyface (a good guy/heroine), I worked to become a great heel, or villain. As my career in the ring started to wind down, I set goals to teach and move on to producing. Even now as I continue my career behind the scenes, I still have my sights on new things outside the ring.

The take-home: Never forget that wherever you are in life, you still have a lot to learn and improve upon—personally, professionally, and in your relationships. If you can embrace that fact with optimism, you will find success again and again.

Kim-Irvine is a TNA Hall of Famer. Follow her on Twitter and Instagram: @GailKimItsMe.



“When you set a goal that you’re passionate about, find a way to weed out the excess in your life. You’ll be shocked by how much falls into place.”

IN THE GYM

A Fresh Start

Start the new year with a balanced approach toward building muscle and burning off the extra holiday calories.

DIRECTIONS: Alternate workouts (see Workout A on the opposite page and Workout B on page 10), completing 4 to 5 sessions per week. Perform each workout as a circuit, doing 3 to 4 total rounds. Don't rest between exercises, and rest only 1 to 2 minutes at the end of each round. Do a 10-minute warmup before each workout and a 5- to 10-minute cooldown and stretch.

EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS

DUMBBELL BENCH PRESS: Lie flat on a bench holding two dumbbells. Engage your pecs and triceps to press up, arcing slightly from the bottom of your chest to the center.

DUMBBELL ROW: Place your right knee and hand on a bench. With your back flat and the dumbbell in your left hand, row it to your chest, pulling from your shoulder blade. (You should feel most of the work being done by your rhomboids, the muscles of your upper-middle back.) Pause at the top and slowly return to the start. After 15 reps, repeat for 15 more on the opposite side.

BODY-WEIGHT SQUAT: With your hands straight out in front of you or at your hips, squat low to the floor, keeping your back flat and driving through your heels to stand up. Reps should be rapid but under control.

PUSHUP: Keep your back flat throughout these, and keep your neck in alignment with the rest of your body, meaning don't bend it toward the floor. Do deep, full reps, getting your chest as close to the floor as possible. As with the body-weight squat, do reps quickly but under control.

INVERTED ROW: Lie in the base of a power rack with the bar resting on safety

pins that have been set about 2 to 3 feet above the floor. Grab the bar with both hands and pull your chest up to the bar, keeping your back flat and your body in a straight line from your shoulders to your hips and ankles.

FRENCH CURL: Hold a single heavy dumbbell behind your head with two hands on the underside of the top plate. Keeping your elbows facing forward, extend your arms to lift the weight overhead.

HAMMER CURL: Hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides with your thumbs touching the undersides of the top plates. Curl the weight up to your shoulders without rotating your hands. (When your arms are moving up and down, it will look as if you are hammering.)

CABLE BICEPS CURL: Using the rope attachment, adjust the high pulley to the low position. Perform biceps curls under control, squeezing hard in the top position.

BARBELL FRONT SQUAT: Load a barbell and rest it just below your collarbones on the front part of your deltoids (shoulder muscles). Hold it in place with your hands just in front of your shoulders or by crossing your arms over the bar. Perform squats, getting your thighs parallel to the floor at the bottom of the movement.

BARBELL THRUSTER: With a loaded barbell across your front delts and under your collarbones, hold the bar with an overhand grip; your hands should be just outside shoulder width. Perform deep squats, then, at the top of the movement—and using some momentum to get the weight up—thrust the bar overhead to a full extension of your arms. Return the bar to your shoulders under control and go right into the next rep.

ARNOLD PRESS: Hold a pair of dumbbells at your shoulders with your palms facing your shoulders. Press the weight up, slowly rotating your palms away from your body so they are facing away at the top of the movement. Reverse to start the next rep.



PLANK: Get down on the floor in a pushup position with your elbows and forearms propping up your body. Keep your shoulders, hips, and ankles in a line and squeeze your abs, breathing behind the brace, as you hold for the allotted time.



WORKOUT A

EXERCISE	REPS
Dumbbell Bench Press	15
Dumbbell Row	15 per side
Body-weight Squat	20
Pushup	10
Inverted Row	10
French Curl	15
Hammer Curl	15
Cable Triceps Pressdown	10
Cable Biceps Curl	10
Plank	60 seconds

CABLE TRICEPS PRESSDOWN: Use a rope attachment on a high cable pulley. Grab it with both hands and engage your triceps to push it down, keeping your elbows close to your sides. Hold it for a second, then return to the start under control.

WORKOUT B

EXERCISE	REPS
Barbell Front Squat	10
Barbell Thruster	10
Arnold Press	15
Lateral Raise	10
Front Raise	10
Upright Row	10
Rear-delt Flye	10
Walking Lunge	20
Side Plank	60 seconds each



WALKING LUNGE: Holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides, perform walking lunges, walking forward with a long stride and lowering your back knee to the floor. Drive through your front heel to stand back up and take the next step. Keep good posture throughout the exercise and don't bend at the waist as you go.

LATERAL RAISE: Hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides. Without bending your elbows, raise your arms out to your sides until they are parallel to the floor. Hold the top position for a second, then return to the start.

FRONT RAISE: Hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides. Without bending your elbows, raise your arms straight out in front of you until they are parallel to the floor.

UPRIGHT ROW: Hold a pair of dumbbells in front of you at your waist. Lift the weights straight up to your shoulders, keeping your hands close to your body. Your elbows should flare up and out as you do this.

SIDE PLANK: Lie on your side and prop up your body on one elbow, keeping your body in a straight line for the duration of the exercise. Switch sides after you've hit the allotted time. For an added challenge, raise your top leg up and try to hold it there.



REAR-DELT FLYE: Lie facedown on a bench set to a slight incline, holding a pair of dumbbells. Raise the dumbbells straight out to your sides without bending your elbows. Squeeze your rear delts in the top position, then slowly return to the start.

Out of the Gate

Get 2019 off on the right foot with these hi-tech picks that will help you track your progress and recover faster.



COMPEX WIRELESS E-STIM WITH TENS

Recover faster and awaken dormant muscle fibers on injured body parts with this physical-therapy-grade e-stim device. It's not a shortcut to abs, but it is a shockingly (no pun intended) effective fitness tool. The TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) feature is effective for pain relief. **\$500; compex.com**

GARMIN VIVOSMART 4 ACTIVITY TRACKER + HR MONITOR

Track calories burned, steps taken, stairs climbed, distance traveled, and hours slept with this tracker that has an easy-to-read LCD display. You can get notifications from your phone, and it's compatible with iOS and Android devices. If you haven't taken the plunge on activity trackers, this is as affordable as it gets for this much functionality. **\$100; bestbuy.com**



HYPERICE VYPER 2.0 RECOVERY ROLLER

Foam rollers are high-density foam tubes that help break up adhesions, or knots, and increase blood flow when you roll across them. So if it's just a foam tube, why is this one so expensive? Because the motor inside the Hyperice Vyper is so powerful it could rattle the fillings out of your teeth—seriously, the third power setting is insane. Turn it on to make it vibrate and get a poor man's deep-tissue massage as you roll your soreness away. **\$149; amazon.com**

Three Easy Pieces

We asked three fitness experts for their best pieces of advice in three categories: fitness, nutrition, and motivation. Taken together, you've got everything you need to start the new year right.



THE EXPERT

SEAN HYSON, C.S.C.S.

Senior content strategist for *onnit.com*, author of *The Truth About Strength Training*

On the Web: seanhyson.com, @seanhyson

FITNESS ADVICE: Alternate upper- and lower-body exercises. Pairing exercises like this in your workouts forces your heart to work harder to drive blood up and down your body. That makes you burn more calories and work more muscle mass each session. You'll get leaner faster.

NUTRITION ADVICE: Measure out your portions of protein, carbs, and fats and get a sense of how much you're already eating. That's the only way you can deter-

mine how much you should be eating to lose fat. (Hint: You can probably get away with consuming more than you realize.) Yes, keeping track of calories and macros can be tedious, but you don't have to do it forever. After you get a sense of what a day's worth of healthy meals looks like, you can start estimating your portion sizes.

MOTIVATIONAL TIP: The most important factor in achieving any goal is simply sticking to the process that

gets you there, and you can't do that without a positive attitude and belief in yourself. Visualize how you want to look and perform for at least 10 minutes daily—see the images like a movie playing in your head. Write down your goal and refer back to it regularly, and count all the little "wins" that you experience daily that help get you closer. Take stock of your accomplishments, no matter how small, which bolsters motivation and increases confidence.



THE EXPERT

ALDEN RYNO, C.P.P.S.

Level 2 strength and conditioning coach

On Twitter: @Alderslodge

FITNESS ADVICE: Follow the five-minute rule. There are days when we don't want to exercise at all. On those days, spend just five minutes warming up or working out, and if the desire still isn't there, then call it a day and head home. But you'll find that more often than not, you'll forget about the five minutes until half an hour later! However, this rule does require a real commitment to that first five minutes each time you intend to exercise.

NUTRITION ADVICE: Taste the rainbow. Eating vegetables, and some fruit, that display a wide range of colors is easy on the eyes and great for your body. The vibrant colors often represent vitamins and minerals, which are essential for optimal function. If we don't get those micro-nutrients, then our bodies are even more stubborn to change. Additionally, eating high-fiber vegetables first fills us faster, so we are less likely to overeat.

MOTIVATIONAL TIP: You are capable! Throughout the day we have hundreds, perhaps thousands, of opportunities to make healthy choices. Take charge of your own health and remember that you do have the choice to do better. That doesn't mean perfect, because there's no such thing. It means that you are ever capable of doing just a little bit better than your previous self each and every day. That adds up greatly over time.

THE EXPERT

STEVE COTTER

President, International Kettlebell Fitness Federation

On the Web: ikff.net, @SteveCotterIKFF

FITNESS ADVICE: Remember that slow and steady wins the race. You're not going to get where you want in a hurry, so don't do too much too soon (or too fast, or too heavy). Consistency is your strongest ally on your path to fitness success.

NUTRITION ADVICE: Eat whole, living foods. Drink lots of water. Stay away from fake and processed foods. If it comes from a can, box, or other container, it is probably not so healthy. Eat more veggies and you can never go wrong. Remember, food is fuel, so don't put cheap fuel in your expensive car (your body). Quality breeds quality!

MOTIVATIONAL TIP: There is only one of you. Be the best you that you can be and believe in your worth. No matter what anyone says, you can do it!



IN THE KITCHEN

10 Things You Didn't Know About Carbs

by JASON STAHL

1 THE CLIFFSNOTES

Carbohydrates—what eggheads refer to as CH_2O —are made up of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen molecules. Carbs are considered an energy source for the body and, like protein, contain four calories per gram. (Fat contains nine calories per gram.)

2 CARBS ARE SIMPLY COMPLEX

Simple carbs (sugar, soda, candy) are digested rapidly and are a quick source of energy. Complex carbs (greens, whole grains, starchy veggies) are slower to digest and provide energy at a more constant rate than the energy spikes you get from simple carbs.

3 THE EFFECTS ARE SIMPLE

Eating carbs doesn't make you fat. Eating too many calories does.

4 BEWARE THE GASMAN

Fiber, a complex carb that the body cannot digest and helps move waste through your intestinal tract, causes flatulence. Fiber is sometimes referred to as “nature's broom” for its ability to clean you out.

5 WHAT IF THE WEST IS WRONG?

According to a study of 80,000 Japanese, people eating a high-carb, low-fat diet—adhering to the country's recommended dietary guidelines—are 15% less likely to die of any cause, including cardiovascular disease and stroke. Japan has the second-highest life-expectancy rate (83 years) and an obesity rate of just 3.5%.

6 THEY MAKE YOU HAPPY

A one-year study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* showed that people who followed a low-carb diet (20 to 40 grams daily) experienced more depression, anxiety, and anger than those who took part in a low-fat, high-carb diet.

7 NOTHING'S FREE

Sugar alcohols, synthetic carbs that are diabetic-friendly and found in “sugar-free” or “no sugar added” foods, contain zero sugar and alcohol. They taste sweet and have about one-half to one-third fewer calories than sugar. Common forms of sugar alcohols include sorbitol, isomalt, and xylitol, which can be found in cough drops, ice cream, and chewing gum. Xylitol is known to cause upset stomach, bloating, gas, and diarrhea.

8 LOW T

In a study published in *Clinical Endocrinology*, researchers found that men of varying ages who received oral glucose injections had a significant reduction in testosterone levels.

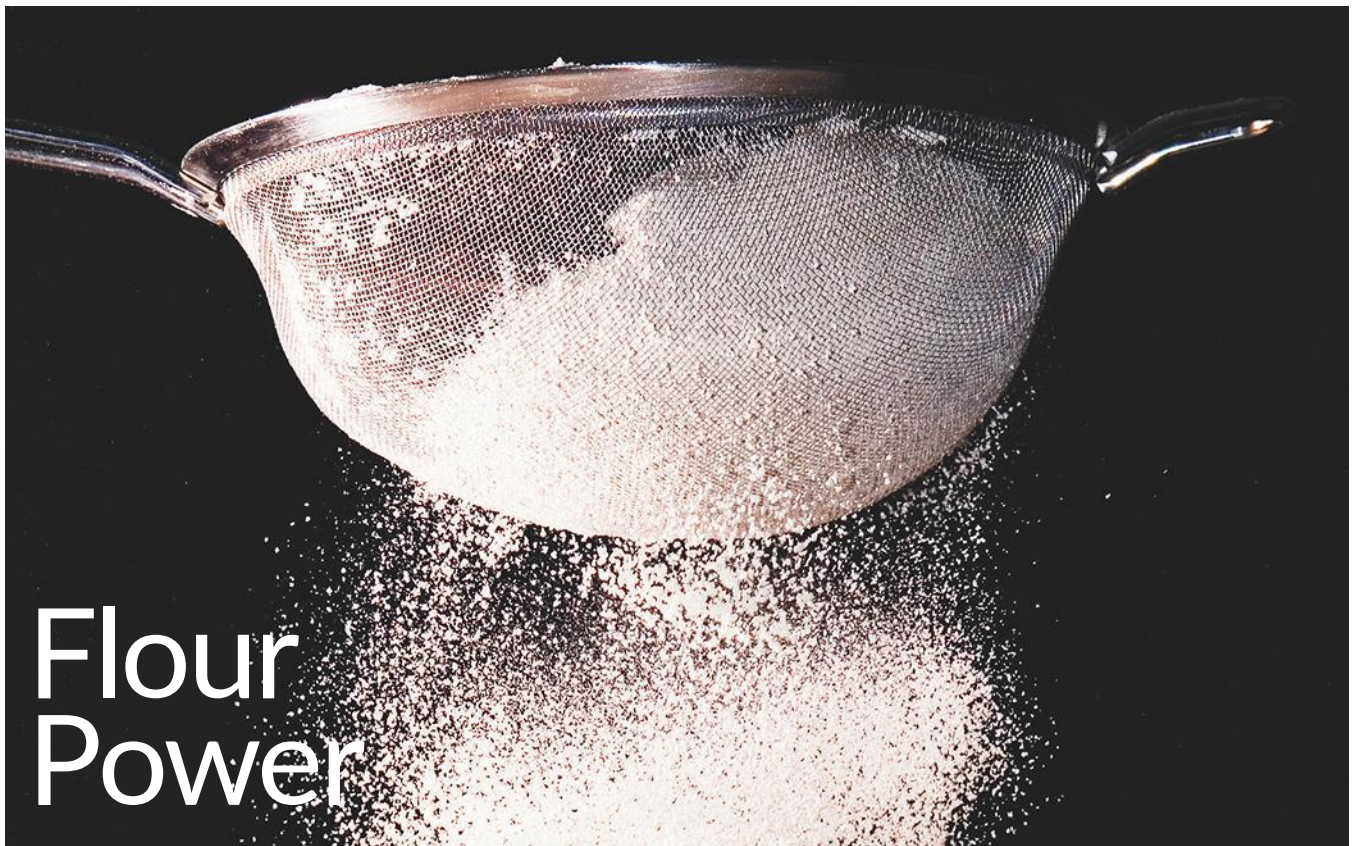
9 FIGHT OFF GERMS

A study in the *Journal of Applied Physiology* reveals that consuming carbs right after a rigorous workout may help fight off colds. Eating one or two ounces of carbs can help restore immune function.

10 LOW-CARB OR LOW-FAT?

After years of studies debating which diet works better, the *National Institutes of Health* believes it has a verdict. The NIH had 19 obese adults test both diets for two weeks. After being tested and analyzed in metabolic chambers, the average participant lost 463 grams (just over one pound) on the low-fat diet versus 245 grams (just over half a pound) on the low-carb diet.





Flour Power

Sub in these five healthy alternatives for sugar-spiking all-purpose flour for a bigger nutritional punch.

by MEAGAN DRILLINGER

1 WHOLE-WHEAT FLOUR

BEST FOR: While whole-wheat flour still spikes your blood sugar, it's a good sub for all-purpose flour. It's richer in essential nutrients like iron, which helps make red blood cells, and fiber, which will leave you feeling full (and help you in the bathroom). And with 16 grams of protein per cup, it's a great addition to protein pancakes.

BUYER BEWARE: Toby Amidor, M.S., R.D., nutrition expert and author of *The Greek Yogurt Kitchen*, warns that baking or cooking with only whole-wheat flour will make a dish dense and tasteless, so combine it with all-purpose flour.

2 CHICKPEA FLOUR

BEST FOR: Boasting 21 grams of protein per cup, 25% of the daily recommended dose of iron, and a whole lot of calcium, this flour is a muscle and bone builder. For best results, replace up to half the amount of all-purpose flour in a recipe with chickpea flour, and mix it with other flours like rice flour or bean flour.

BUYER BEWARE: For anyone who is counting carbs, chickpea flour contains 53 grams per cup.

3 BROWN RICE FLOUR

BEST FOR: Brown rice flour provides 50% of the daily recommended amounts of key vitamins and minerals like B-complex vitamins, which convert food into fuel, and three times the daily recommended amount of manganese, which helps the body form connective tissue and bones. It's best used as breading and to thicken sauces.

BUYER BEWARE: Like chickpea flour, this is another carb-heavy choice. According to Amidor, one cup of brown rice flour contains 574 calories, 121 grams of carbohydrates, and only 11 grams of protein.

4 SOY FLOUR

BEST FOR: Relax, soy won't spike estrogen levels. Which is good news, as soy flour is a great alternative for cooking and can be used to replace up to 30% of all-purpose flour. It's packed with 29 grams of protein per cup and is a rich source of calcium, B-complex vitamins, and vitamin K, which is essential for bones and heart disease prevention.

BUYER BEWARE: According to the American Nutrition Association, raw soybeans contain several antinutrients that can damage your ability to absorb protein, which processing helps reduce but doesn't eliminate.

5 COCONUT FLOUR

BEST FOR: This grainless flour has the lowest score on the glycemic index—a scale of 0 to 100 that measures how drastically food spikes your blood sugar—with a score of 45. (Below 55 is considered low.) What's more, coconut flour is gluten-free. You should use it to replace up to 20% of the flour called for in a recipe.

BUYER BEWARE: Coconut flour is tricky to work with and can't easily replace other flours without making significant changes to the recipe. It's very dense and needs to be used with plenty of eggs or liquids for moisture.



FROZEN FOOD

CHILL OUT: FROZEN PRODUCE IS HEALTHY

■ Compared with people who didn't eat frozen fruits or veggies—which are usually frozen just hours after harvesting, thereby protecting their nutritional integrity—those who did had a much higher intake of essential nutrients like potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber, plus had a significantly lower body-mass index. (Frozen Food Foundation)



FREEZE, MISTER!
Nowadays, frozen food can be nutritious, such as veggies frozen just hours after being harvested.



BREAKFAST

EAT BREAKFAST TO LESSEN INFLAMMATION

■ A small study found that though breakfast skippers burned slightly more calories during the day, they showed signs of insulin resistance and their biomarkers for inflammation rose significantly higher than on the days when they had a healthy breakfast. The morsel, er, moral of the story: Eat breakfast! (*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*)

GETTY IMAGES

1,217

CALORIES

That's how many the average American discards every day from high-quality foods like fruits, vegetables, seafood, and dairy products. What a waste! (Johns Hopkins University)



SPICE IT UP

KILL CANCER WITH A DASH OF SPICE

■ Putting black pepper and other spices on raw meat before slapping the flesh onto a grill grate can eliminate nearly 100% of its HCAs—cancer-causing compounds. A mix of one gram of black pepper and 100 grams of ground beef also inhibited HCA formation but was too pepper-heavy to be palatable, so researchers recommend adding other spices like garlic and oregano to adjust the taste. They found that the most effective spices were rosemary, thyme, oregano, basil, sage, marjoram, clove, and allspice. (Kansas State University)



Cauliflower Rice

Cut carbs and your cancer risk while boosting your fiber intake with this cruciferous superfood.

by JENNIFER ISERLOH

1 SWEET AND SOUR CHICKEN

Rice 1 small head of cauliflower by roughly chopping and adding to a food processor. Heat 2 tbsp coconut oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 2 boneless, skinless, thinly sliced chicken breasts, 1 chopped red bell pepper, and 1 chopped onion. Cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables soften and chicken browns, then transfer to a plate. Add 1 tbsp oil to skillet over medium heat. Add cauliflower and cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until it softens. Add orange zest and juice from 1 orange, 3 tbsp soy sauce, and 1 tbsp honey. Toss well and top with chicken mixture.

