

LISA: What that means...Don't let the quit in. And it's the concept that once it's inside of you, it can grow. And so, if you block it out, it never comes in the front door, then quit can't develop. Command is knowing when to care and, and then caring a little bit more. Every time there was a barrier in front of me... all those barriers, I don't know that I would have had the same resilience at 27 than I did at 37.

CHRIS: Welcome to *No Turning Back*, apodcast hosted by General Stan McChrystal and myself, Chris Fussell. Our goal here is simple: to have serious conversations with serious leaders so that we can learn from the best and navigate these complex times together. Thanks for joining us.

Really excited to have Lisa Jaster on today. Lisa's been a friend for at least, for several years. In military circles, she is a well-known individual because of sort of iconic status that she achieved when she became one of the first women and the first Army Reserve Officer woman to make it through Ranger School - which is the selection process that anyone in the Army - officer, enlisted, reserve, active duty - that wants to be associated with the Ranger Regiment has to go through this selection course.

It has about a 75% attrition rate, like many other special operations selection models, and going back several years when Department of Defense started to adjust its policy, allowing women to serve in special operations in frontline combat units, billets to Ranger School and other US military special operations selection courses started to open up for, for women. And Lisa raised her hand and was one of the first to be selected and one of the first to graduate as well. But she did it at 37 because that's how old she was and where she was in her career, having graduated from West Point many years prior, when that, that policy changed and unlike most of us when we were 37, Lisa was still fit and ready. And as she'll talk about in today's discussion, was within weeks of being selected at Ranger School - not getting months or years to prep for that training course, like many would have.

So, she has some great insights into what that meant for her, her family, for the military more broadly. And then we talk in depth about her leadership lessons, how she's translated military lessons over in the civilian world, and then, a bit about just her personal view on fitness, on readiness, on, on leading others and being a mentor throughout her career.

So, really appreciative of Lisa for taking the time. This is a woman who, if you hadn't heard of her before, you'll find this conversation impressive and insightful and reflective of a leader who has taken the practice seriously every day of her career. Now over the discussion.

STAN: Lisa, thanks for joining us today. We really wanted to talk to you because I found out that Air Force ROTC cadets are required to memorize a quote from you. I mean, they don't memorize any of Chris's quotes or my quotes, but they memorize you saying, "There's no quitting. I can't have quit in me. There was never an option to stop and quit." Now, for our listeners, let me give you a little context, because that really comes from the experience of Ranger School.

Now Ranger School something a lot of soldiers go through and members of other services periodically do as well, but I was a West Point cadet and Ranger School was this thing on the horizon. At some point you are going to have to go to Ranger School and it was viewed with a little bit of, well, a lot of trepidation. And I remember one of my instructors, they were all fresh out of Vietnam when I was a cadet, they would tell us war stories now, and again, and he goes, "let me tell you this war story from Vietnam. We were out in the jungle. We'd been doing combat operations. I fell asleep and I woke up in a cold sweat, terrified."

And we're all on the edge of our seats and he goes, "I dreamed I was back in Ranger School." And at that point, of course, our fear of Ranger School just went off the charts and we kept that until the day we ended up in the School. But I give that background because it's important for our listeners to understand that Ranger School is an experience and an idea, it's a hill to climb that most people don't make it over.

And so, the fact that you made it through Ranger School puts you in a special group of people. Now, let me pass the Chris to get to the specifics of what we want to ask about.

CHRIS: Yeah, I'd love to start there, Lisa. You know, haven't, I never went to Ranger School - some folks in SEAL teams will do that, but know enough about it, having been through SEAL selection. There's all this sort of ... live in the same space. You have on your... very impressive resume, one of the interesting facts, there is one of the first women to complete Ranger selection, which has, you know, this 80% attrition rate, like all special operations, which is interesting from the outside, but somebody that knows you, like I do, knows you as a leader, an athlete, you know, a very focused and disciplined person.

So, having been through another type of selection, what I'd like to ask you about is actually... the average type of person that goes through those selection, man, or woman, is younger. You went through Ranger School when you were 37. I went through BUD/S when I was 23. I might've turned 24 there, right out of college, college athlete, best shape of my life.

And I still found it more grueling than any season in the, in the wrestling room. You're more injured, you're more exhausted. And that's when I was 24. And you could recover in 12 hours. At 37, if that's, if that's the right age, plus or minus. What, what drove you to say? I want to go run around a bunch of 19- to 22-year-olds, straight out of bootcamp or West Point?

