

# The Reality of Combat!

The Psychological Conditioning, Reaction, Sacrifices and Consequences of Real Combat.

By

Danny Lane



Danny Lane is a Highly Decorated United States Marine, Decorated Police Officer, Martial Arts Champion and Master, former Bodyguard for Movie Stars and Corporate VIP'S and Criminal Investigator.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in real combat?

In this article I wish to convey my own personal feelings and experiences of the mental transformations before, during and after real combat situations.

I'll suggest a psychological attitude that every warrior should develop if you are going to physically survive during and psychologically survive after the combat missions are over. The physical techniques are secondary to the mindset of the combatant.

What you consider in this article as right or wrong, correct or incorrect, can only be determined by yourself. You can translate this reference of my work any way you want.

Yes America, we will always at war somewhere in the world and sadly, sacrificing young men and women's lives for the freedom of our future generations.

It is not widely understood that the lives of all combat veterans are changed forever once they have entered the combat zone and "walked through the valley of death and surviving for most veterans is worse than being killed.

Sadly, what is not understood by the general public and the veteran's family are the many survivors of any war continues to suffer in many ways the rest of their life. The physical wounds are secondary to the mental scars.

Ask any combat veteran and they will tell you the toughest battles they have ever fought were the ones within after they came home. The war within their own minds having to deal with the atrocities of war can and often last a lifetime. Mine has.

Let me get started on how to SURVIVE in REAL COMBAT!

## The Mindset of a Warrior!

MCMAP - Marine Corps Martial Arts Program is the first Marine Corps close combat program to combine combat instruction, core values and the development of a martial arts mindset. ... A Marine warrior is an individual whose strength of character and mental discipline rivals his strength of arms. The warrior ethos is a code of conduct that embodies a life where integrity, loyalty, honor, and selflessness, and courage are one's guide.

I credit the following mental philosophies in helping me function in a high stress situation with a positive frame of mind, achieve a positive outcome, and cope with my own personal setbacks and failures

To understand what I am talking about, it is first necessary to understand the "**Psychological Transformations**" the human mind must go through and understand in order to carry out the necessary missions and objectives they are given in combat.

**Death:** Death is a fact of life, and although it may seem to run counter to moral standards, death inflicted with intent is also a fact of life. At times a man is forced to kill or be killed, in order to defend himself, family and country.

**Killing:** Killing, as you know is considered wrong by every natural and cultural instinct possessed by man. To deliberately take the life of another human being requires extreme conditioning on the psychological level as well as the conditioning achieved through concentrated physical training. All life is precious, but there are times when a man must wreak destruction on other men.

If you ever encounter this type of situation, you will know as I did when, where, and the time and place that justifies the slaying of another human being. Sometimes, the choice is not ours to make.

**Conflict** is essential to the development of man and society. It leads either to the construction or destruction of a man or an entire group. If you do not understand the need for conflict, then you should not be in a position of authority over others. If there is no conflict internal or external there can be no growth. The resolution of your affairs forces personal development. However, conflict does not always mean physical combat.

Being prepared for any eventuality by understanding the controls required to develop your own particular agenda is essential. You must see the need for battle if you wish to develop your own cause on any level, but you should not fight a battle if you cannot foresee winning the war.

**Mindset!** How do we train to create the mind set needed to take another person's life? And, how do we create a mindset that, if necessary, to suffer the loss of one's own life?

First, proper physical and mental training is essential since it arms you with the tools and knowledge needed to carry out and survive a combat situation. That combative mind set can be developed through well disciplined, rigorous training and by gaining confidence in these abilities and skills. The combatant then has to subconsciously program themselves through meditation and visualization to react without hesitation. The last and most important test of course, is the real combat experience itself.

In many ways, the battle has a life of its own. You cannot know if you will be successful. You can only prepare for battle and it must be done with all of your heart and with all of your consciousness. In that manner you will have the edge. Being unprepared will bring about defeat unless you are truly exceptional, and there are very few who fit that description.

It is foolish to fight a battle that you cannot win, and you cannot win unless you have properly prepared and planned to win.

**Fate**, which is based on your true desire, will determine the outcome of the conflict according to the extent of your own belief, fate and destiny.

Speaking of fate and destiny, since childhood I had dreams and premonitions of going to war, fighting for my country, and coming home a hero. I used to watch Audie Murphy and John Wayne movies. I had a real German helmet from World War II and wore it during BB Gun Fights.

My fantasies met reality in 1968 when I enlisted in the Marine Corps. In the Marine Corps boot camp at Parris Island, SC, I grew from a boy to a man overnight. We were trapped in that hell hole Island being physically and mentally tortured beyond belief not knowing the worst was yet to come in the "Nam" only a few months later.