2 MUSHROOM RISOTTO

Rice 1 small head of cauliflower. Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 1 chopped red onion, 10 oz can of mushrooms, 4 minced garlic cloves, salt, and pepper. Cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables start to brown, then transfer to a plate. Add cauliflower to skillet and cook over medium heat 4 to 5 minutes, or until it softens. Turn heat off. Stir in ¼ cup mascarpone cheese and ¼ cup Parmesan. Top with mushroom mixture and sprinkle with ¼ cup Parmesan.

3 COCONUT CASHEW FRIED RICE WITH POMEGRANATE

Rice 1 small head of cauliflower. Heat 3 tbsp coconut oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 4 minced garlic cloves and cook 1 minute, or until they become fragrant. Add cauliflower, ½ cup cashews, and 1 tbsp curry powder and cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until cauliflower softens. Add 3 tbsp soy sauce. Sprinkle with ½ cup shredded, unsweetened coconut, ½ cup basil, and 1 cup pomegranate seeds.

4 KIMCHI FRIED RICE

Rice 1 small head of cauliflower. Heat 3 tbsp sesame oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 6 sliced scallions and ½ cup kimchi and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Add cauliflower and cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until it softens. Add 1 cup frozen, thawed peas, 1 cup frozen, thawed corn, and 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar and cook until heated through. Top with ½ cup kimchi.

5 RICE AND BEANS

Rice 1 small head of cauliflower. Heat 3 tbsp olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add 1 chopped yellow onion, ½ cup cilantro, 2 tsp chili powder, ½ tsp cumin, salt, and pepper and cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until onion starts to brown. Add cauliflower and cook 4 to 5 minutes, or until it softens. Heat 15 oz can of kidney beans (drained and rinsed) and add to rice.





The #Tastemaker

He's an executive producer of Netflix's *Disenchantment*, a former *Simpsons* showrunner, and the writer of the suddenly world-famous "Steamed Hams" bit. (Search for the original and its many permutations if you're unfamiliar.) When he's not making television, **BILL OAKLEY is making a name for himself on Instagram as the nation's foremost authority on fast food. Here, he reveals the bizarre evolution of his second career.**

RI MAGAZINE: The first two fast-food reviews you posted on Instagram were a bit mean-spirited, which was wonderful. You reviewed the new McDonald's Quarter Pounder, and your only remarks were, "It's a slight improvement." You said of KFC's Crispy Colonel, "It's really standard." They were very blunt, so what was surprising was when they turned sincere and enthusiastic, which kept me watching. Can you explain the shift in tone and how your fans embraced it?

BILL OAKLEY: I would debate you on that and say there probably wasn't a shift in tone so much as it was just consistent honesty across the board. In those first two, I literally didn't know what I was doing in terms of editing. I could barely paste together three shots. So it might have been just a low production value that made it seem more homegrown and mean. But I think since Day 1, I have been brutally frank, and I'm surprised that people respect my opinion regarding these things. I do strive to keep it honest, and people don't like it so much when I sacrifice honesty for the joke. Which is sometimes necessary, but I don't usually do it.

I thought maybe in the case of McDonald's, you had sacrificed for the joke, because I think they've really upped their game over the past 15 years—probably with *Super Size Me* as the catalyst.

I think they've brought their A game only in the past 18 months. The thing is, I honestly do believe those Quarter Pounders are only a slight improvement. But I think a lot of their food offerings this year are improved, like when I did the review of

their honey-sweet barbecue chicken tenders or whatever they're called. That was the best thing I had at McDonald's that I can remember.

Did you see *The Founder*?

Yes, I saw it twice. I really liked it.

That scene where Michael Keaton's Ray Kroc goes in, and he's eating at that original McDonald's location, all I could think was, "Wow, I bet that burger kicked serious ass."

mediocre. And I think their locations vary widely in terms of their consistency.

What prompted you to do that first video? A realization that you had some cache in this area because of "Steamed Hams"? ["Steamed Hams" is a famous *Simpsons* segment from Season 7 that Oakley wrote.]

It was motivated entirely by my desire to review the fresh beef Quarter Pounder. Since I had had a well-known McDonald's rant about two years earlier on Twitter, I wanted to follow up by trying their new, highly hyped attempt to improve the offerings. When I arrived at the restaurant, I decided that a prose tweet simply wasn't going to be adequate. So I filmed myself trying it. Then the video was so well received that I continued doing it.

You said you got to eat fast food only on special occasions as a kid. Were your parents very strict about keeping you away from it?

It was because we lived out in the boon-docks in Maryland, and people don't remember this, but in the '70s, there

"I'm trying to have it both ways....
I would say many of my reviews are 100% sincere.
But other times, I'm making fun of the genre."

Yeah. I was reading online something about it. It was one of these question and answer things on Quora asking people who'd eaten at McDonald's in the '50s whether it was different. I gather it was much better. I guess it was more like In-N-Out. But eating fast food in the '50s was different. The food tasted different than it does today.

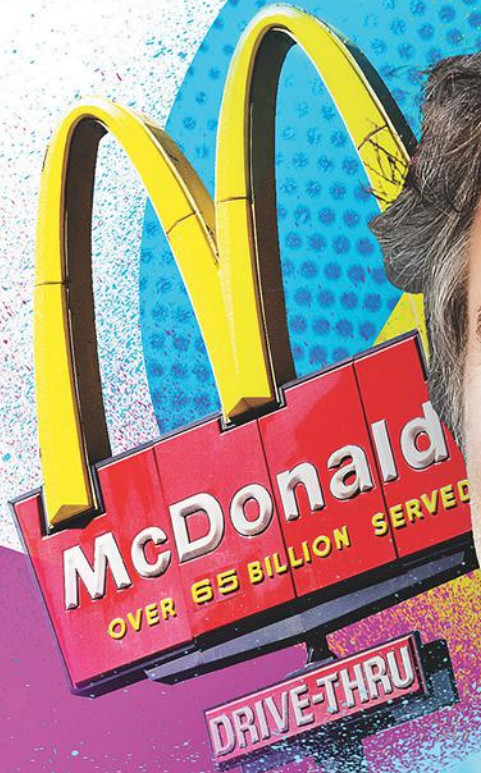
Today people think they want a Shake Shack on every corner, but does McDonald's prove that food is not infinitely scalable? If you had a Shake Shack on every corner it would probably suck.

I think that's what's happening to Shake Shack now. You know, I feel they expanded too fast, and the past three or four times I've been to Shake Shack, it has been

weren't McDonald's restaurants everywhere. Fast food was not everywhere. There was a Gino's, which is a regional thing, but it was 20 miles away from our house. The nearest McDonald's was in Baltimore, which is 60 miles away. So I never got any fast food. I also was never able to play any video games. So both fast food and video games I'm definitely overindulging in as a grown-up. Probably secretly compensating for my deprivation as a youth.

You use a lot of hashtags like #influencer and #foodie, which I take as sarcastic.

Yes. I'm trying to, as is the case with many things that I write, I'm trying to have it both ways—doing it, but also making fun of it at the same time. Which is the kind of thing we would often do on *The*



Simpsons, simultaneously embrace and satirize something.

Like *The Simpsons* clip show. If you're gonna make a clip show, you make fun of the fact that you're gonna do a clip show.

Exactly. I would say many of my reviews are 100% sincere. But other times, I feel like I'm making fun of the genre.

When you are not eating fast food on a video, what is your diet like? Because from the outside we see you eating only burgers and fried food. It's kind of like a Guy Fieri situation, where we say, "Hey, this dude is terrific. I sure hope nothing bad happens to him."

I appreciate that. I should mention I do go to the gym every day. I do eat a lot of frozen pizzas and things like that, but I also cook, like, three times a week. I'm the only one in this family who cooks. So I wouldn't say they tend to be particularly healthy things, but I cook things like pot roasts, and I'm trying to master all the things that I like. I'm trying to master cooking the perfect burger at home. I've been trying to master fried chicken for years, and it's super-hard. Pulled pork, stuff like that. I don't eat a lot of superhealthy food under any circumstances.

If you're making it at home, studies show you're eating a lot fewer calories.

Yeah. Well, I've literally been working for years to perfect a burger that is kind of like In-N-Out quality or a Shake Shack quality at home, and I think I'm virtually there. [See sidebar on this page.]

"We were certain [*The Simpsons*] was going to be over. At the time, almost no TV show had gone on, besides *Bonanza* or *Gunsmoke*, past Season 9 or 10."

You've mentioned that you lost a ton of weight after leaving *The Simpsons*, like 65 pounds, and that people ate horribly on the job. Was it just a lot of stress eating?

Yes. And you eat for entertainment. You have to remember this is before the days of cellphones. So now people constantly look at their cellphones in the writer's room, which I disapprove of, to be honest. I don't think you should be able to bring your cellphone in, because it wastes half a day. People's brains are not on the script; they're on Twitter. But back in the pre-

BILL OAKLEY'S GUIDE TO "STEAMED HAMS" AT HOME

It's like having your very own Shake Shack—localized entirely within your kitchen.

- **Use 80/20 or 70/30 ground beef.**

"If you go any leaner than 80%, it's not going to have the same flavor, and it's not going to be as juicy."

- **Get the pan superhot.**

"It should be a cast-iron skillet, and it should be smoking a little bit before you put the meat on."

- **Season the raw meat with salt and pepper. Keep the patty relatively small.**

"When it hits the pan, smash it down. That's how you get that char and crust that Shake Shack has pioneered on a national level. When you're completely done, it shouldn't be any bigger than a Shake Shack burger."

- **Dress it appropriately.**

"I prefer the way they dress it at Five Guys—ketchup, mustard, mayo, and then toppings: lettuce, tomato, pickles. It's a really simple recipe. I've taken to brushing mine with mustard. If you're really ambitious, you can put on some caramelized onions, which is an In-N-Out Animal Style thing. Martin's Potato Rolls are preferred. If you went through all the trouble to do this, you would have the perfect burger. It would easily rival any of those fast-food burgers."

cellphone era, when we were at *The Simpsons*, there's literally nothing to do except sit there and work or think about the script and eat. So the eating takes on this outsize, fantastical aspect to it, where you're fantasizing about what you're going to have for lunch. And if you have to stay for dinner, you're fantasizing about that. So you overeat. You order more lunch than you need because you want a lengthy experience. You want an appetizer with your lunch and a side dish and maybe even

a comedy. *Lucy* didn't go that long. *Cheers* went to Season 10. *M.A.S.H.* went to 10. That was it. We were like, "This thing is going to be over soon," and also because we felt like we were running out of stories. Even Josh [Weinstein] and I had a lot of trouble coming up with enough good stories for Season 8, and it was traditional for people to run the show for only two years at that point. So, No. 1, we had already run the show for two years. No. 2, we didn't want to be the guys to break it. We said, "Let's just do our two years and get out while the getting is good. The show couldn't possibly go beyond another year or two. Then we'll be on to something else." Of course, we were wrong. [Laughs] That was the wrongest thing of all time.

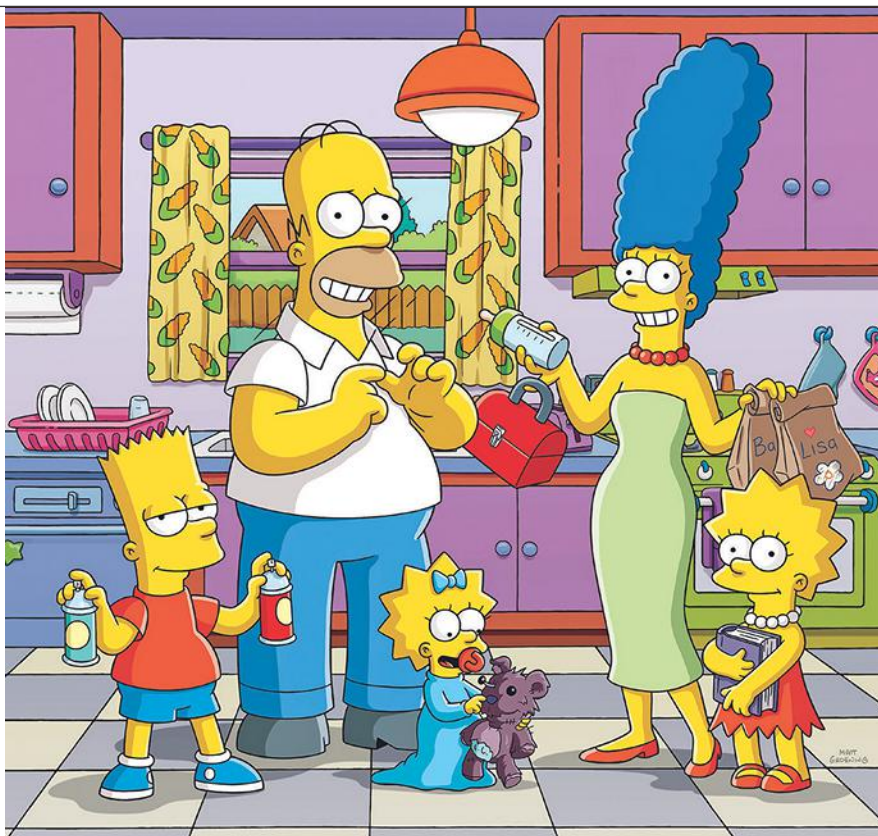
And for anyone not in that business, show running means you pick which scripts are developed, and you're pitching in with every aspect of writing, etc.

Yeah, it's basically like being the writer, producer, and director of a movie all at once. You're in charge of everything. You have a team of writers and a team of animators, and the composers and the actors, but you're in charge of all those teams. So you make all the decisions about what stories are going to be done and who's going to write them and who's going to direct them. The job is incredibly difficult, and that's also why nobody had done it for more than two years at the time. Josh and I, we split the work

a dessert. If you were thinking clearly, you would order a salad with chicken. But then you would have less lunch to enjoy, and it would be over quickly.

You were not just a writer on *Simpsons* but the showrunner, which most people would think is the greatest job in the world. What prompted you to leave?

We were certain it was going to be over. [Laughs] At the time, almost no TV show had gone on, besides *Bonanza* or *Gunsmoke*, past Season 9 or 10. I can't even remember



An executive producer of *The Simpsons*, left, and *Disenchantment*, below, Bill Oakley has also written for *Portlandia* and *The Cleveland Show* and produced for *Futurama* and *Mission Hill*, which he created.



between us, and we were still working 80 hours a week or whatever, and it's not a job that we thought we could continue to do well for more than another couple of years at that point.

People now know that you wrote the "Steamed Hams" segment that has become a viral meme. What gave it new life now? It's more than 20 years old.

I believe it all started with the Australian grocery store thing about three years ago. People in Australia were calling this chain of grocery stores and asking if they had steamed hams. And I guess they got thousands of phone calls asking for steamed hams. So the grocery store put up a sign in the grocery store that said, like, "We don't have steamed hams for sale, but if you're looking for ground beef, start right here." And they made a funny video in response to it. I think that's what jump-started this thing. I thought, "Oh, how amazing. That's delightful." And then I think the excitement that came from that kind of translated to a worldwide, I would say, renaissance. It started slowly, but it began with people remixing it on YouTube. Then it kind of took on a life of its own.

Do you have a favorite meme remaster? I thought *Blade Runner 2049* was great.

Man, there must be so many hundreds of them. I like the simpler ones from the early days. Like when it was translated to

Chinese and then back again, that was really good. But I guess my favorite one is that really sad one, where it turns out Skinner has died in the fire, and then Chalmers is sitting out in the forest, camping and watching the aurora borealis and thinking about Seymour up in the sky. That is my favorite one. I think it may be called "Steamed Hams, but It's a Tragedy" or "Steamed Hams, but Seymour Dies." You can find it. It's very moving.

Congratulations on *Disenchantment* being renewed. In general terms, can you tell fans what to expect in Season 2?

We already finished the second season. We thought the seasons were going to be 20 episodes a year. But they decided to break it into two seasons of 10 episodes per year. It's completely written and almost completely animated as well. In terms of what will happen, I can't say too much, but you will definitely see a very interesting and exciting resolution to the cliffhanger that I wrote, which was the season finale, which is kind of a two- or three-part beginning of the second season. You will also see each character getting a little bit more time for us to get to know them in depth, including the king. And some more emotional episodes. I can't say anything more than that.

Follow Oakley on Twitter and Instagram: @ThatBillOakley.

THE BEST OF THE BEST

Oakley's definitive fast-food rankings.

BEST BURGER

"HI-HO BURGER in Santa Monica was my fourth review. It's made with Wagyu beef. I haven't had a better burger than that."

BEST FRIES

"I still think MCDONALD'S has the best fries. Freddy's—where they make them skinnier—are a close second."

BEST FRIED CHICKEN

"POPEYE'S. Without a doubt."

BEST PIZZA

"In Portland we have a place called PIZZA JERK, which is my favorite. From a chain I'd have to say PAPA JOHN'S. And frozen, it's WILD MIKE'S."

BEST MEXICAN

"There are a dozen small places in L.A. whose names escape me, but TACO BELL is still definitely the best Mexican chain. The taco supreme from Jack in the Box is also great."

BEST NATIONWIDE CHAIN OVERALL

"WENDY'S. The new S'Awesome burger is probably the best nationwide item I've had this year."

FLYING INTO THE NEW YEAR

He travels the globe more than 300 days a year. Between filming for TV, touring with the USO, and raising money for the Robert Irvine Foundation, he found time to write a new book, *Family Table by Robert Irvine*. How does he do it all? In short, he stays in great shape. Read on for Robert's fitness rules, then check out an excerpt from his new book, beginning on page 30. Follow Robert's lead and you can make 2019 your best year yet.

Photographs by **Per Bernal**

ROBERT'S FITNESS RULES

SWEAT EVERY DAY

You won't always have an hour to go to the gym. But pushups, body-weight squats, pullups, situps, and running—are all free. Don't stress about sets and reps. If you're sweating, you're doing it right.

FOLLOW THE RULE OF THREE

Every complete workout program needs three things—a push, a pull, and a squat. Examples of pushes: bench presses, dumbbell bench presses, and pushups. Examples of pulls: pullups, dumbbell and barbell rows, and rowing machines. Examples of squats: barbell, dumbbell, and body-weight squats and all lunges. Use all three regularly to avoid imbalances and injuries.





Leg training will keep you mobile as you age. And you don't have to go anywhere near as heavy as Robert.

SUPERSET EVERYTHING

It's much more than just an efficiency tool. Yes, you'll save time, but you'll also sweat more and keep your heart rate elevated. You can and should use supersets—performing back-to-back sets without rest—on as many exercises as you can. I recommend supersetting opposing muscle groups, such as biceps and triceps, chest and back, and hamstrings and quads.

FLIP YOUR GRIPS

Experiment with different grips on every exercise. For example, on barbell curls, rather than using a standard shoulder-width underhand grip, try an overhand grip (called a reverse curl) and try moving your hands out wide on one set and then in tight on the next. On machines, swap out different handles. Your body is an adaptation machine; these variables will keep it guessing and progressing.

CYCLE YOUR CALORIES

Cheat meals don't just save your sanity; they're an effective way to keep your diet working for you. Try eating as clean as possible for six days in a row and then, on the seventh day, give yourself one meal in which you allow yourself to eat anything you want. The extra calories you consume will stoke your metabolism to burn at a higher rate. Just be sure to return to a normal, balanced dietary plan when your cheat meal is over. When you blow it up beyond a meal, you can stymie progress.

DAY 1: UPPER BODY

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Incline Bench Press	4	12
SUPERSET WITH Barbell Row	4	12
Plate-loaded Machine Row	2	20
StepMill (hold dumbbells)	1	5 minutes
Pushup	3	20
SUPERSET WITH Dumbbell Curl	3	15
Treadmill Push*	1	5 minutes
Arnold Press	3	12
SUPERSET WITH Bentover Dumbbell Raise	3	12
Plank	2	Failure

Alternate Days 1 and 2, doing 4 to 5 workouts per week.

*With the power turned off, hold the handles, lean forward, and push the belt with your feet.



DAY 2: LOWER BODY

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Barbell Squat	4	10
Walking Lunge	3	10 per leg
Rowing Machine Intervals**	10	20/40 seconds
Dumbbell Stepup to Calf Raise	3	10 per leg
Medicine Ball Russian Twist	4	15 per side

**20-second sprint, 40-second steady pace (10 minutes total).

JUST GET TO THE GYM

Even on days when your energy levels suck and you think you can't do much at the gym, just go and plan to do 10 or 15 minutes on the treadmill. If that's all you wind up doing, fine. But chances are, by the time you get your heart rate up and the endorphins start to flow, you're going to want to stay and do more than you planned. As with all things, if you just show up, it's amazing what can happen.

FIND A STRONG PARTNER

Too often we look for partners—in the gym, at work, and in life—who are “on

our level” rather than looking for people who can push and inspire us to elevate our game. In the gym, this is simple: Link up with someone who’s stronger and fitter than you. Will you be able to do everything they’re doing? No. But you will push yourself harder and further than you ever would alone. Apply this to all areas of your life and watch what happens.