LISA: The really short answer? It was the first time I was allowed to. So, for people who don't know me, my dad was a class of 1968 West Point grad. He went to Ranger School in '68, did three tours in Vietnam, four Purple Hearts, a Silver Star. So just like you were saying, Stan, I grew up with this image of Ranger School in my head that it was the be all, end all - to include the fact, that I brought a boyfriend home at one point in time, my dad said, "You can't date my daughter, unless you go to Ranger School."

He was a Second Lieutenant and he was an Armor Officer. So, this was one of those things that was held up as kind of a mythical creature that you want to find - it's that unicorn. So, my first opportunity is to go when I'm 37 and I actually looked at my husband, I'm like, "This is stupid."

It was my Sergeant Major, who was like, “Hey, uh, Major Jaster. You really need to go. This is... You're the type of person they're looking for. This is exactly what you need to do. You're already fit.” Because that was another thing - there was no six-month train up. There was no go to Ranger PT at your unit for a year before your unit actually sends you.

There was no, there was no warning. In September, you put your name in the hat, and October, they said, “Okay, we're going to do this.” In January, I was shaving my head. So, if I wasn't fit it, wasn't going to happen. And so, my Sergeant Major tried to talk me into it. Then my husband tried to talk me into it. Then they cornered me and brought my kids in. And finally, they really suckered me into it.

But honestly, Chris, if I could have gone at 25, I'm not sure if I would've... I would've signed up, but I'm not sure that I would have been as successful because I also didn't have that same mentality that I have now.

I mean, every time somebody... every time there was a barrier in front of me, whether it was the fact that I couldn't get a Ranger physical, an Army Reservist living in Houston, can't go on post and get a Ranger physical, especially as a female. So even getting into that school, that would have been my first barrier.

At 25, I don't think I would have taken a blank check and walked to an emergency care facility and said, “Hey, I don't know how to do this, but here's a blank check. Let's make it happen.” All those barriers... I don't know that I would have had the same resilience at 27 than I did at 37.

STAN: Boy, Lisa, that's fascinating. If I could jump in - because I've never been a female, but I've been 37 and, and I don't think I'd have gone to Ranger School at 37.

So, so I hugely admire that. But also, for our listeners, you know, the demographics of who completes Ranger School is interesting. Actually, younger people finish at a higher percentage rate than older people. And you think that people typically Army Captains 26, 27, 28, don't do very well. And it's attitudinal.

So, what did you take in, the blank check to get a physical, what did you take into Ranger School that got you to that mental state that I won't quit?

LISA: I love MMA. So, before the cameras went on and we were recording, I was talking about doing Brazilian jiu-jitsu this morning. Well, there was a UFC ultimate fighting championship show. I mean, this is really simple. And you both know from going to difficult schools that it goes from, I had this grand design of, I want to do all these wonderful things to, okay, I shaved my head kiss, my loved ones goodbye, I'm going to do this no matter what.

Well, that transition comes from, I watched this UFC show and Ronda Rousey, of all people, but you know, huge female in the industry, I mean, she really did put MMA on the map for women because she was just such, so dynamic and with her Olympic credentials, very impressive person. Well, she's, this is one of those, be real cut. She's talking to one of her athletes and she,

she said the words, “don't let the quit in.” And it was just one episode and one sentence she made, we turned it off... we turned off the TV and I'm talking with my kids, my husband and I are starting to bake what that means. “Don't let the quit in,” And it's the concept that once it's inside of you, it can grow. So, if you block it out, it never comes in the front door, then quit can't develop.

So, I think again, that's one of those nuggets, that's one of those seeds, that it's 37, I could see, I could, I could grasp onto that. Just, just quitting wasn't even an option. And I used to joke, I actually prayed with the chaplain one day and we were in the middle of the mountains. We were both on our second time through the mountains. Absolutely worst part of Ranger School as far as I'm concerned, we had to take a knee. I was the 240 gunner, he was my assistant gunner as a chaplain, of course. And we're sitting there and we're talking and I was like, “Hey, do you mind praying with me chaplain?” I finally got him, talked into it and I said, “I don't want to quit. I don't want to leave, but dear Lord, if you think that it's a good time to give me an injury, I won't be mad at you.” I wasn't gonna quit, but Hey, if something happened, I wasn't completely devastated.

CHRIS: That is a great anecdote. I think we've all been there in one way or another.

You know, a lot of the... I'd like to spend a little more time here, just cause it's, it's interesting. And we haven't, we haven't gone deep on this in any of the, with any previous guests, there's this fascination with special operations on the outside. And I don't know about you, but try as you might to convince people, look, there's a baseline level of physical readiness that has to be there, but it's not world-class, not at the start, and frankly not at the finish.