At night, while we laid in our beds with the lights out, our drill instructors lectured us on the reality of war. They said *"Look around ladies, many of you men are going to be dead in a few months. That's what Marines do. They die for their country"*. Gunny Plummer said even if we trained hard and made all the right decisions, fate may still take its course and we may still die.

Those were some shocking words but they were right. I didn't know much about "fate" then but I do now. I, however, trained extremely hard so I could battle death and cheat destiny if it was in my cards. You see, I planned on making it back from that war alive.

The fact is, no matter how much we prepare physically for combat if we aren't conditioned spiritually, psychologically, emotionally and mentally we may self-destruct from fear of dying or guilt with living.

Was I prepared to kill or die after only 6 months of Marine Corps training and mental conditioning? I thought so but, I didn't know for sure, I had never done either. I hoped so. I had dreamed about it since was a kid. But I had self-doubts just like everyone else. No one knows for sure how we're going to react until the time comes. But, I would soon find out.

#### **Rules of Combat:**

1. The morality of the combat is essential to the outcome of the combat. You must know exactly what it is you wish to accomplish and why. And, you must believe it is justified.
2. The atmosphere and the attitude of the combatant are most important!
3. Are you capable of standing alone when necessary and making decisions that can determine the outcome?
4. If you are a leader, do you have influence with those you lead?
5. Will you do whatever necessary to accomplish your goals, irrespective of the feelings or lives of others who may otherwise wish you harm?

In Vietnam, my unit fought in battles constantly for our very lives. We unfortunately killed men, women and yes, even children without having the choice to let them live. Such is the reality of war. In war, life is wasted without hesitation. The question of right and wrong is never asked or answered by the combatants. A soldier's duty is to kill and survive to kill again. War is one of the places that these techniques are morally proper, but not the sole place.

I made it back from "Nam" cheating death a hundred times. There was also a hundred other ways to die in that hell hole besides being killed by Charlie. It wasn't my fate to die there like 59,000 others. I was however wounded several times and seen hundreds of our own men go down, along with thousands of the enemy.

My destiny was to continue, like in my dreams, to come home to a hero's welcome. But, I would find out I was wrong! There were no marching bands, parades, nor a large crowd welcoming us home when I walked off the air craft carrier, USS Iwo Jima, in San Diego. In fact, I had been to war and killed for my country, but I was not old enough to even buy a beer in California. Somehow, that just didn't seem right, but what the hell, I bought a fake ID with two AK-47's I got in battle from the NVA. But, it was great being back in the USA and not in a body bag. Little did I know the hardest battles of the war were yet to come...in my mind.

### **The Consequences of Combat:**

There are numerous things that can happen as a result of being in a combat zone. Of course, you can be killed. You can be wounded, dismembered or crippled for life because of an explosion or gunfire. You can get heart issues and other life threatening diseases even decades later from the chemicals used.

You can suffer from Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder that can lead to a lifelong condition of anxiety, depression and suicide. And there are those hidden deadly diseases and viruses our warriors obtained while fighting on foreign soils that can lay dormant in our bodies for decades after.

I will open up and tell you my experiences of the aftermath of combat and how it has affected my life. All said, there are probably 100 ways to die in combat during and after besides getting killed by the enemy.

*Traumatic experiences shake the foundations of our beliefs, and shatter our assumptions of trust. Because they are so far outside what we would expect, these events provoke reactions that feel strange and crazy. Perhaps the most helpful thing I can say here is that even though these reactions are unusual and disturbing, they are typical and normal for a combat veteran. These are normal responses to abnormal events.*

I didn't know until years later that the traumatic experiences I suffered in combat in Vietnam, as well as twenty five more years as a cop, bodyguard and security expert had changed who I really was. My whole personality had changed from when I was as a kid, but I didn't see it. Everyone around me did though. I was suffering from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and didn't know it for 15 years after my return from combat.

The Veteran's Administration didn't acknowledge the problem with returning veterans until 1983. It has been reported that as many as 60-100,000 combat veterans from Vietnam have committed suicide. The American Legion reports that 22 veterans die from suicide every day. VA studies reveal more than 11 percent of Vietnam Veterans still suffer from PTSD forty years after their return. I am one of those veterans.

**Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** is the most common diagnostic category used to describe symptoms arising from emotionally traumatic experiences. I have experienced them for the past 50 years.

**First**, you will often feel edgy, irritable, easily startled, and constantly on guard: the military veteran or cop always sits with his back to a wall, sleeps poorly, is agitated and finds it difficult to concentrate. These symptoms are described as hyper alertness or hyper arousal.