LOVE THE PROCESS

Write those three words on a piece of paper and tape it to your mirror. Having a fitness goal is not an end point, and the words “love the process” will help

you remember that. You could do a lot of things you hate to achieve a goal, but how sustainable do you think your progress will be if you hate it every step of the way? You need to find ways to enjoy the process of getting there. As you eat healthy food, visualize it making you stronger and healthier. As you lift weights and run, visualize your body as you want it to be. Every step of the way gets you closer. You don’t have to hate any part of the goal.

BE THE WEIRD ONE

It’s OK! Really. People in your workplace might think it’s strange to see you doing

pushups or body-weight squats (or replacing your traditional desk with a standing desk), but you can let them snicker all they want. Break every two hours for a few quick sets! If you ask me, I think it’s much stranger to sit in the same chair all day long. Not only do all those short sets add up over time, they will give you a better boost of energy than another cup of coffee or a snack from the vending machine ever could. When people see that your efforts are keeping you healthy and fit and making you more productive at your job, they won’t be laughing. They’ll be coming to you for advice. Be gracious and give it them.

“Don’t wait for motivation to begin. It rarely works that way. Start moving toward where you want to go. As you make progress, you’ll get the motivation to continue.”





STAY FIT ON THE GO

Robert travels more than 300 days a year and is able to maintain a lean, muscular physique year-round. Here are his five tips for staying fit when traveling or otherwise pressed for time.

1. WEAR A WEIGHT VEST

■ This adds intensity to any activity. Instantly increase the difficulty of a 10-minute walk, a set of pushups, or even household chores. You'll sweat more and get a great core workout.

2. SHORTEN YOUR WORKOUTS

■ When you're pressed for time, the easiest thing to do is to cut your workout in half. If you typically like to do four sets of everything, just do two and move quickly. This one is so obvious, but most people resist it. I know so many guys who will skip the gym entirely if they have only a half-hour. Well, two sets are a lot more effective than zero!

3. DON'T WASTE TIME LOOKING FOR A "HEALTHY" RESTAURANT

■ Most sit-down restaurants can be healthy if you just ask. No matter the house specialty, they can make you grilled chicken and steamed vegetables. I make this request all the time and usually get it. They don't accommodate me because I'm a fellow chef; they accommodate me because they want the business.

4. BRING THE HEAT

■ Travel with hot sauce. This is the perfect antidote to the oversize portions that are the norm in American restaurants. Pick your poison: Frank's, sriracha, Tabasco, etc. Adding heat and spice to your food makes it more satisfying, so you'll need to eat less of it to feel full. There are also a number of studies that have strongly correlated the active component of hot peppers and hot sauce—capsaicin—to fat loss.

5. DON'T SKIP CARDIO

■ I hate skipping any workout, but when push absolutely comes to shove, I make sure I always get my cardio in. Everyone enjoys lifting more than cardio, and I'm the same way, but cardio is what ultimately helps you stay lean—and keeps your heart healthy—and staying lean makes your muscles look bigger. It seems counterintuitive, but it really works.



FAMILY TABLE

BY Robert Irvine

Robert's upcoming cookbook offers recipes and strategies to bring your family back together and back to the dinner table.





Photographs by **Ian Spanier**

There's No Right or Wrong Way to Make Muesli

One of the easiest ways to get kids involved in the kitchen is to make a muesli containing oats, fresh and dried fruit, nuts, milk (cow's milk, almond, and soy are all fine), nut butter, yogurt, and honey. It makes a tasty, nutritious breakfast, but the real reason muesli is so great: There's really no way to mess it up. I could give you a precise recipe, but that's missing the point. Here you have a chance to teach your kids about the beauty of being imprecise and "feeling" your way through the process of creating something. I have a lot of fun doing this with my wife, Gail, and my daughters, Annalise and Talia. All kids, especially young ones, will have fun when they realize there are no rules to break. They'll also learn about proportion. If it looks too soupy, they can add some more oats or sliced pears and apples. If it's too dry, a little more milk and/or yogurt.

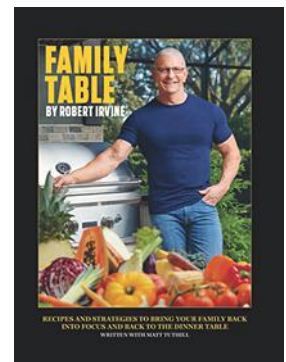
If you've ever been to my live show, you know that one of the challenges I undergo is rescuing a dish once audience members have had their way with it, dumping everything from gefilte fish to Fruity Pebbles in the same bowl. By constantly tasting, adjusting on the fly, and trusting my innate sense of proportion, I've been able to change some pretty disgusting messes into food that isn't just edible, but dishes that people actually love.

The same principles are at work when you make a muesli. When I recently did this with Gail, Annalise, and Talia, we combined just a few ingredients: oats, peanut butter, honey, almond milk, and raisins. We all tasted it along the way to make sure it was just a little sweet and that the peanut butter—which is a very powerful ingredient—hadn't taken over the entire dish. Once we had a nice consistency—not too thick, and just a tiny bit runny—we put it in the fridge. By the next morning, the oats had absorbed all the excess liquid, and it had transformed into a delicious meal that was big enough for the entire family. We did it with zero planning, using only what happened to be lying around the pantry, and in less than five minutes of prep time.

REMEMBER: FOOD JUST HAS TO TASTE GOOD. It doesn't have to be high-brow or sophisticated. I'm damn good at what I do, and I have confidence that I can make any dish taste great. But your family doesn't care how long it takes to make something or what kind of techniques you had to learn to make it. I recently asked Annalise what her favorite dish of mine was from when she was growing up. You know what she said? Bacon on a Martin's roll. Yup. Something so simple that literally anyone on the planet could make it. Sometimes you've got to laugh—and be thankful that kids are so great at being honest.

AVAILABLE NOW

FAMILY TABLE BY ROBERT IRVINE is available at familytablebook.com and Amazon.





SUNDAY MORNING OATMEAL

171	3g	2g	37g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	CARBS

SERVES 4

1½ cups water
 1½ cups whole oats
 ½ tsp kosher salt
 ½ cup dried cherries
 ½ cup golden raisins
 1 tbsp brown sugar
 1 tbsp milk
 1 banana, sliced

- 1 Heat water in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer. Add oats and salt. Bring to a boil.
- 2 Lower heat and simmer for approximately 8 minutes, stirring.
- 3 Remove from heat and stir in dried cherries, raisins, brown sugar, and milk. Cover and allow to sit for 3 minutes.
- 4 Top with banana.

CHEF'S TIP Oatmeal is a great blank slate for you and your kids to experiment with. In addition to this recipe, here are three other flavor combinations that really work great: almond and cherry; apple and cinnamon; and my favorite, ricotta and fig.

FRESH CRAB & CORN SPAGHETTI

SERVES 6

4 whole ears of corn
2 slices bacon
1 tbsp butter
1 quart vegetable stock
2 lbs spaghetti
3 tbsp shredded
Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp heavy cream
1 tbsp black pepper
6 oz crab meat

- 1 Shuck the corn and remove the kernels with a knife by standing the ears up vertically and running your blade between the kernels and the cob.
- 2 Place bacon and butter in a pan over medium-high heat. Render the fat from the meat and heat until butter begins to brown. Add corn and allow to cook for approximately 3 minutes. Add vegetable stock and bring to a boil.
- 3 In a separate pot of boiling water, cook

369	20g	15g	41g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	CARBS

spaghetti. This should take approximately 10 minutes.

- 4 Add spaghetti to corn broth and finish with Parmesan cheese, heavy cream, black pepper, and crab meat.

GET THE KIDS INVOLVED Kids make good sous chefs, so put them to work! Shucking corn might feel like grunt work to you, but it'll make a kid feel useful because it's an important part of the process.





GARLIC & JALAPEÑO COWBOY RIB EYE

495 **48g** **25g** **6g**
 CALORIES PROTEIN FAT CARBS

SERVES 4

- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsps mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 24 oz cowboy-cut rib-eye steak
- 2 jalapeño peppers, halved vertically
- 2 heads of garlic, halved horizontally
- 2 sprigs basil

- 1 Make a marinade using the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper. Whisk together.
- 2 Place steak in the marinade. Cover in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 to 6 hours.
- 3 Pan sear or grill the steak for about 4 minutes on each side, or until internal temperature reaches 135°F.
- 4 Grill jalapeño peppers and garlic until golden brown and softened.
- 5 Slice steak at an angle, garnish with basil, and serve with jalapeño peppers and garlic. The garlic should be soft enough to spread like butter.

CHEF'S TIP Balsamic vinegar, which is vinegar aged from grape must—freshly crushed grape juice, including the skins and stems—is a digestive aid and helps break down proteins. When using it in a marinade as done here, it has the effect of lightly tenderizing the meat. Thus, the longer you allow the meat to marinate, the better the results.

S'MORES PIE

229 **3g** **7g** **41g**
CALORIES PROTEIN FAT CARBS

SERVES 15

4 oz butter
5.3 oz sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 egg
1 cup graham cracker crumbs
1½ cups flour
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
20 oz milk chocolate
3 cups miniature marshmallows
½ cup heavy cream
4.5 oz bittersweet chocolate

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease an 18x13-inch sheet pan or a glass Pyrex baking dish.
- 2 In a stand-up mixer, beat butter, sugar, vanilla, and eggs using the paddle attachment.
- 3 In a separate bowl, stir together ½ cup graham cracker crumbs, flour, baking powder, and salt. Combine with sugar-and-butter mixture.
- 4 Press half the dough into pan and bake for 15 minutes.
- 5 Melt milk chocolate in a saucepan or in a microwave. Pour into graham cracker pie shell. Top with marshmallows.
- 6 Scatter ½ cup graham cracker crumbs on top of the pie and bake for an additional 10 minutes.
- 7 Make chocolate ganache: In a small pot, bring heavy cream to a boil, then slowly incorporate bittersweet chocolate using a whisk. Once all chocolate is incorporated, keep warm, being careful not to burn.
- 8 Finish the pie by blowtorching the marshmallows or briefly placing the pie under the broiler and watching carefully. Top with hot chocolate ganache.



THE WAR COMES HOME

Better known as “the Reaper,” Nicholas Irving retired from the Army Rangers with an unconfirmed kill count in the triple digits. Since coming home, he has ridden a roller coaster of alcoholism and PTSD. Life after war has finally stabilized since his failed suicide attempt, but every night, his enemies still rise from the dead to haunt his dreams.



T

he nightmare is always the same. The first man that Nicholas Irving ever killed appears as a ceiling fan above his bed. The man's head becomes the center of the fan; his arms and legs are the blades. Irving is pinned down and can't move. The fan spins faster and faster and descends toward Irving. Eventually, it flies out of control and explodes in a spray of blood that covers him and everything else in the room.

"It's guaranteed that I have that same exact dream once a year," Irving says.

The first time he had this nightmare, it was the night after that very first kill. Irving was a newly minted Ranger at the time, part of the 3rd Ranger Battalion out of the Army's 75th Regiment, an 18-year-old machine gunner serving in Tikrit, Iraq, in 2004. He was an expert in a variety of heavy guns, and that day he worked behind the iron sights of a .50 caliber. For the uninitiated, the 50 cal is designed to take down vehicles, strong enough to chew through tank armor and mangle the treads. Its effect on a flesh-and-blood human burned images into Irving's head that he'll never forget.

"He turned to jelly, mist...and just...weird-looking," Irving says. "He disintegrated, evaporated in his vehicle."

Over the next seven years, Irving deployed a total of six times, three as a machine gunner, three as a sniper. He killed at least another 59 men, including 33 confirmed in a single tour as a sniper. The latter figure earned him the nickname "the Reaper," and in 2015 he released a biography of the same name. (A miniseries based on Irving's experiences was in development for NBC before the Weinstein Company's bankruptcy.)

Irving will never know the actual number of enemy combatants he killed in

action, which could climb higher than 100 men. That's because he was involved in several hellacious firefights that were so lengthy and exhausting, it was impossible to take an accurate account of all that had transpired. One such firefight occurred in a 2007 battle in Mosul that Irving refers to as "the hotel party."

"It was a multistory hotel. It was a hornet's nest full of bad guys," he says.

Irving and his teammates used every weapon system at their disposal. By the end of the firefight, the Army had dropped 500- and 1,000-pound bombs on

and compares the adrenaline rush of combat to playing in the Super Bowl. His ability to speak openly about his experiences, as well as his keen recollection of specific, often gory details, makes him almost as much of an anomaly in the veteran community as his prodigious battlefield statistics.

But the price Irving paid was a high one. Besides the fact that his first-ever kill comes back as an annual nightmare, the other 364 nights of the year are filled with even worse terrors. He dreams of only one thing—that the men he killed are coming

back for him. But in his dreams, Irving's bullets are useless. The dead march through his line of fire and chop him to bits with hatchets, axes, or broken bottles.

"I want to say they've gotten better," Irving says. "The chopped-up

part, it cuts off once it's happening. I used to watch the whole thing like an out-of-body experience."

DREAMS OF BEING A SNIPER

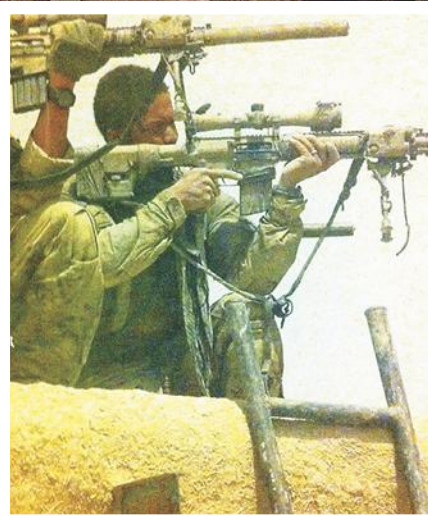
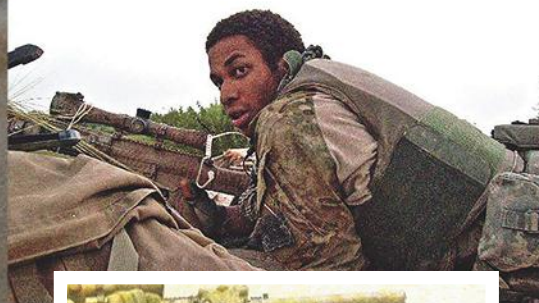
In an ironic twist, when he was overseas—and before his body count started to climb—he would dream of home. Specifically, high school just outside of Baltimore, where he was bullied incessantly for being undersized—he's 5'7", 160 pounds at his heaviest—and for being a sincerely enthusiastic ROTC cadet.

"A lot of guys think that you become less alpha if you talk about your emotions. Keeping it inside...gets really, really bad."

the enemy position. Helicopters providing air support depleted all their machine gun and rocket ammunition and began firing handheld weapons out of their windows. Irving emptied canister after canister of .50-caliber ammunition into the building—going window by window in a process he likened to Whac-A-Mole. At the end of the day, every man in Irving's unit was out of ammo.

"That was a good day," Irving says.

He still talks excitedly about his exploits



Scenes from Irving's deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, with his squadmates' identities concealed for security reasons. Top left: Irving and his spotter survey a target area in Afghanistan. Some of Irving's kills were up to a half-mile away.

As early as sixth grade, Irving says, he dreamed of being a sniper. Both of his parents were in the Army, and Irving grew up on the grounds of Fort Meade in Maryland. His mother, Angie, made him his first ghillie suit. An otherwise poor student, Irving got his only A in ROTC. He graduated with a 1.7 GPA. Nevertheless, his father, Gerald, always foresaw great things in his future.

“My dad kept saying, ‘One day, you’re going to write a book, and people are going to read your life story.’ I said, ‘I have a 1.7. What the heck is he talking about?’”

Military life might have been all Irving wanted, but if you’re a stickler for the rules, he should have never been accepted at all. Irving is color-blind, an automatic disqualifier for the infantry. He learned this only at the MEPS, or military entrance processing station, while taking a physical to get into the Navy, where he had planned to become a SEAL. He failed twice, but after his second try, an Army nurse overheard what his issue was and took him aside for another try.

The nurse traced his fingers across numbers he couldn’t see so he could read them out loud and pass the exam.

“I saved my medical records,” Irving says. “There’s a one-day gap where it’s a 0 out of 14 and then 14 out of 14, passing with flying colors.”

BRINGING THE WAR HOME

To this day, when Irving wakes up in the morning, it takes a while to work the kinks out of his joints. He’s perpetually sore, a side effect of parachute drops and carrying so much heavy gear over so many miles. When equipped with all his gear and a full complement of ammo, he tipped the scales at 315 pounds, a weight at which it was typical for him to march 15 miles or more.

It turned out that wear and tear was the least of his worries. The intense combat experiences and subsequent nightmares, combined with a lack of direction for a new career once he left the military in 2010, led Irving to drink heavily—a full bottle of Jack Daniel’s plus an almost unbelievable 20 beers per day. This crippling habit didn’t just leave him blind drunk, it emptied his bank account and nearly cost him everything; his car was repossessed by creditors, his home was on the verge of foreclosure, and he was left to beg his wife, Jessica, and his parents for money,



Irving’s notoriety has given him a second career as an author and a military adviser for film and television. Right: The buttstock of Irving’s SR-25 after a four-month deployment in Afghanistan. The 33 tally marks represent the kills accrued during that time.

which he also drank away.

Through all this, Irving didn’t seek help and didn’t talk to Jessica about the underlying issues. In fact, throughout his military career, Irving kept his role within the Rangers a complete secret from her, going so far as to tell her that he didn’t see combat when he deployed.

“She didn’t find out until 2009,” Irving says. “One of my guys slipped up. He was like, ‘Dude, I heard you killed 50 guys overseas.’ She was standing right next to

It would hardly be a new phenomenon in Irving’s circle. Thirteen men he served with chose to end their own lives.

“You go from this stellar background to watching some of the missions you do on CNN to calling your parents, saying, ‘Hey, can I borrow \$200?’ It’s really depressing. At that point, I thought, ‘I’m just a burden on people.’ I contemplated suicide twice. I had one failed attempt.”

On that day, Irving walked out to a secluded area behind his home, an area he chose because he thought, “It

won’t be too much of a mess to clean up.” Then, with a round loaded into his favorite Glock, he put the gun to his head.

“I pulled the trigger, and nothing happened,” Irving says. “Nothing happened. It’s

a Glock, so there’s no safety....

I walked back inside. I had to find another round. Somewhere in that thought process of looking for another round, I passed out drunk.”

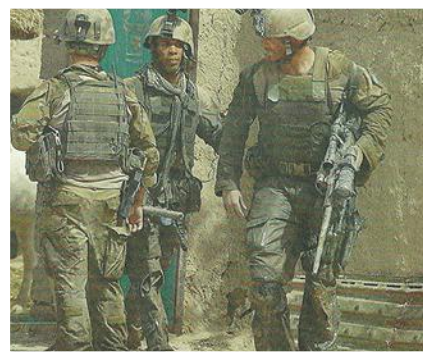
Irving says he can’t explain what happened, but he’ll happily give credit to God. Of all the hundreds of thousands of rounds he’s ever fired, he had experienced only one other weapon malfunction

“I thought, ‘I’m the only guy who’s losing his house, the only guy who’s losing his car.’ You find out that, no, you’re not the only guy.”

me. She looked at me like, ‘What?’

“We went home that night, and it was weird. She said, ‘I’ve been sleeping with a guy who’s killed people....’ Then she said, ‘That’s why you drink.’ I was like, ‘I guess. I’m not really sure.’”

The shame of his spiral into alcoholism nearly made him a statistic—one of the 22 veterans who commit suicide every day.



or jam. But surviving the suicide attempt would be right in line with other inexplicable miracles he's seen on the battlefield.

"We were in this one firefight that lasted about 12 hours," Irving recalls. "Almost to a man, all of us had bullet holes in our clothes, but we weren't hit. I saw some weird stuff that day, like a bullet entry on the front part of someone's chest and an exit wound on the back, but the round never touched him. A chaplain that day had to put down his Bible and pick up a gun.... I saw an RPG shot at us at a close distance, and then it just beelined straight up to 12 o'clock and exploded instead of hitting us. I couldn't explain that, either."

Irving began to taper his drinking in 2015 and quit cold turkey on Nov. 28, 2016—the day his first child, a son named Kayden, was born. The day also happened to be Irving's 30th birthday.

"I was sitting in a hospital for 18 hours that day. We were concerned. He had a heart condition, a murmur," Irving recalls. "All my focus was on him, making sure he was fine."

"I didn't care about anything else. It was the first time in a long time, many years, where I didn't crave or think about a drink. Usually, in a stressful situation like that, I would want to decompress with something, Jack Daniel's or a beer, some-

thing like that, but it was the first time it never happened. I realized, 'It's not that bad. I'll just quit it right now.'

"Then when they pronounced, 'Oh, he's fine. He's good to go,' I said, 'Well, maybe that's a sign.'"

His son's birth gave Irving a hopeful outlook on life that he thought he'd never find again. Today, he has a simple message for veterans contemplating suicide: There is light at the end of the tunnel.

"Don't be afraid to talk about anything," Irving says. "A lot of guys think that you become less alpha if you talk about your emotions and talk about what you feel. I think keeping it inside—it's what I did—it gets really, really bad the longer you do it. But talking about it and not being ashamed and feeling sorry for yourself for the things that you've done help a lot. I've forgiven myself a long time ago for the things that I've done. I do believe that everybody I killed deserved it, and they were trying to do bad things to us and prevent my guys and me from going back home. I never had a regret about doing that."