Right. It's you have to be able to maintain that baseline for an extended period, which is more about your mental readiness and your grittiness. You know... like in SEAL training, which is, you know, has nuances different than Ranger School. I'll tell people all the time, nobody quits during the middle of an evolution, people quit at the end of a meal, and they quit at four in the morning when their alarm goes off.

Nobody can't do another pull-up. They always get through the pull-ups. That's the idea of doing that many pull-ups for another four months. It's the idea of being that cold again, it's the idea of swimming that again, that forces people to quit and they do that when they're warm in their bed and snuggled up with their, you know, their pillow, or the end of a meal when they've got puppy tummy, and then six hours later, they regret it.

And I think something, what you're saying, applies over to leadership in the, in the regular world as well. And it comes with age. There's a difference between the 37-year-old and 23-year-old. You had a mental awareness that I certainly didn't go in through that sort of selection to say, “I can see this for the big picture. I can compartmentalize. I have more life experience to be able to not worry about, can I do another pull up tomorrow and just chunk it into little bits?”

Do you think that's part of what was helpful?

LISA: Oh, most definitely. And, and along that is when you're talking about the big picture, what was my worst-case scenario? A lot of these young 23, 24-year-olds, especially the lieutenants, if you're an Infantry Lieutenant and you don't graduate from Ranger School, you're, it's a career limiter. I'm worst-case scenario was I go home to a great job at Shell, a fantastic husband, supportive kids, and, and all of those things told me go and do great things. So, I had all that backing. My worst-case scenario was going home to something amazing.

And so, when I left, I had all that in my kit bag, that whether I got home in a week, a month or a year, that that was all still waiting for me. And also, being a little more seasoned, I could look at it and say, I've been on the other side, I've been in a leadership role already. So, I know that when I'm in the subordinate role, that the leaders are playing a role. There are certain things that, whether it's the instructors, whether it's people who are in a leadership position in the school, but not necessarily a Ranger instructor, they're playing a role for a very specific purpose and it is to make Ranger School hard enough gate that you prove yourself, you prove your mettle. So, if you're called into action, if you're called into combat, you've already proven that cold, tired, hungry, you can keep your cool. And I think that's, that's part of that's age, but part of it also is experience.

CHRIS: Yeah. I'll turn it to Stan anyway to follow up, but the, but it's a really interesting point and there are, you know, folks coming out of the communities we all have served in, there's a certain type of mental character type that, that, you can, you can map it out in industry. And when you, and this transferable skills, when it comes to what you're describing is really interesting. And I think one of the, one of the arts of being in the cadre in a Ranger selection or SEAL selection, et cetera, I never did that, but I know a bunch of folks that did obviously, is there again, Hollywood image bunch of mean "agro" type people.

The good ones are actually quiet and nice. And they would... because they're looking for that moment of weakness, that moment of mental weakness, they're not going to break you with pushups. If they do, that's done in the first five days. Right. What they're looking for is that moment. They say, "Ah, Lisa's, Lisa's getting soft right now. She'd rather be home with her kids. And I'm going to go offer that to her and say, 'Look, this is stupid. You don't want to be here. These kids are young, you've got a family waiting for you. What are you doing? Like, no one cares if you don't finish this.'" And that, they want to wake up that part of your brain that says, "He's right. Actually I should get outta here. This is ridiculous. Right?"

And those are the moments where the same, like an industry, right? Leaders in industry there's moments where you say, "What? Why am I trying to convince the organization to redo the strategy?" You know, I'm going to get paid at the end of the year, no matter what.

And it's that certain type of character says, "No, this is the right thing to do, and I have to stick with it." So, I just want to make that comment based on what you were saying, but Stan over to you.

LISA: I'd like to dovetail just a little bit. Some one of the things I use, or one of the examples I use is if you go to the grocery store without a list, you come out with the chocolate covered almonds that are in the checkout lane.

For whatever reason, and maybe, maybe a Diet Coke or whatever, there's all these impulses. And it's a fundamental leadership style, but I didn't realize that it was something I did until Ranger School until I started having these kind of After-Action Reviews of Ranger School. But it was a fundamental part of my leadership style is I like to go in with a grocery list.

So, you were talking about industry and I'd like to kind of lean that way is with my job at Shell, with my job at MNS Engineering and the stuff I'm doing now, you have to go in with a plan and it's okay to deviate from the plan, but it has to be a conscious effort. Otherwise, you end up with \$400 worth of groceries, but you can't make a meal.

