



I. MY EARLY YEARS

Age: 11-16

Growing up I had the good fortune of being surrounded by people that believed in me. My parents, my sister, a precious trio of aunts on the paternal side of my family, and one aunt on the maternal side who were always there for me growing up. In addition I was blessed with a stable of cousins, a childhood sweetheart, and friends that could have as easily been brothers and sisters.

The common denominator of each of them was their extraordinary **love** for me and their **belief** that I could do anything I set my mind to. They continuously shared their **trust** and **confidence** in me, and like a seed it was planted and became rooted in my mind, my heart and my soul. To this day it still bears fruit in my life.

Being an extremely motivated high school student, I had a great ambition to serve my country. At a time when it wasn't fashionable to be patriotic, I was. As early as the ninth grade I served in the Civil Air Patrol, became a Naval Sea Cadet-Marine Corps Division, and began seriously studying martial arts. I could have easily set out on a path of going to one of the service academies, pursue a military career, and then go into public service.

When you grow up with people who love you telling you with conviction that one day you could even become President of the United States if you want, you most certainly believe anything is possible. However, for better or worse the path we often set out on isn't always the one we stay on.

Life gets in the way and forces us to make serious decisions that put us on a different course. Ultimately, our success and happiness is more dependent upon what we do with the decisions we make than it is about the decisions themselves.

For me the strength of the influence I received in my youth gave me exactly what I needed whenever I was faced with change, opportunity, challenges or adversity. Regardless of what it was I was going to do, I was going to give it one-hundred percent, be all-in, and glean every ounce of value I could from it. And that is exactly what I did.

This way of thinking toward everything I would set out to do since has formed the foundation for who I am, what I do, and how I coach and mentor others today.