It should be noted, too, that Irving's ability to talk so openly about his experiences has given him a second career as a writer. A follow-up to his first book, called *Way of the Reaper* and released in 2015,

includes details of operations not covered in the first book. Since then, Irving has begun writing a series of military thriller novels, the first of which, *Reaper: Ghost Target*, released in May 2018. His notoriety also earned him a job as a military consultant on movie and television projects, and in 2016 he worked onscreen alongside John Cena in the military-themed reality show *American Grit*.

"No one should be afraid to talk about what's on their mind," Irving says. "Even if you think no one's listening, I'm a big believer that someone's always listening somewhere. When people have those Facebook rants, someone's always listening. You'd be surprised whose life you can impact—or whose life is exactly the same as your life. You're not alone in anything in this world."

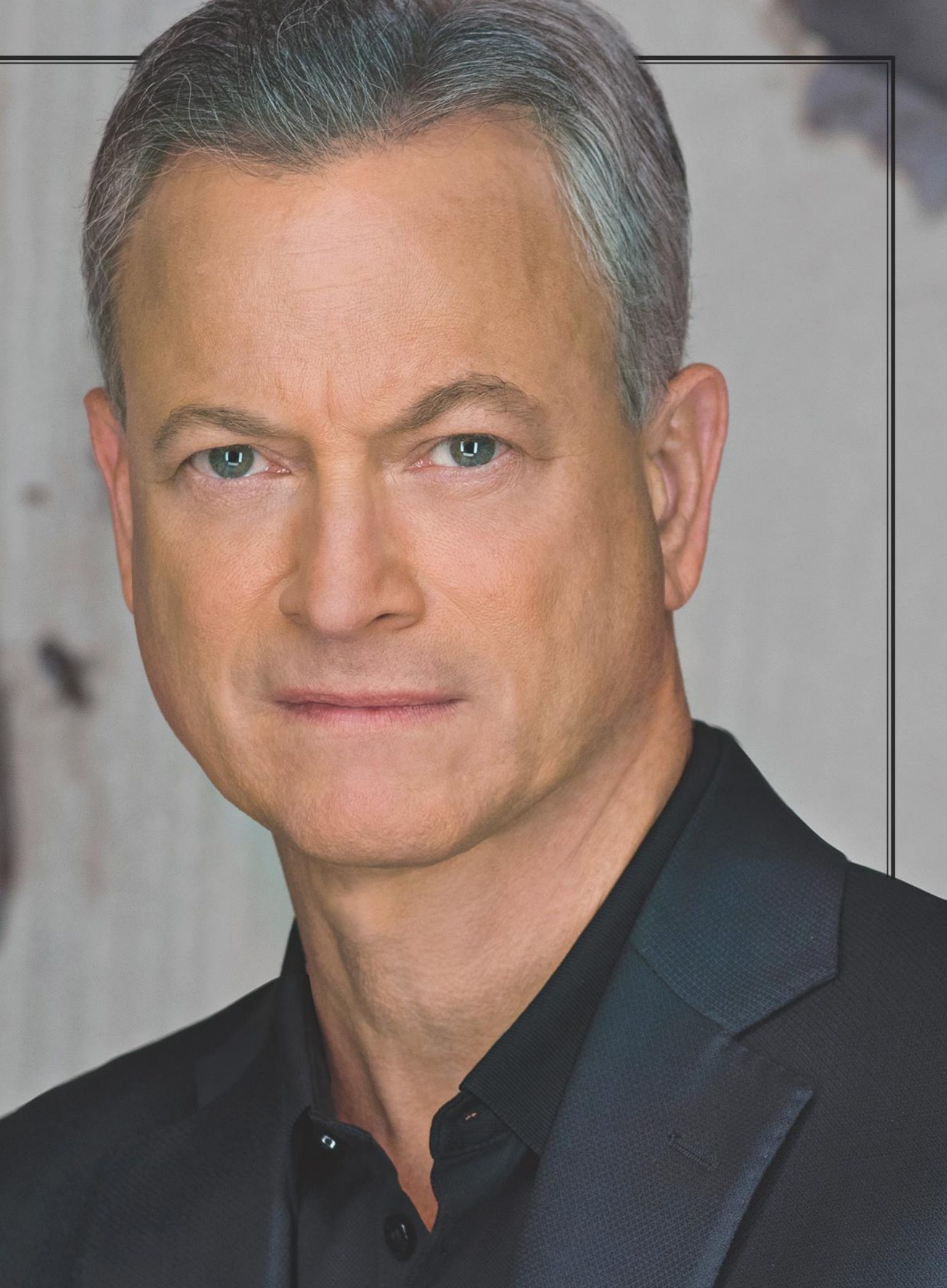
"I thought, 'I'm the only guy who's losing his house, the only guy who's losing his car, about to lose everything.' You find out that, no, you're not the only guy. There are a lot of other guys going through this, too."

"Keep working hard. Don't quit. There is always going to be light at the end of every tunnel."

Irving is the author of eight books, including the upcoming *Reaper: Threat Zero*. Follow him on Twitter: @irving_nicholas.

GARY SINISE WILL NEVER FORGET

When America failed its veterans after Vietnam, the nation compounded the mistakes of an already tragic era. Gary Sinise has spent his life fighting to ensure that this chapter of our history doesn't repeat. He has parlayed his fame and fortune into the Gary Sinise Foundation, raising awareness for veterans' issues and building homes for wounded veterans.



It is fitting that the face of veteran plight in popular culture turned out to be Gary Sinise. By the time he took on the role of Lt. Dan in 1994's *Forrest Gump*, he had already been actively engaged in volunteering and raising awareness for veterans' causes for more than a decade. His poignant portrayal of Lt. Dan, wounded in Vietnam and forgotten when he returned home, helped shine a light on a dark period in American history and issue an artful warning to younger generations who hadn't experienced the horror firsthand.

In 2011, after decades of volunteering and throwing the weight of his celebrity behind veterans' causes, he founded the Gary Sinise Foundation to create a bigger impact. In addition to raising money to build specially adapted smart homes for disabled veterans, the foundation hosts Invincible Spirit Festivals on military bases to raise morale for troops and their families. Sinise is usually front and center with his Lt. Dan Band. Robert is a mainstay at the festivals.

Sinise has enjoyed a long and storied career in theater, television, and film, which began when he founded Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company when he was fresh out of high school in 1974. From there, he went on to act in dozens of movies, including *Forrest Gump*, *Apollo 13*, *The Green Mile*, and *Mission to Mars*, to name just a small handful. Most recently he starred for nine seasons on *CSI: NY* and is currently starring in *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, airing Wednesday nights on CBS.

In an exclusive interview with *RI Magazine*, Sinise says the greatest benefit to a résumé as long as his is the fact that it gives him a bigger platform from which he can help the troops.

RI MAGAZINE: Most people would be surprised to learn that you took up the cause of improving veterans' affairs long before you signed on to play Lt. Dan. What spurred you to take up the cause?

GARY SINISE: It goes back to the late '70s and early '80s, when I really started thinking about military service and what our veterans were going through. When I was in high school, the Vietnam War was raging. I remember my parents being very scared that I was going to get drafted. The country was being torn apart by divisions over the war. All the college campuses were exploding because there was a draft, and lots of people were being drafted into military

service who really didn't want to be there.

The Vietnam War was not going well according to the press at that time. As I was in high school, I remember a little bit, but not a lot. The little that I do remember are the casualty reports on television every night. At the height of the war, we were taking 500 to 1,000 casualties a week. It was very devastating. There were many, many wounded. I would notice these news reports, but then I would just go back to being a high school kid worrying about playing in a band or acting in high school plays and whatnot.

After high school, I started a theater company, Steppenwolf Theatre, and I met my wife-to-be, Moira Harris, through that company in 1976. Through her, I met her two brothers who were Vietnam veterans. Boyd McCanna Harris and Arthur Harris. One was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, the other was a West Point graduate and served as a platoon leader, a lieutenant, and then

feel guilty because I hadn't really paid attention that much as a high school kid.

I just had this terrible sadness for what happened to our Vietnam veterans. I felt a guilt and a shame that I had been so unaware. I started to try to do something in the Chicago area to support Vietnam veterans and got involved with some local Vietnam veterans groups and ended up doing some theater pieces that were about Vietnam. One of them was written by a group of Vietnam veterans; I rehearsed it in '83, and it opened in '84. I started a program in my theater where we would let veterans in free of charge for that particular play on Tuesday nights. Every Tuesday night was a veterans night. We would have 200 veterans out there watching this play. It was very healing for a lot of them because—this is back in the mid-'80s—it was right around the time when the country was starting to say, "Hey, we're sorry for the way you were treated."

In the late '80s and early '90s, I supported

“I just had this terrible sadness for what happened to our Vietnam veterans. I felt a guilt and a shame that I had been so unaware.”

went back for a second tour as a company commander, a captain, then a major.

Then my wife's sister also joined the Army out of college, and she married a soldier who was a combat medic in Vietnam. I had three Vietnam veterans around me at that time. I began to get this lesson about what it was like to serve in Vietnam, what it was like to come home after the war, how the nation literally turned its back on our veterans. I started to think, "Oh, yeah, I remember all that now." Then I started to

Vietnam veterans who had seen the play—specifically Tom Luberd, a Marine—by raising funds to help them build a veterans memorial in Lansing, IL. And because I helped them with that, they put my brother-in-law Boyd on the wall because, unfortunately, right before I ended up doing that play I was talking about, he passed away of cancer. He was a lieutenant colonel at the time. I was very sad about that because I was looking forward to showing him the play and telling him how much his influ-



Clockwise from top left: Gary with his wife, Moira; with Captain Luis Avila—who lost his left leg to an IED and was almost completely paralyzed—and his wife, Claudia; with Lt. Colonel Bryan Forney in the ICU of Brooke Army Medical Center after Forney was injured in a helicopter crash; with Robert on the set of *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*.

OPENER: KAREN HILL/CBS. THIS SPREAD: COURTESY OF GARY SINISE AND THE GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

ence on me was reflected in my desire to make that a great show.

Recently I supported the restoration of that memorial. One of my other brothers-in-law, Jack Treese, the combat medic, had passed away on Oct. 1, 2014, and Tom Lubarda added Jack's name to the memorial as well. I wasn't expecting that. It was very nice of them to do that.

Over the years, I would do little things here and there to support our Vietnam veterans. Then I had the opportunity to audition for *Forrest Gump* and to play a Vietnam veteran. That got me started working with our wounded, because he was a wounded soldier. That was the relationship that began with the Disabled American Veterans Organization going back to 1994.

After Sept. 11, I knew where I was going to place my energy to support my country. It was toward the men and women who were deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq in reaction to that attack.

I started volunteering for the USO and to support many, many different military charities, and raising money, and playing concerts, and traveling, and trying to keep awareness up for what our men and women were going through in Iraq and Afghanistan. It all came to a head when I decided that this felt like a calling to me to serve the men and women who defend us. I decided that I would take the good fortune I've had in my career and apply it to the creation of the Gary Sinise Foundation.

One of the signature activities of the Gary Sinise Foundation is building specially adapted smart homes for disabled veterans. How many have you built?

I've been involved with, or am involved with, over 50 at this point, but in various incarnations. When I started with the first couple of homes, I didn't have my foundation. We built homes through an entity called Building for America's Bravest. They

asked me if I would do a concert to raise money for a quadruple amputee. He was the first surviving quadruple amputee injured in 2009. We've had five of those guys since then. I ended up being involved in building houses for all of them.

After launching my foundation in 2011, we created our R.I.S.E. program, Restoring Independence Supporting Empowerment. We've worked on several projects since our launch, some in collaboration with other organizations, some are in process, and some are slated to go into construction.

One of your ambassadors, Michael Schlitz, we wrote about in this magazine. He was badly disfigured but has a great outlook on life. What kind of ambassador has he been for the foundation?

I met Mike in 2010. My friend Leann Tweeden, who I'd been on some USO trips with, brought him to the set of *CSI: NY*. Mike had just been to UCLA to go to



Operation Mend, which is a great program where surgeons and plastic surgeons all come together to try to do corrective surgery on those who have been badly wounded. Mike has undergone dozens and dozens of surgeries [91], as you might suspect.

As the home-building effort grew and grew, I called up Mike one day and said, "It would be my honor to build a house for you," and we ended up building a house for Mike. He's a great Army Ranger, a very good communicator, and a resilient guy who's been through a lot, obviously, and has become a pal. At one point, I asked Mike if he would like to be an ambassador for my foundation. As I was expanding, it started to become more difficult for me to continue to shoot TV and then travel all over the place doing events and speaking. We created the Ambassadors Council as a program of my foundation and started asking certain pals of mine if they would come onboard to help raise awareness by doing events for us and speaking on my behalf and for the foundation. Mike has been a great ambassador, as has my pal Robert Irvine.

Twenty-two veterans a day commit suicide. I'm sure you've seen that statistic. There's been somewhat of an effort to draw attention to that, but the 22 Pushup Challenge that's been going around on Facebook hasn't gotten anywhere near the kind of publicity that something like the Ice Bucket Challenge did. That statistic is so

huge and so alarming. Why do you think we're still seeing these numbers?

We're going to, unfortunately, face the residual effects of military service and long, long wars and deployments for years. This has been the longest war in our nation's history. It still goes on. We still have troops in Afghanistan and have had them there for over 15 years. That's longer than any conflict we've ever been in. Every effort that we can make to keep awareness up, and to draw attention to where the problems are, and to shine a light on them, we should make.

The mental health problem is a very serious problem, and it's not always combat-related. You have people in the military who are stressed out for a number of reasons. Maybe they haven't even been to combat, but the pressure and the strain that is placed on our military is gigantic. They're trained to kill people. That's the nature of war. That's what you do in war. You fight and you kill people, and you see people get killed and maimed. You see innocents lose their lives and lose their families. You see all kinds of horrific things, and then you have to come home from that and try to push on.

That can be very, very difficult. As I said, we've had a number of service members over this long period of time, since Sept. 11, who have deployed over and over and over again. The amount of stress that places on their families and them is gigantic. Imagine a kid, he's 8 years old, and for the next 10 or 12 years, his mom or dad is gone in war eight

or nine times over that 10- or 12-year period. That's a lot of stress on a family. So I believe that we can never do enough to give back and show our support. We've got to keep trying to do our best to do more.

I would argue that the length of the war has worked against it in terms of keeping awareness up for what these guys are facing. In the very beginning of the conflict, there is a ton of news footage that you get from the war zone. Over a decade-plus, it starts to taper, and it seems like most of the coverage now—yes, you'll see a brilliant front-of-the-battle-lines kind of report on 60 Minutes—but for the vast majority of the time on TV, they're talking about it in abstract terms as a policy decision that is happening somewhere in Washington. Do you think if we were presented with the face of this more often, we'd understand it better, and we wouldn't tolerate the plight of these veterans?

You'll get no argument from me on that. I agree with that. That's absolutely true. This has been a very long war. If our troops are not on the front pages for some big event, or something like that, we tend to forget that we have people continuing to serve in harm's way. That's where awareness raising comes in. I've tried for 15 years to keep awareness up and to keep reminding people that we have families, military families, sacrificing on a daily basis whether they're on the front pages or not.



Clockwise from far left: On the set of *Forrest Gump*; Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band perform at various charity functions for the troops; with John Malkovich in a production of *True West*; Sinise during his senior year of high school in 1973 with his band Half Day Road.

Sinise's new book, *Grateful American: A Journey From Self to Service*, from Harper Collins Thomas Nelson, releases on Feb. 12. You can preorder it at Amazon and other booksellers now.

Trump has publicly defamed a Gold Star family as well as John McCain—whom I know you supported in '08—saying he likes veterans who, “weren't captured.” Are you worried that veterans' affairs won't be treated with the attention and compassion that they deserve under this administration?

Here's how I'll answer that question: I always worry about how our veterans are going to be treated, no matter who the president is. You always hope that each president

We are the citizens of the United States who benefit from the freedom that is provided by these defenders. To take some responsibility for trying to ensure that they're taken care of and to place our energies into supporting organizations or helping particular veterans in our own communities—that's something that we can do. We don't have to wait around for the government to do that. Every citizen has an ability to reach out to somebody and help them.

Excellent point. You've been called the new Bob Hope. Is that a nickname that you embrace?

Those are very big shoes to fill. I'm just trying to do my part.

You've had an incredibly storied career and been in some films—like *Forrest Gump* and *Apollo 13*—that are cultural touchstones and will go down as a couple of the all-time greats. Are you at a point in your career where you do appreciate looking back at things like that? Or are you not much for nostalgia?

I'm somebody who has been blessed with some good success. The way I look at that success now is through the work that I'm doing on behalf of our veterans, and the charitable efforts, and the foundation. The reward of having a good career is that I get to do good things for our defenders and the people that I care about.

I've had financial success. I've had creative and artistic success. I was blessed to start a theater company at an early age that has lasted for over 40 years and continues to do great work in the city of Chicago. That gave me my education as an actor. I was able to take that education and use it to go into the movie and television business and make some money and have this public platform

think we learned some valuable lessons from that, because you can see that there is a great respect for the men and women who serve our country now.

It was a bit tougher during the height of the Iraq War, if you recall. The media was printing story after story about how the war was failing. It was a tough time. Any positive stories of progress and success were overshadowed by things like Abu Ghraib and all the things that were going wrong in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was a very tough time for our service members over there. It felt to me a bit like what it must have felt like for our Vietnam veterans. I wanted to do something to make sure our military folks felt appreciated for what they were doing over there.

I tried to do my best to talk to the press about what I would see when I would go to the war zones at that time. I saw some great Americans trying to do their best to get through that as best they could and to get rid of a terrible dictator and try to help some people over there. It was a tough scene for a lot of them. Fifteen idiots from Abu Ghraib were dominating the news and, with the exception of a few positive news stories here and there, the other 150,000 who were serving honorably were being virtually ignored.

We don't want any of our service members to ever feel like their service wasn't worth it. That's what I feared so much during that period, because I'd seen that happen with our Vietnam veterans.

I had a terrible fear that our men and women would come home from Iraq and Afghanistan and think that nobody cared and nobody appreciated them. That they would think, “I got wounded for nothing. I lost my buddies for nothing.”

I want them to know that I appreciate what they do, that I recognize the sacrifices they and their families make, and I don't forget. I'm grateful that we have people like them who are willing to go out there and do the hard, dangerous work to keep us free and safe. Therefore, I hope that they feel like their sacrifices were worth it. We can never forget that freedom is not something we just automatically have in this life.

Freedom must be fought for and protected. I hope our defenders always remember that there are millions of Americans who value the freedom that they provide, we recognize where it comes from, and we don't take it for granted.

If I can do a little something to remind them of this and to inspire others to step up and give back to them, then that is a way that I can serve. And service to others is always a great healer.

“I always worry about how our veterans are going to be treated, no matter who the president is.... The pressure and strain on our military is gigantic.”

will make improvements, but the Veterans Administration is a pretty giant bureaucracy and a pretty big beast to get a handle on. There are a lot of good people who are trying, but it's a difficult beast.

I'm hopeful that the president will, as he has said, improve the lives of our veterans. I want to see them make improvements to the VA. I'll also say that it's always important to have solid nongovernment, nonprofit organizations out there serving the needs of the men and the women who serve.

as a recognizable actor to be able to talk about things that I feel are important—such as standing strong for the men and women who serve our country no matter who their commander in chief is.

The hard lesson that we learned from the Vietnam War is that we should never turn our backs on the people that serve our country, even if we don't agree with the war they're fighting. But that's what happened during Vietnam. It was a shameful period in our history. It was bad for our country. I

To find out more information about the Gary Sinise Foundation or to donate, visit: garysinisefoundation.org.



SCHWARZENEGGER: A LIFE WITHOUT LIMITS

A champion in bodybuilding, film, and politics, Arnold shares the life lessons that made him a success in every arena—and reflects on how those lessons prepared him for his most serious work, which still lies ahead of him.

RI MAGAZINE: You're currently trying to tackle some very big issues: gerrymandering and climate change. Your videos are everywhere, and you're obviously very passionate about this. What lesson from your past, maybe in bodybuilding, best prepared you for this crusade? Because as with bodybuilding or fitness, it's an uphill battle, progress is barely discernible, and for the average person, it's easy to get discouraged when thinking about the enormity of the task. There is at least that much in common with fitness.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER: I think there are a lot of similarities. When I think back to where we've come from, in fitness, with there not being very many gymnasiums, to where we ended up now—having a gymnasium in every hotel in the world and in every military base, every fire station and police station, at every university, every high school—we've come a very long way. So we know that it has been very successful, but if I would have thought that this could have happened from one year to the next, I would have been totally wrong. But I did not think that way. I thought that it's gonna be an uphill battle, and all we have to do is keep plugging away and have as many people as possible help me, and that's how we're going to end up successful in the fitness crusade.

At the Arnold Classic [held every year in Columbus, OH, and around the world; learn more at arnoldsportsfestival.com], we now have 78 different sports, with 20,000 athletes participating and 250,000 spectators. It didn't start that way. At first, it was a bodybuilding competition. The same will happen with the environmental movement, and the same will happen with the anti-gerrymandering movement. It will take time, and it will take a lot of help from a lot of people. I've learned to be patient, and I've learned to stay focused and keep on message, so that we don't deviate from that but instead keep talking about gerrymandering and the environment. When we talk about gerrymandering, we talk about what damage it's causing right now and how we have to get rid of it, how politicians made it their business to pull the wool over our eyes and make us believe everything is OK.