And, and that's exactly what it is. You know, what do you have at home? What do you have waiting for you? What's on the other end of this? You've already decided to walk away. I'm going to spend my 40, a lot of us, 50 and 60 hours a week away from my family, focused on my job, have a plan and, and keep that focus, knowing that I've already got all this great stuff in the background.

Worst-case scenario, I have a bad day and I go home to something great. But while I'm here, I've gotta be all in. And I've got to look at my plan and go through my checklist and make sure I attack each and every item that needs to be addressed today.

STAN: You know, Lisa, that's great. And I'm going to transition a little bit to leadership outside of the military, but I'm gonna start with a military story from Ranger School.

And we were going to get, we were very early in the morning. It's like five o'clock and we're going to do the five-mile run. A timed event. And so, this man mountain of a non-commissioned officer stands in front of us and goes, "Rangers, today we are going to do the five-mile run. Okay. We are going to do it in 40 minutes. Okay. That is about nine minutes a mile."

And I remember, you know, the smart-ass lieutenants in the class of may go, "about," but the point was, here's a guy who knew his business. Who never would have left the quit in. And when you get into things that really matter, who do you really want working with you?

You know, sometimes we get intellectual arrogance if we've got a graduate degree or we've read a lot of books so we can quote something. And then at the end of the day, who in our organization actually gets things done? And so, I sort of throw it to you for your experience in, in the civilian leadership world, how does that resonate?

LISA: You know, our doers... one of the things that I think I neglected when I was a young officer that becoming a reservist where 90% of my life is in corporate America and only 10% is in uniform, is in the military we're so surrounded with alphas and we don't have the time limitations that, you know, you're trained to standard, not to time, which a lot of times

unfortunately means it's seven, eight, nine o'clock at night, and you've got to finish up whatever tasks you have for the day.

You can't do that in the civilian world. And you also... you can't hold them back. You have to worry about hours and you have people who might not be alphas. People who don't want to shoot guns and don't want to run around in the woods. You might have somebody who's quiet and focused and good at something else.

So, one of the things that my transition out of the military taught me and I learned pretty much two by four to the forehead, is that the non-alphas are as critical, or maybe more critical than your alpha personalities and learning how to leverage them and motivate them and focus them, kind of like your Ranger instructor...he, he has one mission on that day. He had one goal, one mission, and that was to facilitate this event - and he was the best man for it. He was intimidating. He was boisterous. He kind of y'all a chuckle with his lack of math, but he was the best person for that mission. And when I started having to hire people in the engineering industry, I remember sitting down with the other people I was conducting the interview with and said, "Hey, listen. For this position, we don't need somebody who's good with people. So, if he's awkward or uncomfortable, that's okay. You need somebody who's happy sitting in a cubicle."

Or for this position, you want somebody who's going to be a subject matter expert and 20 years from now, we'll still be training the college grads in what he's doing right now. And those people are okay. Not only are they okay, but they're critical to success. And if you're a good leader and a good manager, you will recognize those SMEs, those subject matter experts, that have a happy bubble. And he'll let them live there.

Stop trying to take your best engineer and make them a manager. Your best manager might know how to add. They might not even know how to find X in the equation and that's okay too.

CHRIS: Lisa, when did you start to, because... those of us, with the military background will point to certain times in your career where you started to learn what it meant to be a leader, but you've had this military civilian career blended in and out reserve time, et cetera.

Can you talk a bit about that process? What were the key moments where you went from or felt like you understood the importance of going from a good doer to a good leader?

LISA: I think one of my classmates I bumped into in South Korea, and she made a comment to me that completely flipped my script. So, you have the Patton-type, leadership and General Patton - hey, do, do do, I'm in charge, very directive type of leadership, which is fantastic in war. You have your General Marshalls, you have all these different types of leadership styles, but they kind of, in history got segregated in: this was a good Pentagon general. This is a good field general, and we don't have that anymore.

We don't need that anymore because we're not, we're not quite separated. And I had in my head leaving from West Point that I wanted to be a "go do." I wanted to inspire. I wanted to be the

fittest person in my formation. I wanted to know more than everybody in my formation and I wanted to lead from the front.

And I showed up to South Korea and I was on Eighth Army staff. It was my first ever real staff position. And I came in and I said, I was going to make a name for myself until I could get myself in another command leadership billet. And one of my peers turned around to me and said, "I'm fine. Thanks."