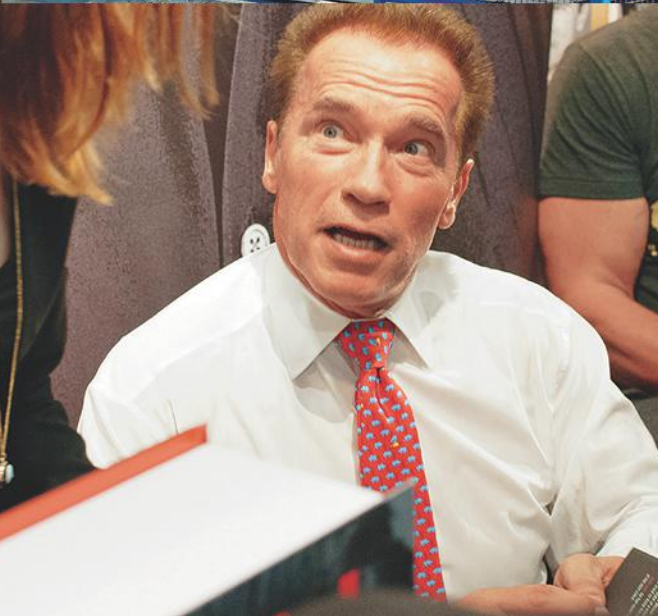
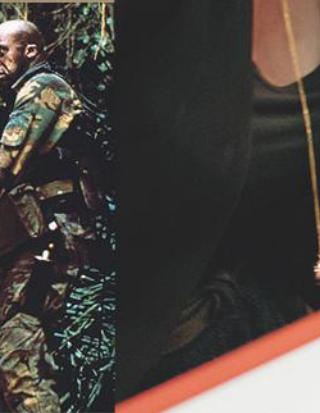
You're a Republican and an environmentalist, and there are very few left who would call themselves both. Is it disheartening for you to see your party take scientific consensus and throw it out the window?

There are two answers. The first is that Republicans are very interested in a clean environment. Republicans are as concerned as Democrats about pollution, but the problem is that the communication of a lot of the environmentalists is so wrong and so off—because they talk about global warming and climate change, and they talk about stuff that is going to happen in 20, 30, or 100 years from now.

Even though it is all true—those things will happen—most people are more concerned today about “What is the job that I can get today?” or “How can I get health care today?” or “How can I go and provide for my family today?” It's all about today. So when an environmentalist starts threatening people and saying, “If you don't go and drive an electric car” and “If you don't change over to solar, then the seas will rise six feet, and we're going to have horrible heat and storms,” people say, “What the hell is he talking about? I'm worried about today,” and then brush it aside. So it doesn't mean that they're gonna be invested in pollution, but they're not interested at all in talking about anything that is happening 20 or 30 years from now. That is a miscommunication on environmentalists' part.

My idea for this is that we need to go and communicate the right way, which is, “What is happening today? Today we have a tremendous amount of pollution,





Clockwise from top left: Arnold's boot and palm prints on Hollywood Boulevard; with George H.W. Bush while serving as the chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness; the outdoor workout pen on Muscle Beach, which Arnold and his contemporaries made famous; signing copies of his memoir, *Total Recall*, at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2012; in a scene from 1987's *Predator*, which has completely held up more than 30 years later; having fun on the beach at the Cannes Film Festival in 2017. You can learn more about his charity work at afterschoolallstars.org.

SCHWARZENEGGER



and today 19,000 people will die because of pollution. Today. And tomorrow, again, 19,000. And the next day, 19,000.” When you can get it out that 9 million people die every year because of pollution, people will recognize the fact that there is no Republican air or Democratic air. We all breathe the same air. There’s no Republican water or Democratic water. We all drink the same water, so therefore, we all have to protect our environment. We have to protect what we have and our future and get rid of the pollution.

Now, it is true that today, the Republican Party, in general, has gone in a different direction. That means that certain principles that the Republican Party used to stand for all of a sudden get thrown out the window by some of the people. Not all of them, but some of the people.

If you think about the party of Abraham Lincoln, this is the party that ended slavery. The Republican Party that a huge majority voted for giving those slaves citizenship in America.

This very same Republican Party has given those slaves that became citizens voting rights. That is the party that I belong to. I belong to the party of Roosevelt that was protecting a huge amount of natural resources and land and created all these huge national parks in order to have a great, clean environment.

I belong to the party that is of President Nixon, that created the Environmental Protection Agency. I belong to the party of President Nixon that wanted to have universal health care, and all the past Democrats derailed him. Specifically, Teddy Kennedy derailed him so that a Republican



Opposite page: At the height of his bodybuilding career. Left: With a wounded vet while serving as governor. Above: The Schwarzenegger Museum in his hometown of Thal, Austria.

four hours a day, it doesn’t stress you out. If you’re passionate about writing, and you write books, articles, and cover stories and all this stuff, I don’t think it stresses you out because you’re writing a book. It maybe stresses you out when the publisher calls and says, “Hey, you’re five months behind schedule,” then you maybe get a little bit stressed out, but the writing itself doesn’t stress you out. So I think if you’re passionate about something, it brings you great

that’s a huge part of what we do with the Arnold Classic. I also want the people to be passionate about giving something back to their community. So I don’t really ever see that it is stressful, what I’m doing.

You’re on social media a lot. Do you ever find it to be a distraction that takes away from what you’re trying to accomplish? So many people get sucked into it, especially young people. They spend so many hours on their phone every day. Do you make a conscious effort to limit social media or random Web browsing?

I think there are two categories here. One of them is: Because I did not grow up with a telephone in our house, and I did not grow up with a television in our house, I was always very content and happy without any of that. So, therefore, today, I very rarely watch a television show. I watch the news, and then I turn it off. When something is on spectacularly, if it’s the Academy Awards or the Super Bowl, of course you watch it, but in general I don’t watch it.

So I’m not obsessed with it. I might come home from the gym, and I read a script from 9 in the morning to noon. My iPad is off. I don’t hear if anyone calls or anything like that. I read my messages and all that stuff, but there are times of the day when I just turn it off. When I drive around in New York, I find what I see through the window of the car so much more interesting than anything that I can find on an iPhone or iPad. I want to experience what is going on live. I want when I go to the

“There is no Republican water or Democratic water.
We all drink the same water.
We all have to protect the environment.”

wouldn’t have health care reform. This is the Republican Party that can win in the future.

In addition to your civic work, you’re still making movies. Do you ever get stressed out by the workload, and if so, how do you deal with it?

I’d say if you’re passionate about something, it doesn’t really stress you out. You know what I’m saying? If you’re passionate about exercising, and you work out three,

joy. The things that I do always bring me great joy, because I love fighting for a good political system and to get rid of gerrymandering. I love fighting for a clean environment, because I believe in it.

I love fighting for people being healthy and fit, because I know how good it feels to get up in the morning and to jump on your bike, to go bicycle riding and to work out in the gym and to be full of energy because you’ve done something great. It feels great, and I want everyone to feel that great, and

SCHWARZENEGGER





Opposite page: At the premiere of *Maggie*. Left: With the mayor of Paris before the Climate Summit.

show, the Arnold Classic—I don't want to go and look at the iPad. I want to see what is onstage.

The second point of it is: Unlike some people who attack the media relentlessly because they're not happy with what's going on—I'm different about that. I compliment the media, and, at the same time, I know what their shortcomings are and what their shortfalls are. Therefore, I find it's extremely important to use social media to get my point across of the things that I want to say or that I want to present to the people. We are very active on social media during the Arnold Classic weekend. This year, we had 468.5 million impressions.

So imagine, with all the channels together in the morning, it's approximately 11.5 million people watching news. In the evening, it's 12.5 million, and with a big sports program, it can get to 20 or

On the other hand, I'm very disciplined and can turn it off and still enjoy the real action out there rather than just getting everything through the phone. Kids, they're starting to do everything through social media.

They don't even talk to each other anymore when you sit at the table. So I think that is a big, big mistake, and I think the parents should watch that and make sure there is some discipline in the house and say, "When you sit down at this dinner table, we talk. We don't talk through the iPhone. We talk. For this hour, we're sitting together for dinner. We talk, and we hang out together." Those are rules I think parents should have. We did that, Maria and I, and have been very successful with that, and it helps us.

What is the unifying factor of your success? You've won in every arena: in body-

"You've got to work your ass off. Don't ever think anything comes easy. Everything is a struggle, everything takes 24 hours a day."

30 million. But we in the Arnold Classic have had 468.5 million impressions! That's how many people were reminded there's a sports festival, because we made sure that each one of our 78 sports is tweeting out, is Snapchatting out, is sending out information talking about the Arnold Classic and reminding people to stay healthy and fit. So that is the power of social media, and so therefore, that side of social media I hail, and I will go all out for it, and I can tell a really good story.

building, movies, politics. But what one thing did you apply to those?

First of all, find your passion, because it's not going to help you if someone says, "You would make a great salesman," but you really have no interest in selling. If you're not passionate about it, then you can never be successful in it. You have to find your passion.

There was a woman at the Arnold Classic, and she crushed a watermelon between her legs. As I'm walking away, the thing

that came to mind was not "Oh, she's crazy," but I said to myself, "She found what she could shine in." As crazy as it may be, it makes no difference, because she was on the floor and bringing tremendous entertainment.

There was a huge amount of people standing around her because she was squeezing one watermelon after the next between her legs, which none of us can do—and crushing it! And making people say, "Wow! Look at the power in her legs!" And she was smiling, and she was full of joy. That's what it's all about. She found what she is good at, and she is using it to its fullest.

It's just a little example, but it reinforces what I said. You have to find what you're passionate about. I was very fortunate to always find what I was passionate about. And you know it was the weightlifting and bodybuilding, when I was 14 years old, or later on with entertainment, when I fell totally in love with being in front of the camera and performing. Then, later on, I did not know that eventually I would turn into this passionate person about giving something back to my country.

But I developed and found my passion. I remember that I felt so good to be working with the Special Olympics. I remember in 1977 training those guys and making them feel really happy about lifting weights. When I went home at night, I just felt happier than when I had done *Stay Hungry* or *Pumping Iron* or anything. So I found another passion of mine, giving back. I went all out on that and eventually got to the point where I wanted to run for governor, to really work full time for 40 million people here in California.

So find your passion, No. 1. Then No 2: You've got to work your ass off. Don't ever think anything comes easy. Everything is a struggle, everything takes 24 hours a day. Concentrate on it, be passionate about it, work your ass off. Work, work, work—that's the way you can do it.

The other thing is that there will be a lot of people in your life who will be saying, "You will never make it" or "This is stupid, what you're doing here." Pay no attention to that. You can take their advice, weigh it, but that should not be your final answer. Always go with your passion. Always go with your instincts.

My instincts told me that I can make it. I believed in myself, and so therefore I did not listen to the naysayers.

Follow Arnold on Twitter: @Schwarzenegger.



The **POST-HOLIDAY CLEANUP**

Supercharge your body in the new year with

these low-calorie, nutrient-dense recipes.

ROSEMARY & GARLIC PORK LOIN

Serves 4

YOU'LL NEED

3 garlic cloves
2 tbs grape-seed oil
2 tbs extra-virgin olive oil
2 sprigs rosemary, picked and chopped
1 cup Dijon mustard
1 tbs fennel seeds, roughly chopped
1 tbs ground cumin
1 tbs kosher salt
1½ lbs pork loin

MAKE IT

- 1) In a food processor, add garlic, grape-seed oil, extra-virgin olive oil, rosemary, Dijon mustard, fennel seeds, cumin, and salt and puree.
- 2) Coat pork loin with mustard-and-herb mixture.
- 3) Place pork loin in a 400°F oven for 30 minutes.
- 4) Lower the oven temperature to 325°F and cook for another 45 minutes. Internal temperature should be 135°F.
- 5) Allow to rest for approximately 15 minutes prior to serving.

THE MACROS PER SERVING

308
CALORIES

30g
PROTEIN

20g
FAT

0g
CARBS



CURRY GRILLED CAULIFLOWER

Serves 2

YOU'LL NEED

*1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp cumin
3 tsp grape-seed oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 head cauliflower, cut into
medium steaks
Salt and pepper, to taste*

MAKE IT

- 1) In a large mixing bowl, add curry powder, cumin, grape-seed oil, and garlic and stir together.
- 2) Add cauliflower to marinade. Cover and let stand for about 24 hours.
- 3) Season cauliflower with salt and pepper and place on a medium-hot grill. Cook for approximately 8 minutes on each side, or until cauliflower is cooked through.

THE MACROS PER SERVING

254
CALORIES
6g
PROTEIN
21g
FAT
15g
CARBS

BERRY, BANANA & SPINACH SMOOTHIE

Serves 2

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 cup orange juice*
- 1 cup frozen blueberries*
- 1 cup frozen strawberries*
- 1 cup frozen raspberries*
- 1 banana*
- 2 cups loosely packed spinach*
- Ice, as needed*

MAKE IT

- 1) In a blender, add orange juice, fruit, and spinach. Blend on medium-high speed until all the spinach is blended and there are no visible green specks.
- 2) Add ice cubes, as needed, for an icier drink.

THE MACROS PER SERVING

222 CALORIES	16g PROTEIN
1g FAT	40g CARBS



OPENER, THIS SPREAD, AND NEXT SPREAD: SHUTTERSTOCK

CARROT BEET JUICE

Serves 2

YOU'LL NEED

3 carrots, peeled

1 apple, peeled

3 ribs celery

1 cup kale

1 cucumber, peeled

1 red beet, peeled

MAKE IT

1) In a juicer or blender, add all ingredients.

2) If you use a juicer, once all vegetables are juiced, simply serve.

3) If you use a blender, add a small amount of water before blending, then pass the juice through a fine-mesh strainer prior to serving.

THE MACROS PER SERVING

159

CALORIES

5g

PROTEIN

1g

FAT

36g

CARBS





RED RICE & BEANS

Serves 5

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 *tblsp* olive oil
- 2 *garlic* cloves, minced
- 1 *large* red onion, diced
- 1 *stalk* celery, diced
- 1 *green* bell pepper, diced small
- 1 *red* bell pepper, diced small
- 2 (16 oz) *cans* red kidney beans
- 1 *tsp* onion powder
- 1 *tsp* salt
- ¼ *tsp* black pepper
- 1 *tblsp* hot sauce
- 2½ *cups* chicken stock
- 1 *cup* white rice
- 1 *tblsp* butter
- 1 *tblsp* minced fresh cilantro leaves

MAKE IT

- 1) Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in a large saucepan. Sauté garlic, onion, celery, and bell peppers until tender. Stir in beans, onion powder, salt, pepper, and hot sauce. Reduce heat to low and let mixture simmer slowly while you cook the rice.
- 2) Bring chicken stock to a boil in a medium pot; stir in rice and butter. Return to a boil, reduce heat to low, cover, and cook for 20 minutes without removing the lid. Remove from heat and let stand for 5 minutes.
- 3) Fold rice and beans gently together and transfer to a serving dish. Serve garnished with cilantro.

THE MACROS PER SERVING

361
CALORIES

14g
PROTEIN

6g
FAT

63g
CARBS

LIVING LEGEND: THE INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY OF WOODY WILLIAMS

His heroism in World War II earned him the Medal of Honor, but that was just the beginning of his story. At home, he faced a brand-new battle. Here's how he won both.





In the two decades

after Woody Williams came home from the war, he was the man everyone expected him to be. He was productive and respected at work. He was loved by his wife and children. Day after day, he went about his business, betraying no hint of the emotional burdens and mental scarring he'd endured on the front lines of one of World War II's bloodiest battles.

Williams, now 95 years old and the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima, as well as the last surviving Marine to have won the honor in World War II, is at ease speaking candidly about his experiences. But for 17 years after the war ended, Williams didn't share much about his time overseas. Nor could he forgive himself for the many lives he took and the manner in which he took them—at close range with a flamethrower.

"I had a tremendous amount of difficulty because I couldn't forgive myself for having to take so many lives in such a horrible, horrible way," Williams says today, speaking from his home in West Virginia, where he lives alone. (He lost Ruby, his wife of 63 years, to a heart attack in 2007.) "A person's life taken by flame is so, so horrible. There is an odor that emanates from that that is like



“We lost so many Marines attempting to approach those pillboxes.... That’s when he asked me if I could use a flamethrower.”

no other odor on earth. And sometimes, in the years after, there would be something, an odor from somewhere, that would bring that back to me.”

From 1945 to 1962, Williams pushed the feeling away with gallons of beer at his local VFW. “It is just what you did,” Williams says. “And I kept fighting the demons. I finally went to God to see if I could find some release and some forgiveness for what I had to do. And I found it.”

For today's veterans and civilians alike,

it is instructive to hear Williams speak about his battlefield experiences and the difficulties he faced afterward. The anxiety, remorse, and flashbacks he dealt with after the war were not unlike the many symptoms associated with battle-induced post-traumatic stress disorder, though Williams was never diagnosed with PTSD, because the term didn't exist at the time.

We often associate the mental trauma of war with veterans of Vietnam and all subsequent wars. This isn't so when we think

of the soldiers and Marines of the Greatest Generation, if only because so few men of that time spoke publicly about the true nature of what they did and what they saw, much less how it made them feel. Gender roles through the 1950s were rigid and, in regard to expressing emotions, very simple.

“I can remember my dad telling me, ‘Boys don't cry. Man up and don't do that. Women do that,’” Williams says. “We may have cried, but we didn't do it openly.”

Williams was raised in the tiny community of Quiet Dell in Marion County, WV. He was taught in a one-room school, and his parents ran a local dairy. He was 17 years old when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941, working in the Civilian Conservation Corps, a New Deal work program that was dissolved soon after the U.S. entered the fray of World War II.

He tried to join the Marine Corps right



Clockwise from opposite page: Gary Sinise honors Williams at the National WWII Museum; Williams presents Robert with a signed photo and other memorabilia at the opening of Robert Irvine's Public House in Las Vegas; President Truman presents Williams with the Medal of Honor; Marines after taking Iwo Jima; Williams and his flamethrower.

after the attack, but his mother refused to sign the papers to let him in underage. When he was 18, he attempted to join on his own, but since he was only 5'6", the recruiters rejected him; he was two inches shy of the minimum height requirement. By May 1943, however, the strain on the military was significant enough to ease those standards, and Williams became a Marine.

By December of that same year, Williams was sent to Bougainville in the South Pacific, arriving shortly after Allied forces took the island back from the Japanese. He then joined the 3rd Marine Division in Guadalcanal, the site of the first Allied victory, and trained there until June 1944, when he saw his first combat in Guam. He stayed stationed there after the victory until February 1945, when he was sent to Iwo Jima.

That infamous battle lasted more than

a month, from Feb. 19 to March 26. It was a long slog for the Allies, owing mostly to firmly entrenched Japanese forces; the battlefield was littered with reinforced concrete pillboxes, which were designed with tiny slits to allow the enemy to shoot in all directions. But those slits were so small they barely qualified as a weakness. The Japanese position was impassable for Allied tanks, never mind infantry on foot.

"We lost so many Marines attempting to approach those pillboxes," Williams says. "Our commanding officer lost most of his officers. We had lost our platoon leaders. We had lost our squad leaders. We had people doing jobs that they were never trained to do, because you lose so many people and somebody takes up the slack."

On the morning of Feb. 23, Williams' commanding officer called a meeting of surviving officers.

"I wasn't supposed to attend that meeting," Williams says. "I was a corporal, and corporals do not attend meetings of that nature."

But for some reason, Williams' buck sergeant told him to go, and he complied. The Marines gathered in the center of a bomb crater—the high walls around them provided good cover—where the CO admitted he was out of ideas.

"What are we gonna do?" Williams recalls him saying. "Every time we advance, they beat us back.' That's when he asked me if I could use a flamethrower to get rid of some of those pillboxes."

Williams agreed, and over the course of the next four hours, with a flamethrower tank strapped to his back, he crawled on his belly toward the pillboxes, with four Marines providing cover fire. When Williams got close enough to the enemy position, he discharged his flamethrower to kill the soldiers inside.

It was an effective strategy, but Williams became a big, slow target, one whose position was telegraphed every time he fired his weapon, which billowed telltale black smoke to the entire battlefield.

"When you fire a flamethrower, you give off an awful lot of black smoke, because you're burning diesel fuel and gasoline," Williams says. "Other Marines trained me to do this, otherwise I wouldn't have done it; when you fire, you move from that particular position, because that's where they're going to start dropping the mortars."

Though Williams says he crawled on his belly most of that afternoon, he did have to stand up a few times. One of those is mentioned in his Medal of Honor citation. It was when Williams saw a small amount of smoke emanating from the top of one of the pillboxes.

Realizing it was a vent, he crawled in close to the box, stood up, and climbed on top of it.

"I figured there was an opening up there, and a good way to kill the people inside was to shoot the flame down through that hole,"

Williams says. “And that’s what I did.”

When Williams landed on Iwo Jima, there were six men under his command. “Flamethrower demolition guys,” he explains. “Privates and PFCs under my patrol. I was their man. And my job was not to take their place but to keep them in supplies and make sure that the flamethrowers are ready to go. Make sure that the explosives are ready to go. That they’ve got everything they need, because they were my group. By the 23rd, I didn’t have any left. They were all gone. Wounded or killed, I never did know. I never got a report.”

With no other Marines trained to use a flamethrower, Williams’ mission continued as a solo effort under cover fire; each time his flamethrower ran out—the four-and-a-half-gallon fuel tank was good for just 72 seconds of sustained burn—he retreated behind his own line to get a new one and to set demolition charges to clear a path for the tanks. At least that’s what his citation says. Williams says he can’t remember how he obtained the new flamethrowers, nor how long the process took.

“I have talked to psychologists about why I can’t remember going back to get five more flamethrowers,” Williams says. “I used six flamethrowers that day, I’m told...and for four hours, they tell me. I could not have imagined how long, because there’s no time frame, nothing to measure by. Night and day run together. You don’t know what day it is, and you don’t care what day it is.”

He’s also hazy on how many enemy combatants he killed, because, he says, “you never knew how many Japanese were in a pillbox. Sometimes it would be a great number. Sometimes it would be a few. One report that I saw, by the witness of another Marine, said there were 17 Japanese in one of them. I couldn’t confirm it. And I’m not particularly interested in knowing how many.”

Frequently, Williams made his way to the rear of the pillbox to clear it out. On one occasion, an enemy infantryman charged at him with a bayonet, and Williams killed him with his flamethrower.

While Williams cleared the way for tanks that day, Marines elsewhere on the island raised the American flag atop Mount Suribachi, a moment immortalized in monuments and photos. He continued to fight through the end of the battle, becoming wounded on March 6 and earning the Purple Heart.

The war ended on Sept. 2 of that year. In a White House ceremony on Oct. 5, President Harry Truman pinned the Medal of Honor on Williams’ chest. By rights, it should have been a crowning achievement, but Williams’ inner battle was just beginning.



Shortly after the war ended, he lost his older brother Gerald, who had seen extensive combat in the Battle of the Bulge and was “shot up bad,” according to Williams. “They kept him in a mental hospital until March after the war was over, because they didn’t think he was capable of coming home and taking care of himself. He cracked up. Went all to pieces. He just gave up on life. He wanted to die, and he did, not too many years later.”

In addition to his brother Gerald, Williams had another older brother, Lloyd, who served but thankfully didn’t see combat as part of a rear supply chain in Germany.

Williams stopped suppressing his emotions with alcohol in 1962. That’s when he found God through his wife’s Methodist church. Until that point, he hadn’t been a churchgoing man, but the religious experience changed him forever. He quit smoking, drinking, and even swearing, committing himself to God and his family. Later, he took on a new career, that of veterans counselor, a job he held down for 33 years.

“It was one of the most rewarding jobs that anybody could possibly have,” Williams says.

The Medal of Honor, he adds, gave him extra incentive to live the fullest life possible and be the best version of himself he could be.

“I no longer just represented me,” he explains. “I now represented the Marines who protected me, Marines who sacrificed their lives doing that. If I had written that recommendation for the Medal of Honor—which I didn’t, my commanding officer did—I would have never used the word ‘alone.’ I sort of resent that word in my citation. It says, ‘He went forward alone.’ That’s not correct. Four Marines were protecting

At 95 years old, Williams still travels frequently for his Medal of Honor foundation and is mentally as sharp as a tack. Above: Williams tosses the coin before a college football game; he also performed the coin toss before Super Bowl LII.

me, and two of them were killed while they did it. So I have said from the very beginning that it does not belong to me. It belongs to them.”

When asked if he could have better dealt with the trauma if men at that time weren’t tacitly forbidden from talking about their feelings, Williams replies succinctly, “Oh, my, yes.”

Basic resources for veterans, he adds, were scarce.

“When I think back to the World War I veterans who came home shell-shocked, they had nowhere to go,” Williams says. “There was no VA [the U.S. Office of Veterans Affairs]. The VA wasn’t created until 1932. After World War II, when we came home, we had no psychiatrists. We had no social workers. I lived in Fairmont, WV, and the only VA medical hospital in the state was 220 miles away. I couldn’t have traveled 220 miles for treatment.

“I’ve never seen a record, and I’m not sure there is one, of how many suicides we had after World War II. But those individuals had no place to go. No one to talk to and no hope.”

Williams says that the seemingly endless military conflicts of today underscore the need to unify in support of the troops. It has been established that 22 veterans commit suicide every day. It is a galling statistic and one of particular personal resonance for Williams.

“We take it for granted that it’s just



another job,” Williams says. “It is not another job. I don’t go out every day and risk my life in any way. They do it without question, with everyone being a volunteer. We have to believe in what they’re doing. There are a great number of people in the country who are not quite sure that we should be involved in some of the combat situations that we’re in. I guess that’s pretty typical. But as a result of that, we lose our perspective about the sacrifices that are being made.

“In the Marine Corps in World War II, we had a word that we would greet each other with. If somebody would do something outstanding, we’d say, ‘Gung ho!’ Today I guess it’s ‘Oorah!’ In my day it really meant ‘together,’ ‘We are together.’

“If America doesn’t come back together, we’re gonna lose it.”

“We lose our perspective about the sacrifices that are being made.... If America doesn’t come back together, we’re gonna lose it.”

GOLD STAR MEMORIAL

In 2010, Williams founded the Hershel Woody Williams Congressional Medal of Honor Education Foundation Inc. It is a charitable 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization that pursues specific endeavors and goals through the vision of Medal of Honor recipient Hershel “Woody” Williams. The foundation encourages, with the assistance of the American public and community leaders, establishing permanent Gold Star Families Memorial Monuments in commu-

nities throughout the country and provides scholarships to eligible Gold Star children. (A Gold Star family is one that has lost a service member in combat.) Its purpose is to honor Gold Star families, relatives, and children who have sacrificed a loved one in the service of their country.

The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument preserves the memory of the fallen and serves as a stark reminder that freedom is not free. The stunning black granite monument features two sides. One bears the words: “Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, a Tribute to Gold Star Mothers, Fathers, and Relatives Who Have Sacrificed a Loved One for Our Freedom.” The other side tells a story through the four granite panels: Homeland, Family, Patriot, and Sacrifice. The scenes on each panel are a reflection of each community’s Gold Star families and their fallen heroes. At the center of this tribute is the most distinct feature of the monument, a cutout that represents the loved one who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom.

To date, 26 monuments have been completed, and 51 are in progress. To help fund the work of Williams’ foundation, visit hwwwmohf.org.

FRIENDSHIP WITH ROBERT

Williams accompanied Robert on his helicopter ride as he arrived at the grand opening of Robert Irvine’s Public House at the Tropicana in Las Vegas in July 2017. Williams also gave a speech introducing Robert and thanking him for his dedication to the USO and for the charitable assistance of the Robert Irvine Foundation. The two had previously kindled their friendship at a benefit for the troops where Robert had cooked and

made a guest appearance.

Williams was welcomed with a rousing speech by Tropicana GM Aaron Rosenthal, who detailed the actions that earned Williams the Medal of Honor. When Williams took the microphone, he said simply, “Today isn’t about me. It’s about Robert and the incredible things he’s done for veterans.”

After the dedication speeches at Public House were over and Williams could get Robert away from the crowd, he presented

the chef with gifts—an autographed copy of the famous photo of the flag raising at Iwo Jima, a book about the Medal of Honor, and a medal naming Robert an honorary board member of Williams’ foundation.

Robert was touched by the gifts and humbled by Williams’ words.

“I know the restaurant has my name on the front, so obviously people are going to get up and talk about you,” Robert said. “Of course you’re going to be flattered. Of course people are going to present your best qualities and accomplishments. But when they come from a man like Williams—a true legend, a true hero, who did such incredibly brave things for this country...well, when he started listing my accomplishments as if they were of equal value, it was too much for me. I know that nothing can ever compare to what he did. But that’s how humble he is. That’s how gracious he is. They just don’t make them like him anymore.”

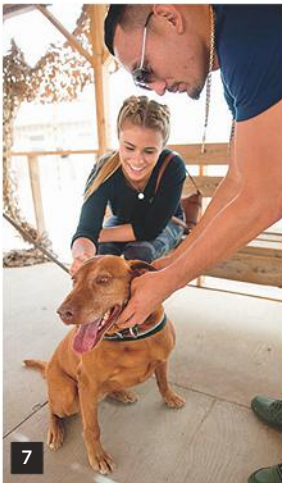
CITATION

Williams’ official citation for the Medal of Honor reads as follows:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as demolition sergeant serving with the 21st Marines, 3rd Marine Division, in action against enemy Japanese forces on Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands, 23 February 1945. Quick to volunteer his services when our tanks were maneuvering vainly to open a lane for the infantry through the network of reinforced concrete pillboxes, buried mines, and black volcanic sands, Cpl. Williams daringly went forward alone to attempt the reduction of devastating machinegun fire from the unyielding positions. Covered only by 4 riflemen, he fought desperately for 4 hours under terrific enemy small-arms fire and repeatedly returned to his own lines to prepare demolition charges and obtain serviced flamethrowers, struggling back, frequently to the rear of hostile emplacements, to wipe out 1 position after another. On 1 occasion, he daringly mounted a pillbox to insert the nozzle of his flamethrower through the air vent, killing the occupants and silencing the gun; on another he grimly charged enemy riflemen who attempted to stop him with bayonets and destroyed them with a burst of flame from his weapon. His unyielding determination and extraordinary heroism in the face of ruthless enemy resistance were directly instrumental in neutralizing one of the most fanatically defended Japanese strong points encountered by his regiment and aided vitally in enabling his company to reach its objective. Cpl. Williams’ aggressive fighting spirit and valiant devotion to duty throughout this fiercely contested action sustain and enhance the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Robert is a fixture on USO tours, and with his wife, Gail, at his side, he has traveled the globe with a host of other celebrities to entertain our troops. Here is some of the action from the past year.



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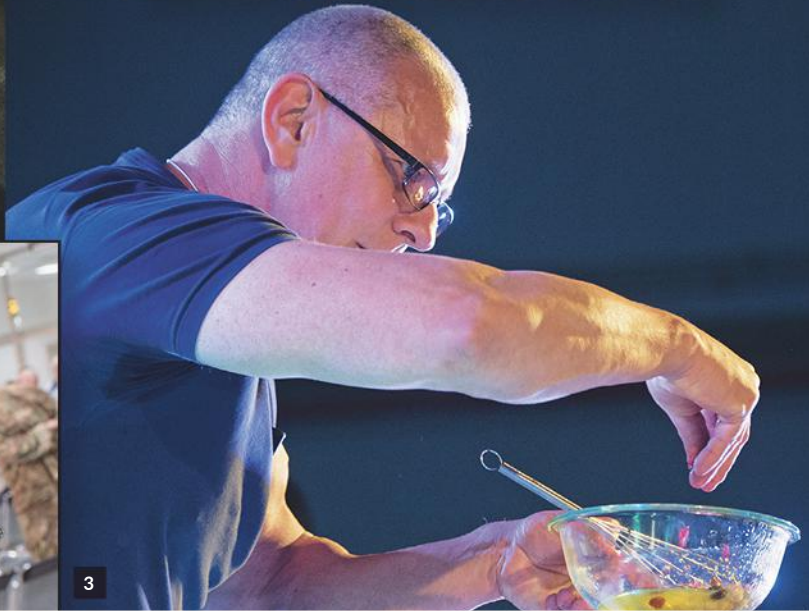


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1) Robert enjoys the view from a helicopter above Forward Operating Base Fenty in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. 2) Robert, Jon Stewart, and UFC fighter Paige VanZant chat with a crowd at Yokota Air Base, Japan. 3) Robert puts on a cooking clinic in Afghanistan. 4) Jon Stewart casually works the GI crowd. 5) Robert helps Gail get ready for flight. 6) WWE's "the Miz" conducts a pushup contest between Robert and a Marine. 7) VanZant and fellow UFC fighter Max Holloway meet a furry friend.



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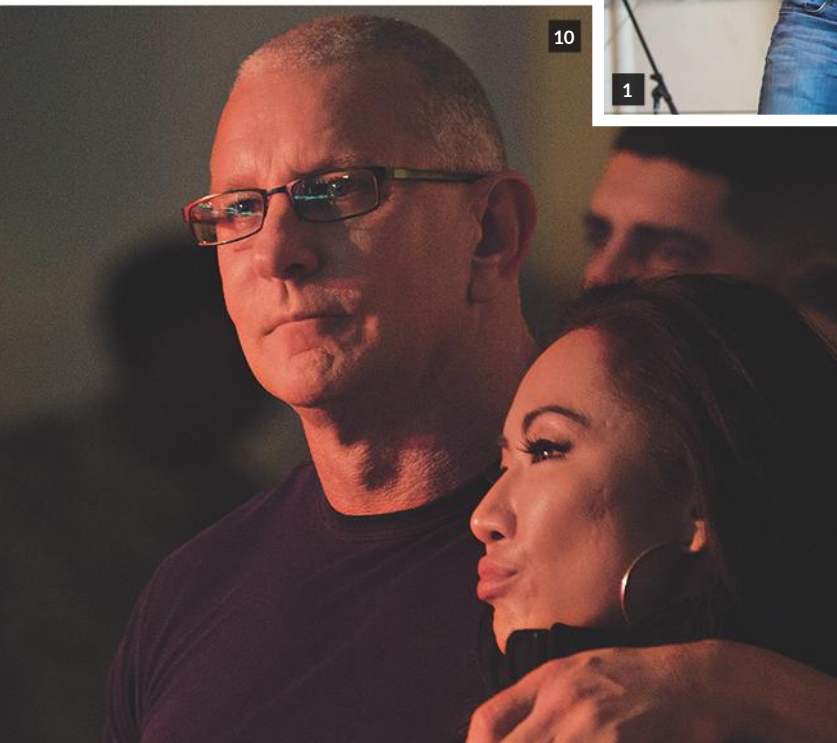


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PHOTOS BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE/PUBLIC DOMAIN



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1) Robert and Gail take on Adam Devine in a flex-off. 2) Robert greets members of the 374th Medical Support Squadron. 3) Sharing a moment with Jon Stewart onstage. 4) Chatting with GIs in the mess hall. 5) Gail puts Devine in a submission hold. 6) NBA legend Rip Hamilton greets a pair of GIs. 7) Robert takes in the scene from the back of a Chinook helicopter. 8) Having a forkload of fun. 9) Arriving in Jalalabad with the Miz and Devine. 10) Robert and Gail take a moment to reflect. It was their second consecutive Christmas spent in the Middle East war zone.



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TRIPLE THREAT

His show *Diners, Drive-ins and Dives* runs in a never-ending marathon, he has restaurants around the world, and he even has a convention named after him. How Guy Fieri keeps it all in perspective.

RI MAGAZINE: First off, congratulations on having your very own cult. FieriCon is amazing. How does it feel to have a phenomenon like that built around your personality?

GUY FIERI: *[Laughs]* You know, my son just asked me if I ever thought I would be famous. He's 12. I said, "No. That's not what I ever went out to do. I just went out to be a good person and be a good member of society and be a good dad." I always wanted to be a great dad like my dad is, and I wanted to be successful in whatever I chose to do. My goals are very simple and very, I don't know, grounded.

I haven't moved from that, and so what happens with all of this craziness—all the emojis and FieriCon and people selling bathroom curtains with my face on them and stuff—I mean, all I do is just smile and say, "As long as I'm making somebody happy and I'm entertaining somebody, and they're having fun and they feel good about it, then I'm doing something right."

I'm adding to it, visiting kids in the hospital, and the fact that that brightens somebody's day and takes their mind off what they're going through, you can't be any more excited than that. You can't be any more appreciative of your opportunity.





You're not affiliated with FieriCon?

No. I hope to make it one day. I've heard a lot about it, and I've had a lot of people send me pictures of it and all that kind of stuff. I was just having a laugh about it. I said, "What happens if I show up to it and just act like I'm one of the greatest impersonators?"

That video would get around.

Could you imagine? Tell them they better watch out. They'll never know.

Food Network airs an incredible amount of *Diners, Drive-ins and Dives*. It's like you have your own television network on most nights. What are your thoughts about how much they air that show?

Well, as long as people aren't getting sick of it, I'm fine with whatever they choose to do. The show brings a lot of happiness to a lot of people. I get letters and emails all the time, and that's the beauty of it. This isn't about me anymore. What it does for the mom-and-pop restaurants is amazing. The restaurant climate is so difficult. It's so difficult to make money. Prices of everything are going up. You name it, there's another price hike on something. So these mom-and-pop restaurants don't have money to market themselves or advertise. When they get a chance to be featured on the Food Network, be it *Triple D* or *Restaurant: Impossible* with Robert, that has a huge impact.

So as much as people will watch it, and it helps people, I'll do it until that stops.



floor." I'm like, "Oh, my God! I'm going to be sitting here eating potato chips and corn nuts as my meal tonight."

It was funny, because that was the first time it ever really struck me. So I feel the pain, brother. I feel bad. I've heard the stories, like, "My husband made me get up in the middle of the night and drive to the 24-hour supermarket because he wanted to make those Asian noodles you ate at some place," or, "We went and bought a smoker barbecue 300 miles from our house because we had to make the smoked

cook everything off the radar, but be willing to take chances. Be willing to try new stuff."

I tell people this all the time with their kids. Don't sit there and build your kids up to it with, "OK, now listen. We're going to make something different tonight, and if you don't like it, well, we can order a pizza if you don't like it." Bullshit!

I remember the first time I fed my little guy Ryder—and he must have been 8 or 9 at the time—I fed him curry. I told my wife before everybody sat down to dinner, "Don't say a thing about this. Don't say a word about what he's getting ready to eat. Just let him go." He ate it, and now this kid's the biggest curry fan in the world. We had curry last night.

We've got to eat without prejudice. We've got to listen to music without prejudice. We've got to listen to stories without prejudice. We've got to cook without prejudice. Stand outside of your comfort zone a little bit, take some chances, and experiment a little bit. I think that people get so nervous and so tight that they cook only their same traditional dishes, and that kind of puts them into that position where they keep playing the same record.

That's the advice that I've followed, and I think it served me really well. It's like in *Triple D*. I have to have so much insight and awareness of so many different types of food, and I think that that's one of the reasons that I've been able to do that is because I've never cooked with any regulation.

Shane Torres is a comedian who went on *Conan* and offered this defense of you against anyone who would tease your look.

"The show brings a lot of happiness to a lot of people.... This isn't about me anymore. What it does for the mom-and-pop restaurants is amazing."

Do you ever come across it late at night and get hungry? Because that's what happens to most people. It's dangerous.

Years ago I didn't understand that. Then maybe three or four years into doing it, I flew into Salt Lake City late one night, and I was waiting for my film crew to show up. I was sitting in the bar at the hotel, and they had it on, and I'm sitting there and I'm going, "Oh, I remember that place. Oh, boy. Oh, God, that was good." Finally I said to the bartender, "Hey, you guys serving food?" He said, "No." I'm like, "Is there anybody around here serving food?" He said, "No. There's a vending machine on the second

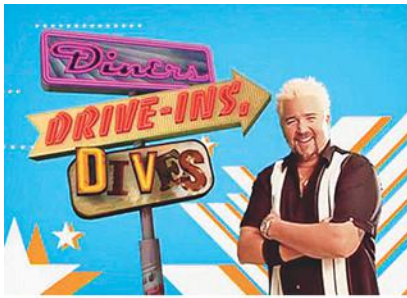
brisket you made."

The beauty of the show is that it's all-American. It's who we are. It's the melting pot. Food's a common denominator of everybody. You might not like the same music, you might not like the same sports, you might not like the same politics, but you all love food.

What's the best piece of cooking advice you've ever got, and who gave it to you?

I think that the best advice that I ever got was from my dad. My dad's not a chef, but he's a really good cook. He said, "Don't be scared. Don't make everything crazy, don't

PREVIOUS SPREAD AND THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES



There's enormous staying power in the simple things. The joy Fieri takes in learning how greasy spoon chefs ply their trade has been a megahit for Food Network. Eleven years after its debut and 260 episodes into its run, *Triple D* is still going strong. Left: Robert appears on *Guy's Grocery Games*.

Then he lists every philanthropic endeavor that you've ever been involved in, and it's a staggering amount of stuff. It's also a hilarious bit. Do you know this guy?

Well, let me first give a big shout-out to Shane. I haven't met him yet, but I'm looking forward to it, and you've got to love a guy who speaks his mind and does his thing his way. We've had a blast with all of the energy that Shane's brought to the game.

When it comes to charity, I grew up in a small town in Northern California, and my parents were always, and still are, about helping others. We're really blessed. If you're up and you're walking around today and you can experience and embrace and appreciate all the things that are going on around you, you're a very lucky person, because those simple things that we all take for granted, a lot of folks don't have.

Whenever you have a chance to, as soon as you get a chance to recognize how lucky you are, now is the time to start to recognize how unfortunate a lot of other folks are, and it's time to help. I don't devote my entire world to it. I've got a family and a business and these things, but there's so

many opportunities to help folks who need the love and support. Our military, all of our civil services, police departments, and our fire departments.

Then you have kids who should be dreaming of having a pony and becoming a basketball star and not worrying about where their next meal is coming from or worried about the cancer they have. It's just heartbreaking.