And, and I realized that I was so busy doing, that I forgot to care. And literally that moment, that moment changed the type of leader I was, because I realized that all the West Point grads that I had previously served with in a combat heavy engineer battalion, OEF One, Operation Enduring Freedom One, Operation Iraqi Freedom One.

I had spent all my time over there doing, doing, doing, I wanted to be this directive leader and not everybody needed that. And it was really good for me to have a classmate, literally turned me around and say, "Okay, so I'm fine. Now we can work."

STAN: That's great. Well, let me ask a question because, and this is for our listeners, you know, we talk about leadership.

We talk about CEOs or jobs like that. What is command? If you were going to, to explain it to somebody else who knew nothing about the military, what is command? How might that be different from sort of traditional leadership jobs?

LISA: So, one of the things I do is I try to help people translate their military resumes and I do it on the side because I'm at that point where a lot of my peers are at their 20 years. So, they're starting to get out and they have no idea how to explain anything. And they'll say, "Oh, I was in command. I was in charge of the health, morale and welfare of 150 personnel." That means nothing to anyone in, in what I call the "real world."

So, I start describing to people, "Well, that means some guy you've never met is getting his car repossessed, and you get a phone call. Some guy has a child born and you get a phone call. Command is knowing when to care and, and then caring a little bit more. And it's caring about everything. It's caring about when people are doing well in life, and when people are doing bad and care is such a poor word because it's, it's all encompassing. It's... are all your soldiers medically fit? Are they physically fit? Are they trained? Do they have the resources they need? I think military leadership command is being generally involved in almost everything and only diving deep when you absolutely have to.

But it's also that leading through others is such a critical aspect. I'm currently in battalion command. I have just under 1300 soldiers and civilians, some of them are part-time and one of them are full-time because I'm a reserve battalion commander. And it's how do I leverage my staff? When do I need to tell somebody else, "Hey, you need to worry about this very specific area and give me the overview?"

And when do I need to dig into it myself? And I think that is very directly related into corporate America. And I think one of the things in corporate America previously, we've only looked at the training, the ... from nine to five the workday, but especially with our life on Zoom and Teams and all these other things, you're in my house right now.

So where in corporate America, we were able to present the person we wanted to be, people were also allowed to present who they thought we wanted them to be, but it's no longer like that. I can make a lot of assumptions about Chris right now, looking at his, his scribbles on the walls and his books. And, you know, there's, there's lots of things that I now know because I'm in your house.

So, what used to be almost unthought of, and only in the military, which is that art of command, which was all inclusive, is now part of leadership in corporate America as well. People's dogs do walk through. You do know somebody's personal life. So just like in command in the military, you are now part of the health, morale and welfare of your, your corporate employees.

STAN: It really captures responsibility on a level that most people may not think. Tell a quick story about my grandfather, because when I was a young officer, I was told I had to buy calling cards. Well, nobody used calling cards in... Lieutenant United States Army. And I was complaining to my father about it because I thought it was stupid.

And he said, well, let me tell you the background. When my grandfather was commanding in the 20s and 30s, new officers on post had to report to the commander's home and take a calling card for the officer and for every adult woman in the household. And you printed them and you put them on a little silver platter, you wore your blue uniform and you stayed 15 minutes, and then you left.

And I said, "Well, that's just ridiculous." He said, no, what happened is the, the commander in their spouse then took the calling cards and on another evening, returned the call. They went to the junior officer's quarters and the purpose was to see what state they were living in. Do they have a fit place to live? Do they have what they need? Is everything okay? And this very formal, almost a kabuki actually had a very real purpose to it. That was all encompassed in the idea of, "I'm responsible to you and for you." And I think it's, I think it's sacred.

LISA: Yeah. Yeah. I actually remember being a Second Lieutenant and you, every once in a while, you'd do a health check or somebody would show up to work and they look disheveled and that wasn't typical of them.

So, I remember stopping by somebody's house and they had, they were using cardboard boxes. They have three children, married three children on base housing, well, it turned out, he had a family member that smoked the most expensive cigarettes, drank the most expensive liquor. And they didn't have a TV. So, all the lieutenants got together and we realized that donating money to somebody who didn't have budgetary knowledge wasn't going to help them. So, we filled their house with Lieutenant stuff, which means, you know, you decorated with your, your Cammy

blankets and all that other dynamic decor. But, and then from there we could help the soldier, but not, not the soldier, but the soldier's wife, because she was the one doing the books.

“Hey, let's talk about a cheaper way to get your nails done. You don't have to give up things” but talk about budgeting and really get to know, I mean, I can see their faces right here right now. And that was 2001. So yeah, we did. I guess that is part of command is literally going into the house of, of some of your soldiers.

CHRIS: Half of my family comes from military background. The other half does not. And the half that did not thought I lived on a ship for 15 years. I could never get their heads around what's a Navy SEAL.

I'd love to take it back a little bit to, to the military side, because I know you think deeply about this as well. I mean, we haven't really talked about it, but amongst us, I think being, being the first woman through Ranger School gives you a special connection with the special operations community. How do, and this is such an important discussion, especially right now as the world, the United States in particular, shifts from a more focused use of counterterrorism special operations force of the last two decades into what, military theorists and thinkers would call a “great power competition. We now have these other significant near peer competitors, Russia, China, others, that are becoming what they were in the eighties and nineties, right?

These force on force, nation-state, or nation-state type, military theory. What is the role of women in special operations, as we move into that much grayer area and use of those elements in your view?

LISA: you know, there was a very good reason to start incorporating women more based on the fights that we've had. Talking about the CSTs, the combat support teams, where, you know, in Muslim countries, the more traditional families, women are not going to speak to male soldiers, intelligence gathering. It's extremely difficult if you don't have females in your ranks and trained. But moving forward, I think, I think one of the keys to having a strong fighting force is making sure it remains a volunteer fighting force.

And there are a lot of females out there that have capabilities that previously weren't looked at. Whether it's from an academic viewpoint, from an intel gathering viewpoint, from an access scenario, whether it's the Muslim or, or even just women talk differently. Not all women, but some women do. And just like some men talk differently.

In the special operations community, specifically where the mission set isn't five people make a team. Two teams make a squad, four squads, make a platoon. You operate this way. You set up this way where there's a lot more variables. It is silly to limit your toolbox. Why only have tools from the left side of the cabinetry when you could have a whole plethora?

And the willingness, going back to the volunteer army, for the longest time, we said, “Hey, men, you have to do this.” And I've always felt really strongly that men don't have to be obligated to pay the United States' bill. So, when we go to war, we pay with lives. We pay... and it's not all

death and destruction, but it's time away from family. It's you come back change no matter who you are, and no matter how awesome or terrible your deployment was. When you go and live in another country, even if it's Kuwait, I know Kuwait, isn't a deployment, but even if it's Kuwait and you live in a different environment and see different people, you come back changed.

And why would we... we only put a segment of our population either at that risk or have that opportunity. And there's a benefit too, because as, as women get more involved in this portion of our nation's wars, we can also have more of a voice with regards to politics and, day-to-day life. You know, if you're, if you're raising children, if you're, if you're a stay at home, mom, if you are a combat veteran, if you're a Senator, if you're a teacher at school, if you're a nurse in the hospital... if you only have a small optic, if you can only see a small part of the world or your part of the world is limited based on somebody else's decision-making process, you, you can't possibly do that job as well as you could if your opportunities were limitless.

And not everybody's going to join special forces, but the fact that it's out there, it means I can try, means. I could think about it.

CHRIS: It's a really... it's a really great way to look at it. I do hope, as we're all just students of national security, that we don't narrow that, how do we get women in special forces, to the last 20 years? Because the role actually is, as you've explained, equally and more important, I think going forward for a whole host of reasons that you just laid out.

So, Stan over you.

STAN: Yeah. And I put the hook historical point. During the civil war, African Americans entered the Army of the United States in Northern and about numbers of 300,000. And they didn't have to, but they entered because they knew that after the war, they would have a better argument with Americans for a seat at the table if they did that.

Now, many of those hopes were not fully realized, but the reality is I think that's right. The more you are able to do, the more you have an argument that we are all equal for opportunity. I'm going to pivot again, Lisa, because many people as they become leaders, particularly when they become 37 or older, they got to take care of themselves.

They got to take care of themselves physically and emotionally. You got a lot going on. So, how do you, you've been working out this morning. We talked about that. What's your rhythm? Give people a window into Lisa's life so they can figure out the parts that that might work for them.

LISA: You know, I think, I think something that I discovered when I started speaking, is people don't understand that high performers, I mean, the Stan McChrystal, you actually put your shoes was on one shoe at a time, your pants on one, one leg at a time, whatever the saying is. It's not magic. It's not amazing, but it's, it's dedication. To get where both of you have gotten it is it, it is a day-to-day process and every day.