I've had a great opportunity, and I've got a little bit of a spotlight, so people will listen to some of what I say, and if I can shed light on any of it or help fundraise, then that's my responsibility to do as a member of the community and as an American. Just do what you can. Not everybody gets to do what Robert Irvine does. I mean, he's amazing. He's over-the-top. I don't think Robert takes a personal day. That type of enthusiasm is contagious.

Very true. You like Shane Torres. How about Bobby Moynihan [who played Guy on *Saturday Night Live*]?

Bobby's the best. When Bobby left *Saturday Night Live*, I was really bummed. I had always hoped that I would make it onto *Saturday Night Live* with Bobby and have Bobby imitating me and me imitating Bobby imitating me. I always thought it would happen, and it didn't. I texted him on his farewell, and he's just a great dude and an incredible, incredible talent. I remember when my son [Hunter] turned 16, Bobby sent him a video wishing him a happy birthday.

You've got to be able to laugh at yourself, and you've got to be able to take it and realize how funny life is. Man, you sure are doing good when somebody can put a skit about you on *Saturday Night Live*. Getting a skit on that show is really difficult.

If you had to go to a desert island and take one menu item with you from all those restaurants on *Triple D*, are you able to pin it down to one item?

That's like saying, "What is your favorite song?"

Yeah.

I don't have a good, clean answer. I mean, I'm a huge fan of Asian food. I love soy sauce, I love ginger, I love garlic, I love spice, I love fresh vegetables. I'm a huge vegetable junkie. That's one of the things people don't even know about me. I'll make six different types of vegetables for dinner. I would say that it would be in the Asian culture, but then again, that tiptoes right over into taking the noodles over into Italian, and then that Italian could go into French.

So do I have a good, clear-cut answer for you? No, I don't. Do I wish I did? Yes. I'll say whatever I picked, I would be on the island eating and happy for the first month and then trying to figure out how to incorporate sand and coconut into diversifying the dish into something else.

You've followed your passions, and it has paid off handsomely. What advice would you give to a fellow traveler who is struggling to get to where they want to go?

Well, I said it to my son today. He asked me about being successful. He said, "Do you think I'm going to be successful?" I said, "You know what, Ryder? I think that the question is the beginning of the journey." Because once you can recognize some of the things that you're looking for in your life, then you have your own definition of what success is and you can start to work toward that path. Not everybody's success is the same success. I don't want to live in a big city, and I don't want to have an apartment on the 58th floor and be able to go out to all the restaurants and the clubs in the city. That isn't my definition of success, but for a lot of people that's the definition.

I don't have a house that is in the mountains that I can get to only by horseback, but that's somebody else's version of success. So all I can say is, set your goals of what you want to be. Set your goals of how you want to live. Set your goals of what you're going to stand for. Once you set those parameters, then I think the path is much more clear.

Then remember, nothing is free. Everything takes time, energy, effort, respect, love. It's like doing television. It's like doing the restaurant business. It's tough work, but if you really love it, 12-hour days aren't bad. If it's something you didn't love, 12-hour days would be impossible.

But a lot of people chase somebody else's version of success. They keep up with the Joneses. They use a road map that's not their map, and when they've worked their ass off and gone through all these trials and tribulations, they get to the end, and it's not where they want to be.

They say, "Well, I'm not happy. I make a ton of money, I live in a big-ass house, I've got this, this, and this, but I'm not happy." So then they're 50, and they have to quit everything, move to the mountains, and go, "Oh, this is what I'm happy about." Well, shit, too bad you couldn't have done that when you were 20 and spent the last 30 years in bliss.

First, you have to define what success is for you, and only then can you start to move toward it.

LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

Become Greater

Three conversations—with Lewis Howes, Gordana Biernat, and Deepak Chopra—to help you live as your highest self, connect with your deepest desires, and manifest your boldest dreams.



Lewis Howes and the School of Greatness

Injuries ended his dreams of pro football stardom, but Lewis Howes found a new path to greatness, developing a hugely successful podcast, building a multimillion-dollar media company, and becoming a *New York Times* best-selling author. Here, he shares his thoughts on banishing excuses forever and creating the life you've always wanted.

Interview by HEATHER QUINLAN

RI MAGAZINE: Your first book, *School of Greatness*, is loved by men and women. Your new book is targeted directly at men. What was it specifically about the state of manhood that made you want to write *The Mask of Masculinity*?

LEWIS HOWES: This book is driven by my own life and experiences of struggling to understand what masculinity truly means. I was raised in a traditional Midwestern home, played sports my whole life, achieved business success, and yet still found myself struggling to handle my emotions and relationships as an adult. I started researching this topic to help myself—and any other men in the same situation.

We see negative stories every day about the state of manhood: More and more young men are spending untold hours playing video games instead of being creative and productive; pornography has replaced relationships for many. These things allow young men to enjoy a “make-believe” or “virtual” manhood. Do you see the proliferation of these mediums as a major threat to manhood?

After doing all the research and interviewing countless men and women about their observations about masculinity today, I identified nine “masks” that men wear to protect themselves emotionally. Each

of these masks acts as a “virtual” way to experience life as a man while still protecting his heart and true identity.

For example, one of these is the Joker Mask—men who turn everything into a joke to protect themselves from intimacy or responsibility. The cost is that their relationships are shallow, people don't take them seriously, and they are ultimately very lonely. The book addresses how to take off each of these masks so that true connection and love can come back into a man's life.

“Visualization isn't so much about planning out what is going to happen but about cultivating a belief in myself that I am capable of making it happen.”

Should women read the book?

I am really excited for women to read it because the stories that men share in it (myself included) are very real and raw. My hope is that it will be an eye-opener to women so that they can better understand where the men in their lives are coming from. I also include a section in each chapter to suggest how women can support the men in their lives in taking off their masks.

You said you envisioned dancing with Ellen on her show. I'm very interested in that because what kind of plan can you make for a goal that doesn't really have a clear path? You talk about emulating others who have done what you want to do. But becoming a guest on *Ellen* and dancing with her doesn't seem to lend itself to any traditional planning method.

The power of visualization is something that I strongly believe in, and it does have a spiritual side to it. I started visualizing athletic goals I wanted to achieve as a student and experienced achieving those exact goals in sports I played. I've learned visualization isn't so much about planning out what is going to happen but about cultivating a belief in myself that I am capable of making it happen.

What are your personal goals for the future? You've mastered salsa dancing. What's next on your list?

I want to impact 100 million people to create a life and business around doing what they love. All my projects and products are contributing to that goal. I also want to become the No. 1 daytime TV talk show host—with the same end goal in mind.

What is your next major career goal?

I've got several projects in the works, but that vision is still guiding me to create a massive self-development brand that will reach far beyond what *The School of Greatness* is right now.

Do you believe there is a symbiotic relationship between personal goals and professional ones? To use you as an example, did mastering salsa dancing embolden you to attack bigger professional goals?

There absolutely is. Every good habit I have in business comes from my sports training. I have gotten myself to do a ton of things that scared me in business (like public speaking) because I started the

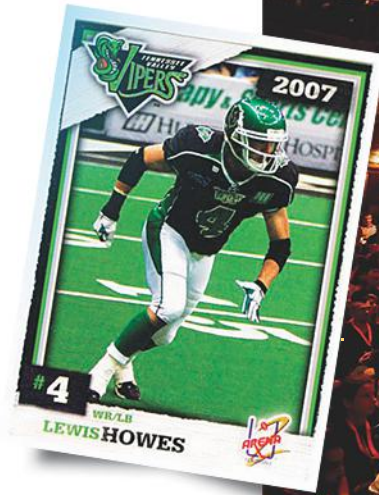
TODD MACMILLAN



habit of pushing myself early on. Even as a teenager, I made myself talk to every pretty girl I saw just to develop the habit of gaining confidence.

You're open about the fact that you were sexually abused as a child. For many victims, this can be a defining moment of their lives, and understandably so. But you refused to let it define you, using athletics as an outlet. MLB pitcher RA Dickey is another notable example of this phenomenon. Louise Hay is an example within the self-help community. How did you avoid the trap of adopting a victim mentality? Do you believe you had an innate drive to succeed regardless of the childhood tragedies that surrounded you? Or did you use tragedy as fuel?

Honestly, being sexually abused *did* hold me



GETTY IMAGES; TODD MACMILLAN



Clockwise from top left: Howes with the Alabama Vipers of the Arena Football League in 2007; speaking to a sold-out crowd; his personal-development course at mentorbox.com; enjoying some of the spoils of his success.

back for a long time emotionally. I was able to create physical results using my anger from being abused as fuel, but I was empty inside after every major achievement. It wasn't until I faced the source of my anger that I really started to heal and achieve the kinds of fulfilling results that drive me now.

When your athletics career ended, you say that you lost your identity. Being jobless is hard for anyone. For a man it can often be humiliating. With every moment that goes by and you're unemployed, you lose more of your sense of self-worth. Reversing negative momentum—in your career and in fitness—is a tremendous amount of work. As you started to climb out—you famously used LinkedIn—did you set “mini” daily goals for yourself? Or was it more of an organic kind of steady persistence, and that just snowballed?

I'm one of those all-or-nothing guys, so when I started getting into LinkedIn, I went all in. I spent at least eight hours a day on it, learning everything I could, making connections, and adding value. I didn't have anything else to do, so I hyperfocused on it. I didn't have a plan, but I saw potential.

If you lost everything today—say, an unforeseen catastrophe wiped out your business—what would you do? Better yet, what advice would you go back and give yourself on your sister's couch? It's inconceivable that today's version of Lewis Howes would spend a lot of time wondering what to do. You'd probably jump right up and act on something new.

I'd do what I'm doing now, but I'd know how to start it better. Relationships are everything, so I'd leverage my relationships immediately and add massive value to everyone around me. That's what opens doors. I'd tell my on-the-couch self to be kind to myself and believe that I had value to give.

Is there one—or several—unifying characteristics of the people you've had on *The School of Greatness*? Because it's not just success—there's an incredibly positive vibe that emanates from each person you interview. Do you look for a combination of success and positivity before having someone on the show?

I am much more interested in the character someone has built than the results they've created in their lives. I always look for people with great energy, who are service-minded, and who have created extraordinary results. I've learned that it's important to invite people on the show who are willing to be vulnerable as well. That's when the best stories come up.

Do you have a favorite guest on the show? From the outside, I might guess that it's Tony Robbins; you two share a real kinship. Tony is amazing. He's a big role model of mine. I also really love Rob Dyrdek and Sara Blakely.

Parting thoughts: Any advice for the readers who are stuck and can't lose weight? It's the No. 1 issue people ask us about.

Check out the episode I did with Chris and Heidi Powell, the fitness trainers from *Extreme Weight Loss*. [Editor's Note: This was Episode 520 of *The School of Greatness*.] They have incredible energy and insight into what actually makes the difference when losing weight. It's all about the promises you make and keep to yourself.

*Howes is the author of *The School of Greatness* and *The Mask of Masculinity*. Get his podcast at lewishowes.com. Senior writer Heather Quinlan is a Bikram yoga instructor and the owner of Bikram Yoga Burlington in Burlington, MA: bybma.com.*



Biernat is the author of
*#KnowTheTruth: Why Knowing
Who You Are Changes
Everything*, available now.



Gordana Biernat: The Art and Effectiveness of Daydreaming

Gordana Biernat is a speaker and an author who has been named to Oprah's SuperSoul 100—a list of “awakened leaders who are using their voices and talent to elevate humanity.” If that sounds lofty and vague right now, it won't once you read our interview with Biernat, who appears on the list alongside the likes of Tony Robbins, Deepak Chopra, and Eckhart Tolle. Biernat seems almost impervious to negativity, speaks with kindness and compassion, and offers hope and direction for anyone who might feel overwhelmed, depressed, or hopeless. Read on. Your day is about to get a whole lot brighter.

RI MAGAZINE: You wrote a column for *oprah.com*, “Getting to the Bottom of Your Worry—and How to Let It Go.” There are some encouraging thoughts in there, specifically the idea that daydreaming is an active form of creation that stops worry. But so often, especially in the West, we are taught that daydreaming is a waste of time. Would you agree that there are instances in which daydreaming is unproductive, such as when it's not backed by action?

GORDANA BIERNAT: I would never consider daydreaming an unproductive waste of time. The reason we are taught at an early age that daydreaming is useless is because the “authorities” that propagate this idea either have no clue or, even worse, don't want us to know how powerful thoughts are and what role imagination plays in the creation of our everyday reality. This is exactly the kind of ignorance I want to minimize when I talk and write about the importance of knowing

who we are and why we are here.

But before I answer your question, I need to talk a bit about why it is important to “own” everything that occupies our minds and choose what we allow to “go on” in our heads. The way I see it, we are creating our reality with what we think, believe, and feel to be true about it. In a way, our reality acts like a field outside of us, reflecting our deepest beliefs and thoughts about ourselves. There is no off or pause button. We are creating 24/7. And since this field works as a 3-D mirror, it obeys everything we “tell” it to do. Consequently, our thoughts create perpetual blueprints of what, to us, seems like a “probable” future reality. And this is the key to understanding why daydreams are not a waste of time, even if we don't always act on them.

From my perspective, worry and daydreaming are different aspects of the same thing—our creative imagination and thought process. And even if both worry and daydreaming come from the same source, they create very different results: Worrying creates blueprints of what you do not want in your future; daydreaming creates blueprints of what you do want.

In a sense, daydreaming is like creating good “memories” of something yet to come. When you daydream, you deliberately tune your frequency in to your desires. This allows you to explore who you truly are and want to become.

Getting to know who you are is one of the most fundamental aspects of existence. Hence, exploring your daydreams is important even if you don't act on every single daydream you have. When you know who you are, your actions become more conscious, and you become a more deliberate, conscious creator of your own reality. Daydreaming allows you to be in charge of how your life story unfolds.

To come back to the unproductiveness of daydreams and where we started our conversation... From a higher perspective, all daydreams are productive since they constitute a fundamental building block in the creation of our reality. The question is more about the quality of the daydream and where the root to the daydream is grounded. If a “daydream” is about hurting others or inflicting pain, then it is grounded in ignorance, and that, from my human point of view, is unproductive.

You seem to be a firm believer in the law of attraction—that what we think about comes about. For someone who is open to the concept, it's easy to embrace much of what you write about. But for someone who is brand-new to the concept, much of what you have to say is met with resistance. For someone coming to this concept for the first time, what is the first thing you would ask them to do as a way of introducing them to the law of attraction?

I would start with the fact that everything in the universe is made of energy vibrating at different frequencies. So the only “thing” differentiating me from you or sand from water is the vibrational frequency of that energy. In my understanding of how we create our own reality, energy and frequency are key points. But I wouldn't call myself a firm believer in the law of attraction.

The way I see it, the creation of our reality is not so much a law of attraction pulling things to you as it is a law of corresponding, or equal, frequency—working through you via your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. To put it simply, life does not happen to you, it happens through you.

The law of corresponding frequency works regardless of whether you are deliberately thinking, randomly daydreaming, visualizing, worrying, dreaming, dreading, or wishing out loud. It mirrors your beliefs exactly and unconditionally. Your beliefs align your frequency to the matching frequency in the quantum field, which then manifests your chosen vibration through you in 3-D for you to see, feel, hear, or taste.

The best analogy to how this thing works would be to imagine the physical reality “outside” of you acting like a mirror that unceasingly and unconditionally reflects your frequency back at you. If you frown, the mirror frowns back. If you smile, the mirror smiles back. In other words, what you put out is what you get back.

You are always sending a frequency with your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and the quantum field—permeating everything—is always responding to your specific frequency. Do you see why it is important to become more kind to yourself, to seek joy in everything you encounter, and to see the best in others? Because what you consciously or subconsciously seek, you will find. Without exceptions.

You've written a lot about this—the idea that the universe is like a mirror. This is an abstract concept that most people have to experience before believing. What made you a believer?

We are taught to stop daydreaming when we grow up. Biernat urges us to keep daydreaming—and to pay close attention to what we see.



Believer...that is a funny word, isn't it? I mean, believing is perceiving, so in that sense, aren't we all “believers”? An atheist is as much a believer as is a strongly religious person. The only difference is the object of the belief. “No god” or “a god.” But both notions are still strong beliefs.

To answer your question, while trying to fall asleep one night when I was 11 years old, I had a revelation. I realized that imagining stars in my mind felt exactly the same as actually looking at them in the sky.

Standing in my nightgown, looking at the stars through my bedroom window, I understood that, in essence, “inside” and “outside” are the same.

I could see the stars and the universe, even with my eyes closed, because my thoughts and the fabric of the universe are made of the same stuff. What I experienced at that early age is a universal esoteric truth that changed me and the way that I perceive myself.

I believe that we are all creators of our own universe. Albeit most of us are unconscious of this tremendous power we possess. Every time someone “remembers” who they truly are, they become the deliberate, conscious creator they came here to be.

Many authors who deal with the law of attraction encourage their readers to engage only in positive thought that they can influence. To that end, watching the nightly news is out of the question. But from a young age, we're taught that staying abreast of current events is a civic duty. How does one maintain their civic duty without reading or watching the news?

First of all, you must ask yourself who decides what the news is and why the positive things happening in the world are not considered to be real news. Why and to whom is it important to maintain the high level of stress and fear?

If you were to stop watching the nightly news for a week, the world would still be there, and not much would have actually happened in your reality.

Secondly, you must ask why civic duty is so strongly connected to being updated with conventional “news.” Habitually watching the nightly news on TV and taking everything the corporate media presents as facts is not the same as being updated on the situation of the world, or your country, or even your city. If you really want to know what's going on, you have to be more selective in what you allow to fester in your

mind as truth, fact, or proof by actively seeking alternative sources of information. Otherwise your responsibility as a conscious citizen trying to maintain your civic duty can easily turn into a mindless co-creation of a reality you do not want to create. You must start to think for yourself, trust your intuition, and, above all, be courageous enough to ask uncomfortable questions and smart enough to look for answers elsewhere.

How can one utilize thoughts to help influence his or her community or immediate surroundings in a positive way?

Since you are a co-creator of this reality, the best way to contribute to the whole is by taking care of your own frequency. Start by being aware of what you are allowing to manifest through you into this reality. Because make no mistake:

What we think, we become.
Our thoughts *create* us.

What we do, we are.
Our actions *define* us.

This is how I take care of my frequency: Put your hand on your heart and allow yourself to connect to your true identity. Then repeat after me:

I am the light in the darkness.
I am the love in the hate.
I am the calmness in the storm.
I am the courage in the fear.

How can one apply this type of thinking to influence their physical being—their own health or weight? Is that possible?

In Western society, we tend to believe that

we have a soul, when in fact it is the other way around. You don't have a soul; your soul has a body. You might ask, "What's the difference?" Well, seen from a higher vantage point, this fact makes your soul primary and your body secondary.

Let me put it another way: Your body does not determine the state of you. *You* determine the state of your body.

While consciousness or your soul is your entire being—thoughts, feelings, intuition, and will—your body is the vehicle your soul uses to explore physical reality. The only difference between your soul and your body is the vibrational speed of the energy. In a slowed-down frequency, your soul is your body. Actually, your body is the focus point where soul consciousness turns into body matter. Regardless of its size, shape, or form, your body is actually an expression of who you think and subconsciously believe you are. What this means is that your body is shaped by your consciousness. So it is not just possible, it is certain that your thoughts affect your health and your ability to lose weight.

Consider this: What you think, say, and do influences two things in your reality—your body and your environment. Your thoughts, words, and feelings carry energy that has magical properties. What you think, speak, and feel creates inner motion setting off alchemical fireworks in your body, affecting your perception of yourself and your body. Every thought or word is like a program outlining a blueprint of what you believe to be true about yourself and your body.

Your body is a living organism at your service 24/7. It responds to the frequency of your thoughts and emotions, and it will do anything you ask of it. It reads your mind, feels your heart, and keeps you alive. If you

ever put yourself down!

Promise yourself to speak kindly to yourself and about yourself.

Promise yourself to be who you truly are with integrity and respect.

Honor your body, because its source is infinite, eternal, and divine. When you start doing this, taking care of your health and weight becomes so much easier.

What do you believe the universe is? You talk a lot about the source, but can you define what that is?

I believe that everything is made of consciousness exploring itself through me, you, through every single living being in nature, through the stars, through the universe...for the joy of imagining, creating, and exploring new aspects of itself. Paradoxically, the source is to be found "inside" and "outside" at the same time.

What advice do you have for the reader who is stuck? Someone who is in a job they don't like, can't lose the weight they need to, always seems to lack time to do what they want? These seem to be the new universal problems of the West.

To accept something and suffer is to become a victim and to subconsciously believe that you have no power. To accept that something is as it is—then either let it go, say no, or change it—is to take your power back.

Change is often a silent inside job that requires patience and courage. Courage to be yourself. Courage to resist negativity. Courage to go beyond your boundaries. Courage to take responsibility for your own life. In reality, we are only as powerless as we think we are. Start telling yourself a different story of strength and joy and watch



“Since you are a co-creator of this reality, the best way to contribute to the whole is by taking care of your own frequency.”

accept the fact that your body is the physical expression of your soul, then shouldn't you listen to your body's innate wisdom? Every discomfort is a stop sign saying, "Change!" Don't ignore it. Don't silence this inner voice with food.