And so, I try. I try to have a minimum amount of sleep. I'm going to get, at least, now this is not a good thing, but this is, this is the life of a working mom who still wants to be a competitive athlete. So, I try and get a minimum of six hours of sleep. My alarm goes off between four and 4:30 most mornings. I spend, because I'm an Army reservist, I know I'm supposed to be doing it one weekend a month, two weeks a year. It's a lot more than that.

So, I check my military email until it's time to get the kids up. Get the kids to school. I go and do Brazilian jiu-jitsu. I come home. I work, I have a certain time in the day when my husband and I work out together because otherwise our relationship fails and that's something else you have to plan personal time in because if, if I don't get my workout and I don't get to have a couple of discussions with my husband, good, bad or indifferent, even an argument makes me feel better because I at least have an anchor.

And then I set my schedule. So, so a day in the life of Lisa is it's a 4 to 4:30 to... I have an alarm set to go to bed. At nine o'clock I have an alarm set that says, Hey, I don't care what's going on. I'm going to make a conscious decision if I'm going to stay up. But this alarm is telling me to go to bed." So, I do it that way.

And the other thing I do is, as you said, I've got a lot of pokers in the fire. I wake up every morning and the very first thing I do is I make a list of, "this is exactly what needs to get done today. These are the must do's and these are the, if I have time to," and I kind of have to keep, keep that battle rhythm up, otherwise a day gets wasted very quickly. And then we'd made a couple of rules.

Again, especially at 43 now, so that I can continue to function as at a high, higher level than I probably could have, had I not planned. And that includes pre-making meals and making time for myself and actually writing days that are going to be rest days. I have to rest because apparently at 43 and I'm sure at 53, it'll be even worse, you can go to bed healthy and wake up injured. So, you have to plan in days to let your body recover and relax. But yeah, it's, it's really important for me to kind of look at each day and fit physical fitness, in fit family time in. And if I don't drop the kids off at school, I want to pick them up from school because that's the one time of the day when there are no distractions. You can't be texting because I'm driving. Maybe we're listening to music, but it is focused conversation on the people who are most important to me in this world.

CHRIS: Yeah, it's a, it's a great point. And I think, you know, it reminds me when I was coming back when I was still on active duty.

I spent a year as, as McChrystal's aide for overseas the whole year and mostly in Iraq and he had his very specific regiment that he, that he lived in for years straight. And it became this sort of mythical thing of, if you want to be part of this force, you, you gotta be like the boss. You only eat once a day, you never sleep, all that stuff. And that being inside the inner loop, I saw there, there were certainly truth in that, but was interesting for me was coming back to my own peers and that, especially people outside of the SOF community would say like, you know, does he

really only eat one meal a day? I said, yeah, but it's only because, and he was fine with, I don't, I don't want this to be something that others do.

It's like, that's how his metabolism works. If he eats twice, he gets tired. Does he only sleep four hours a night? Well, usually, but he's kind of stressed. He's running like a war in seven countries at once. Right. I'm sure he would sleep more if he could. Right. But people want to not... and I've been guilty of in the past. I want to believe that you're superhuman, that you are doing things that I'm not wired to do. And what you just laid out as discipline. No, you make a list. You set an alarm to go to bed, which means you're, you're not drinking too much to get up at 4:30 in the morning. You're training every day. I mean, it's these simple decisions that you're making every single day with consistency that I think is so key to long-term leadership capability as well.

CHRIS: I'm going to turn it over to Stan, but I do have to ask, first say thank you for taking the time. We don't want to eat up too much more of your, your, your afternoon. But do you roll with your husband or is getting tapped out by your wife too, too much? Is that the workout you guys do together?

No. So, my husband is a black belt. He is a lot better than me in jiu-jitsu. So no, I don't roll with him anymore. And when I do, I make sure that I pretend that I'm injured so that we have to go light. Got it. Got it. Makes sense. Well, thank you Lisa, for the time Stan, over to you. Thanks Lisa.

STAN: It's classic. You know, we did. Brazilian jujitsu back in the Rangers, and now I've got three granddaughters and it should work on them. But what they do is they have two come at you from the front and one is around behind you. And the little buggers get you every time. So I, I warned you about that. Let me tell you what, what I take away, Lisa.

You said something really important about "don't let the quit in," you know, your life has probably summed up by that. If you think about West Point, you think about going through Ranger School, at age 37, not quitting. If you think about commanding a battalion, living a life, having a civilian job, having kids, all of those things, it's because you care, you care about yourself, you care about what you commit to, and you care about the people for whom you are responsible.

And if there's anything that says leadership more than that, I don't know what it is except thank you. I really appreciate your time and all you've done.

LISA: Thank you, sir.

CHRIS: So not surprisingly, just a really good discussion with, with Lisa. I mean, I've, I've ... through mutual friends, had the privilege of calling her a friend since her early days. I met her after Ranger School, but we just stayed in touch over the years and just a really impressive leader. And a lot of, a lot of takeaways from that. What jumped out to me out of the gates was because we wanted to start with that, you know, being 37 and going through that sort of

selections, it's very unique, but, her honesty saying, "I don't know if I could have done it at 23, because so much of it as a mental game," I was really impressed by that.

STAN: Yeah. One of the things that I think listeners ought to understand too, is the context of the moment. She couldn't have gone at 23 because the Army wouldn't let her. And even when she and her two predecessors went through Ranger School, it was a very emotional deal for a lot of people in the active Army.

And then a lot of veterans, there were hateful things said, there were emails, there were campaigns to stop women from assaulting the bastion. So, the first females that went to Ranger School had this sort of cacophony behind them. You know, there were supporters, but at the same time, there were Ranger instructors who didn't want them to pass the course.

And so, when you realize it's hard enough anyway, and then you have that environment, it's doubly impressive.

CHRIS: Yeah. And you know, when you're seeing some of that mental fortitude, nobody cared that Chris Fussell was going through SEAL selection. Right. So, layer on the exhaustion plus that pressure, just, just really impressive. But I think again, for listeners that didn't serve in the military in, in complete honesty and transparency, when I look at Lisa now, or when I first got to know her, I just see a leader in uniform. Right. And she she's just tough as nails. She made through a selection course that 80% of fit young men hadn't historically because she could do it, but that's not what she, how she measured herself, not being the first woman, but being someone who made it through Ranger school.

She's just a great example I think of how the military views its members.

STAN: Yeah. And, and you see how she runs her life. I mean, if I used a single word, I'd say it's disciplined. She has certain the way she wants to run her life with her kids, with their marriage, with their job, with her working out and she puts them all together in what seems to be just an extraordinary, effective way because she's chosen to.

CHRIS: That's right, yeah. The idea of that, the alarm to tell me to go to bed, I don't think I've ever heard anybody say that before, but that's, that's a level of discipline that, you know, explains why she's been able to do so many exceptional things with her, with her life.

I hadn't heard "don't let the quit in," put, put in that way before. And it really did give me, you know, pause to reflect there certainly have been times I think when we can all be the guilty of that, but it's a great, it's a great slogan to, to live by and to share with, you know, I think on my own kids, it's a great example to share with young people that are figuring out how to be gritty and tough and stick with stuff.

STAN: And, you know, it's interesting, although it's they just share the same gender. When I think of Lisa, I think of Coco Chanel, not because they're both females, but Coco Chanel has a great quote. She said, "I didn't like my life. So, I changed it." She just grabbed a hold of life and

for the rest of, you know, her decades of business and being a fashion icon, she literally shaped things around her so that it was what she wanted. And it was a force of will.

CHRIS: Yeah, I hadn't, I hadn't thought of that comparison, but it is a good one. Honestly, I didn't know Chanel was a person until I read, you have to read their chapter in *Leaders*. And, I guess I'm embarrassed to say it, but I just thought it was a brand name, but you did. That was my favorite chapter in that book because she was just, uh, She was a badass. I mean, she just didn't take, take, she took names and nobody got in her way at a time when that was just not the norm. And not only should she make it, but she redefined a whole part of culture. Really impressive individual in the, I can see the connection that would come to mind there.

You know, the other, the other piece, and we could have spent an hour just talking to Lisa about her views on women in the military, women in special operations specifically. But I hadn't put, I hadn't heard anyone else put it like that, obviously she's spent years thinking about it, but the, the I've always looked at it through the counterterrorism there there's critical role that women can play in that space, but she's making a much bigger argument and one that I hope we don't learn in the years of head as the world shifts from just us counterterrorism battlefield to these other larger problems as well.

STAN: No, that's right. It's not a question of women doing things as well as men, so they can get in the club. In many cases, women do them far better. And so, it varies by person, but that's what we should be looking for. Yeah, that's right. And she, you know, serving from, in, in the Ranger regiment and in oil and gas, I mean, she has definitely learned how to make herself known in traditionally male dominated spaces, so absolutely a voice and a leader worth, worth listening to. And we'll, we'll hear more, more from her in the future. I'm sure.

Great, great discussion with Lisa. Part of that important legacy inside the US army and we appreciated her taking the time.