Trust your body and initiate a loving relationship with every part of it.

Start being observant of what you say and what you believe about yourself and your body. Promise yourself to never,

your life transform. There are no mistakes, only feedback. Remember:

Change what you can.
Keep what you *love*.
Let go of the rest.

Biernat is prolific on social media, sharing her empowering message on Twitter and Instagram: @MyPowertalk. Go to mypowertalk.com to learn about one-on-one coaching.



Deepak Chopra on Humanity's New Crossroads

A candid conversation about the nature of existence, the endless advance of technology, and the pillars of true health.

OF ALL THE LUMINARIES of the New Age movement, none are as famous, outspoken—and sometimes polarizing—as Deepak Chopra. But the prolific author (the New Delhi native has written 86 books) has credentials that many of his peers in the movement don't have; an overlooked fact about the 72-year-old is that he is a medical doctor and formerly served as chief of staff at New England Memorial Hospital, a background that uniquely positioned Chopra to bring Eastern concepts of wellness to the West.

His earlier books about self-healing and personal fulfillment have given way to exploratory writings on the subjects of quantum physics and technology. He recently co-authored *You Are the Universe: Discovering Your Cosmic Self and Why It Matters*, with Menas C. Kafatos, Ph.D., an American physicist. The result is a true head trip that posits the notion that each of us co-create the universe and that without mankind the universe ceases to be. How could this be so? We asked Chopra himself, and touched on a number of other timely subjects, such as technology, the idea of an absolute truth (and fake news), fitness, and Trump.

RI MAGAZINE: In the opening pages of *You Are the Universe*, you take the old riddle, "If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" and you answer it definitively in a really surprising way. You say, "If there's no one around, then there is no tree." Without people to observe it, there is no universe, and you explain this throughout the book by citing different studies, and you construct a lot of very useful metaphors. If a reader takes what you're saying at face value, how is that information helpful to people?

DEEPAK CHOPRA: The first thing is, sound is an experience. Just like color is an experience. Form is an experience. Taste is an experience. Smell is an experience. Sensation is an experience. Thought is an experience. And anything that you call "imagination" is an experience. If you didn't experience these entities, then you wouldn't know that they existed. So your only knowledge of the existence of anything is awareness of it.

Without going into detail...is there a universe? Is there a body? Is there a mind? I think we can say for sure there is something called existence. You know that you exist. And you also know that everything that you look at and experience around

"Technology is the next leap of human imagination and therefore part of our evolution. If we resist technology, we will become obsolete."

you also exists. Never mind defining that in detail. So then the next question is, "Where is this existence apprehended? Where is this experience occurring?" And most people would say, "It's occurring in the brain," or "It's occurring in the body."

But even that is questionable. You have to question that because how do you know there is a body? How do you know

there is a brain? And you know there is a body and a brain, because you've experienced such a thing. You experienced a brain on a CAT scan or you looked at it on a dissection table. You experience your own body. And, in fact, when you look deeply into the experience of your body, you'll realize that it's a bunch of sensations, and sense perceptions, and images in the same way as everything else is.

Furthermore, your body is changing. The experience of your body is changing in every moment of now, even though you don't see it as such. You don't have the same body you had 10 years ago, 15 years ago, or as a child. So what is the essential experience of anything, including your body or your brain? It's images, feelings, thoughts, and sense perceptions.

When you go deeply into this, you realize that these are all modifications of awareness of that which we call consciousness. We have to use these words, because without words we wouldn't be able to communicate. So in reality, that which we call the physical universe, that which we call a physical body, and that which we call a physical brain, and even that which we call the mind are human constructs. So most of knowing and experience is awareness. Ultimately there is only awareness, though the experiences seem to occur in time.

The experience you had five minutes ago is gone. The experience you had one minute ago, when we started this conversation, is gone. By the time you've heard the end of my sentence, the beginning of the sentence is gone.

So experience is in time, or appears to be in time, but the awareness in which that experience is, is not in time. Because when you had the experience of a baby or a teenager as you, your awareness that that experience occurred is a constant. The only constant is that which we call "I." You know, "I went to a movie yesterday. I had Chinese food today. I'm in love. I don't like

Donald Trump." "I" is the only constant.

So what is the "I" that experiences the body, mind, and universe as a unified activity? And you can see just from your own logic and also from your own experience that "I" doesn't seem to be in time. And that's a very important thing to know, because then all these constructs that we have, birth and death and body and mind and universe, are literally constructs. And they're human constructs. We experience a human universe. You don't experience a dolphin universe. You don't experience the universe of an insect with a hundred eyes. You experience the human universe, and it is not only a construct, it's a modification or a modulation of your own awareness.

This is important to note. This changes everything. Because human beings suffer because they don't know what fundamental reality is. They hold on to experience that is ephemeral and over as soon as it arises. They're afraid of impermanence. They identify with a socially induced hallucination called ego, and they fear death. And all these problems are actually occurring because we confuse the construct with the awareness in which the construct is conceived.

In other words, you confuse yourself with your selfie. Your selfie is literally the body you perceive at this second, but there's no permanence to it. It's just another experience. Broken down into sensations, images, feelings, thoughts, sense perceptions, which toward the end of the book I call "Qualia." This is a Qualia universe, a human Qualia universe. Qualia means "quality of experience." Just like Quanta means "quantity of measurement."

If I'm taking that and I'm distilling it into something smaller, like the realm of self-help, I see the value in that. I see how that would make me let go of the past and stop stressing about the future and stay in the moment. But do you see any danger—

Wait there, just wait there. You cannot experience the past, and you cannot experience the future. All you can experience is a



OK, but do you see any danger in espousing this theory? Imagine if everyone accepts this—the absence of an absolute truth or constancy without human involvement—that might open the door for a lot more people to take it too far and say,

one taking away your personal property. Awareness is that in which we all experience ourselves and each other, and therefore you cannot divide that awareness, so that takes you to a place or an understanding of inseparability.

I won't use fancy words. Scientists blame me, you know, they're always kind of targeting me; they say I steal their words. But if you understand quantum entanglement, or the inseparability of space, time, energy, information, and matter, then you see that the ultimate truth is the one awareness in which we are all being experienced. And as you go in that direction and the people are understanding, then love and compassion and joy, and equanimity and peace of mind, and thoughts begin in that truth. Not as moral imperatives to be followed but as natural aspects of your being.

“We are at a crossroads. We can't stop technology, but how do we use it? To disconnect from each other? To create cyber attacks? To create biological warfare?”

thought about the past and a thought about the future, which is always now. Now is not a moment in time. Now is the awareness in which the universe is arising and subsiding.

“Well, nothing is permanent, so I'm going to do whatever I damn well please whenever I want.” Which many do already, of course.
The danger is only if you think of some-



THERE IS NO TREE

Chopra says existence and awareness are one and the same and that human observation gives the universe its form. Meditation is a tool everyone can use to heighten their awareness of deeper truths.



Many experts think that we're on the brink of the next mass extinction, the last one being 65 billion years ago, when a meteorite fell on our planet and dinosaurs were wiped out, and humans are a product of that extinction. So if the human species goes extinct—maybe nature has other plans, I don't know. But, on the other hand, the technology can also connect us in a way that we have never been connected before. People are connected already, but they're not connected at a deeper level of emotional and spiritual bonding. But technology can—if we so will it, or engineer it—we can use technology to our advantage.

Meditation is an incredibly powerful tool for alleviating much of the anxiety that more and more people are feeling these days. I felt that maybe at the turn of the millennium that it was permeating the mainstream pretty well, but with technology advancing so rapidly and being the addictive thing that it is, it does seem like fewer people are willing to disconnect, to take that time for themselves. We're rarely looking within; we're often looking without. Do you have any hope that, in a society that worships technology, meditation could ever take root firmly enough to make a positive global impact?

I think technology is the next leap of human imagination and therefore part of our evolution. If we resist technology, we'd definitely—if we understand Darwinian principles—we will be soon obsolete. So

you can't stop technology. The question is, how do we use it? Do we use technology to disconnect from each other? To create cyber attacks? To create atomic bombs? To create biological warfare? To create destruction of the planet? I read today that an iceberg the size of the state of Delaware separated from its main shelf in Antarctica. This could create huge havoc in the world. So we are at a crossroads. We can't stop technology, but how do we use it? I'm a big fan of the good, appropriate use of technology, including artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality. I think these can give us a deeper understanding of the very fact that the present reality is also virtual reality. The extension of that augmented reality can give us a deeper understanding into the matrix of existence from where all this happens. Whether that'll happen or not, I don't know.

You mentioned the iceberg. I'm curious if anything really does seem to worry you or keep you up at night. Does global warming—or the prospect of famine or overpopulation—do those things worry you?

Nothing worries me, but I do see the insanity of what is happening in the world, and I refuse to participate in it. Because if you think that climate change, and extinction of species, and social and economic injustice, and poison in our food chain are not insanity, then you are participating in and declaring your own insanity. So I refuse to give up my stance that the world is insane at the moment. And I've kind of, in a way, picked up my visitor's badge, and I will not participate in the insanity. I will speak what I think is the truth. I'm not concerned. The universe existed, not as a human concept,



but whatever existed, existed before we came along. And if we are wiped out, it will go on its merry way, and the human species will have been an interesting experiment that did not work. So who am I, a puny little ego, squeezed into the volume of a body in the span of a lifetime, to worry about that, you know?

You make the big point in the beginning of the book about the theory of relativity. Once people, especially other scientists, were aware of it, they started seeing it everywhere and realized it had always been there. It had been at work in their lives before they knew about it. It reminded me of when you see a word and you don't know its definition, then you look it up, understand it, and then you start seeing it everywhere. And you realize, "This has always been around me," and it's really startling. Exactly.

I feel like people are starting to realize this about each other, as we're walking around with these supercomputers in our pockets, and we're starting to be much more aware of all the different kinds of people and belief systems that are all around us. And there's a huge positive there, but it's also connected us in this way where we can be inexplicably cruel to each other anonymously. As you look at the whole of smartphones and social media and the way that has exploded, do you see there is a net positive, or do you see a net negative?

I can't answer your question, because we wouldn't be having this conversation in the absence of technology. So what I can state, that our capacities, our technological capacities, our scientific pursuit, have outpaced our emotional and spiritual development. So, you know, you have ISIS, a Bronze Age mythology but with modern capacities like the internet and cyber warfare. So as long

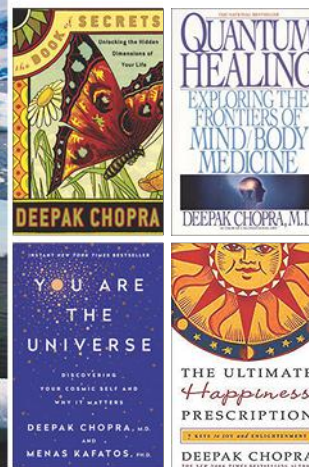
as our technological capacities continue to outpace the emotional and spiritual evolution, it's a negative net balance.

The concept that we shape our realities is very empowering, but again I'll play devil's advocate and take the negative side. We see so many people saying, "Nothing is real unless I want to believe it." You see it with "fake news" and the way we have such strong confirmation bias, and the way we choose our information sources.

If I am a supporter of President Trump, there is no amount of evidence of criminal activity that will ever make me believe that he's criminal. I can just yell, "Fake news!" at you, and I can walk away, and I can live in my own reality. When you think about that phenomenon, and you think about what you're talking about, does that ever give you pause and you say, "Hmm, maybe this isn't the message that people need to hear right now. Maybe the idea of an absolute



Far left: Movement and exercise form one of Chopra's six pillars of well-being. Left: Chopra says the melting ice caps are an urgent wake-up call to mankind. Below: Some of Chopra's 86 books.



truth could be more helpful even if you don't believe it?"

The absolute truth is, the source of all experience is oneness. That's the absolute truth. So if you understand the absolute truth that we are activities in a single awareness, then we automatically go in the direction of truth, goodness, beauty, harmony, love, compassion, joy, equanimity. If we feel disconnected, then we do create personal realities that are destructive. But if you look around wherever you are, everything you see is a human construct, and we created it. We created what we call civilization. Everything.

From machines to technology to even, in fact, the experience of our body, our biology is an experience in awareness, and by changing your habits, like thinking and feeling and giving it good rest, as in sleep, meditation, stress management, mindfulness, healthy emotions, good natural diet and food, you can actually change your biology and therefore the experience of your biology.

So this understanding is, in a way, the original fall from the biblical mythology of the knowledge of good and evil. And so when you have that, it's a double-edged sword. You can lead the world or you can destroy it. And I think we are at a crossroads at the moment. Which way will we go, only we will find out.

We do write a lot about health and fitness in this magazine, so I wanted to ask you, aside from what foods to eat and what exercises to do, how important are my

day-to-day thoughts that I choose for myself? And how important are they to how they affect the overall health of my body?

Here are the six pillars that I call the six pillars of well-being:

NO. 1: Deep, natural, restful sleep.

NO. 2: Stress management, whatever

NO. 6: Connection with nature. All thoughts are important in that, if your thoughts alienate you from the rest of the world—and if you're feeling anger, resentment, hostility, guilt, shame, disgust, resentment, grievances, fear—that sort of thing certainly causes inflammation in your body, and inflammation is the background of 95% of chronic illnesses. Only 5% of disease-related gene mutations are

“If we understand the truth, then we automatically go in the direction of truth, goodness, beauty, harmony, love, compassion, joy, equanimity.”

way you use to manage your stress, including mindfulness and meditation.

NO. 3: Movement and exercise, possibly yoga and breathing techniques because they help coordinate mind and body.

NO. 4: Healthy emotions. Not just thoughts, but emotions. Because emotions are what drive us. So emotions that connect us to life in general.

NO. 5: Food that is not contaminated by poison, including inflammatory products like insecticides and pesticides, and growth hormone and steroids and chemicals.

actually fully penetrant, which means they guarantee the disease. The others are influenced by how we live our lives on a day-to-day basis.

That's a wonderful formula. Hard to argue with. For a final question, let's get personal. What makes you happy?

You know, I don't use the word "happiness." I use the words "fulfilled" and "peaceful." And what makes me peaceful and fulfilled is when I'm expressing my creativity and doing something that makes a difference in other people's lives.

Follow Chopra on Twitter: @DeepakChopra.

ASK US

Q: “Cardio on an empty stomach: Will it really help me burn more fat?”

—Thomas F., via Facebook

Answer by SARA-JANE MCSHANE, FITNESS AUTHOR AND PERSONAL TRAINER:

Fasted cardio and its effect on fat loss are hotly debated topics in fitness, with diehard devotees on both sides of the argument. Which one is correct? Let's break it down.



FASTED CARDIO

This fat-loss method was first hypothesized to be successful because, without food readily available for energy, your body would turn to its fat stores as the energy for your workout. This method is seen by its proponents as a quicker way to drop a few unwanted pounds and a great way to meet a goal. However, research has cast doubt on this theory. Studies have demonstrated that fasted cardio does not increase fat burning over a 24-hour period as opposed to consuming some carbohydrates before exercise, which may help you burn more calories throughout the day.

UNFASTED CARDIO

There are several studies to draw from. Researchers in one study used milk glucose to test “unfasted” cardio. Ten males were used as the subjects, and all the results concluded that unfasted cardio actually helped these individuals burn more fat than fasted cardio. This is not to say that milk is the best pre-workout on the market or the answer to fat loss, but research shows that consuming calories consistently can actually help utilize

our energy stores better. This, in turn, can aid fat loss.

THE VERDICT

The majority of data available concludes that fasted cardio does not, in fact, offer additional benefits, and in some cases can actually hinder results. However, there are a lot of

individuals—many of them elite bodybuilders and other athletes—who have reported great success with fasted cardio over the years.

But, as with many aspects of fitness, there is no one-size-fits-all answer. There is a very wide range of what is normal, and what might work for somebody else, particularly an elite athlete, might not work for you.

In my experience, I would say to avoid fasted cardio unless having any kind of food in your belly makes you nauseous when you train. I have observed that the best way to ensure you are burning fat is through HIIT (high-intensity interval training), which helps keep your metabolism elevated for longer periods of time, while regulating your nutrition. The key number to remember is 3,500. As in, there are 3,500 calories to one pound of fat. Burning an extra 500 calories more than you eat per day will help you burn one pound of fat per week.

Total calories consumed versus total calories expended is what ultimately determines success or failure. The timing of when you eat is of secondary importance.

Follow McShane on Twitter: @SJfitnessAuthor.



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COLD-WEATHER HYDRATION

Q: In the gym, I don't sweat nearly as much during cold-weather months as I do during warm-weather months. I drink about a gallon of water a day during the summer. Does that mean I can back off how much water I drink until it warms up again?

—Jack M., via Twitter

Answer by NATHAN MIKESKA,
TRAINER AND WELLNESS AUTHOR:

You might be thirstier in the summer months, but it's just as important to stay hydrated in winter. Water, and the bodily functions it enables, is very important, especially for people who exercise often. Water aids in our body's nutrient delivery and waste removal, helps maintain body temperature, serves as a source for sweat, lubricates joints, and cushions organs and tissue.

We lose 60% of our bodies' water through urination at a nonexercise state, defecation, and insensible processes (breathing), and 90% can be lost in sweat during exercise. Remember that sweat output can change depending on the environment, intensity and duration of exercise, and size of the individual. Even though you are not sweating as much in cool-weather months, it's important to replenish constantly.

SOME ADVICE: Monitor your body weight before and after exercise. If, following exercise, you lose a pound, you should always replace one pound of weight lost with two to three cups of water. Monitor the volume and color of your urine. Remember a small volume of dark-colored urine means that you aren't drinking nearly enough.

ADEQUATE INTAKE: Adequate intake for individuals 19 years of age or older is 2.7 liters (91 ounces) for women. Men should

consume 3.7 liters (125 ounces). However, please remember that every individual is different based on age, activity level, climate, and daily activities. If you know that you normally go to the gym in the evening, I advise consuming as much as these recommendations throughout the day:

- **BEFORE EXERCISE:** Two to three hours prior, you should consume 17 to 20 ounces, the size of a typical bottle. About 10 to 20 minutes prior, you should consume seven to 10 ounces, the size of a typical glass.

- **DURING EXERCISE:** The main goal is to match sweat and urine output with fluid input. You need to be aware of how much you are losing (via sweat and urine) during workouts. The typical recommendation is seven to 10 ounces every 10 to 20 minutes. This is most important for long-duration (more than 60 minutes) and high-intensity exercise in a hot, humid environment.



“I think in terms of the day’s resolutions, not the year’s.”

—Henry Moore

“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.”

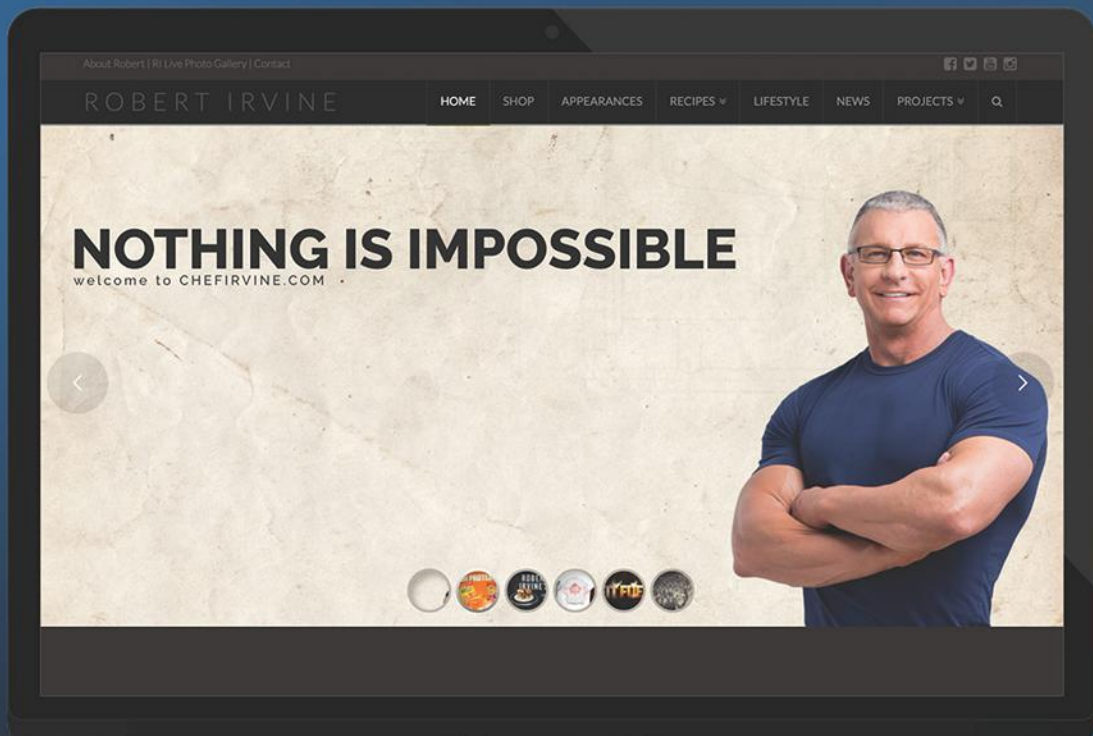
—Confucius

“Age wrinkles the body.
Quitting wrinkles the soul.”

—Douglas MacArthur

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