**Second** set of symptoms is called intrusion. This is where you involuntarily re-experience the traumatic event in the form of memories, nightmares, and flashbacks during which you feel or even act as though the event were recurring.

When you are not suffering these involuntary reminders, we experience emotional constriction or numbing, a need to avoid feelings, thoughts, and situations reminiscent of the trauma, a loss of normal emotional responses, or both. Most of our feelings seem unreal and the ordinary business of life no longer matters. We feel cut off from the concerns of others and unable to trust them. It seems that the future holds nothing. At the same time we feel anger at those responsible for the traumatic experience, and ashamed of our own helplessness.

Sometimes, we feel guilty about what we did or failed to do. We become demoralized and isolated because of anger, guilt, shame, avoidance, and emotional numbing.

**Seclusion** is one of the most compelling symptoms I suffered. I secluded myself from others that wanted or could help me. I RAN away from conflict as I became afraid of myself. My routine was to lock myself in a room and remain alone until the anxiety passed. I didn't and couldn't show love, feel love or want love even from my children. I knew I loved them but couldn't feel the emotions of what any parent should have. My biggest regret and downfall in life is not being able to be a loving father.

**Adrenaline Rush!** The adrenaline rush you get when you're in combat firing automatic weapons, shooting rockets, throwing grenades and fighting hand to hand to the death is something that has to be experienced. The constant challenge of risk taking, overcoming death and defeating fear is embedded inside your brain forever. It never leaves when the battle stops. I strived on it and needed it to feel normal. I found myself putting myself in dangerous situations just to experience the rush of adrenaline and experience the challenges of surviving and overcoming them. After my return from Vietnam I became a police officer within months so that action satisfied my adrenaline rush for the most part. It however wasn't near the rush as a fire fight in combat. I then got into martial arts and kickboxing so I could experience the rush of winning or losing and fighting man to man in the ring.

**Addictions!** The need for speed so to speak and the adrenaline rush was satisfied initially by me with working out in martial arts and kickboxing sometimes 4-6 hours a day. I needed to sweat and work out the demons that lurked inside my brain. I couldn't sleep unless I was totally exhausted. The action on the streets as a cop and competition in the ring in martial arts and kickboxing helped satisfy my need.

But later in life came other demons. I didn't do drugs (prescription) for obvious reasons because of my duty as a police officer, but I did drink excessively. I needed that to take the edge off each day and night so I could relax and maybe sleep two-four hours most.

When I slowed down physically I began to gamble. That's right, I got my fix betting on football, basketball and baseball. Anything that bounced I bet on it. The excitement and the unknown was more what I needed instead of making money. I knew it was wrong but I viewed it as a victimless sin at that time. Once I accumulated some wealth I started doing day trading on the New York Stock Market. The rush of watching the ticker tape go by on the computer wondering if you were going to make or lose thousands of dollars a day was my fuel for excitement.

I also got into rock climbing and rappelling, riding my Harley at high speeds and other destructive and dangerous behavior. Was it the **(PTSD)** or just my personality you may ask? I know NOW it was the **(PTSD)** as I needed the need to satisfy and recreate the rush, the excitement and the conflict I needed.

**Suicide:** Several times over the years after flash backs of the atrocities I committed, I felt the urge to check out of this world. I wanted to end my life by biting a bullet. Sitting in the dark, looking down the barrel of a 357 Magnum, drinking a last rum and Coke was the plan most times. Several times I thought about taking sleeping pills to just go to sleep and not wake up. But I realized that would be the chicken shit way out. I just wanted to rest, be at peace with myself. I knew my legacy in life would be diminished should I exit that way, so I carried on and dealt with the pain. I realize now that there was so much life left to live and my purpose on earth wasn't finished yet. I quit feeling sorry for myself, and moved forward with new conviction.

**Overcoming:** The only way to overcome this mental struggle is understanding and love by those around you. Prescription Drugs, Street Drugs and Alcohol are NOT the answer. I have spent more than 50 years going that route. Finding a loving woman like my wife, Gina, who listens, prays and understands what I went through is the answer. Up to now, I remained silent and never discussed the atrocities of war with anyone. Asking forgiveness from God is also a must. It is NOT your fault you did what you did. You had a duty to serve and protect your country. You must let it go, or it will destroy you and everyone around you. It almost did me. Put it in God's hands! He can handle anything! Pray daily and ask for strength to overcome. Instead of asking WHY Me Lord, I prayed SHOW me Lord!

**Meditation, exercise and eating healthy** are also crucial. You need to stay busy! You can beat it, I have for the most part. I am at the place NOW I can think of the atrocities and events and talk about them without reliving them. I am forgiven and I am set free of the guilt. It takes time and effort but it can and does work. Writing out your experiences and facing them are also great therapy as it has been for me.

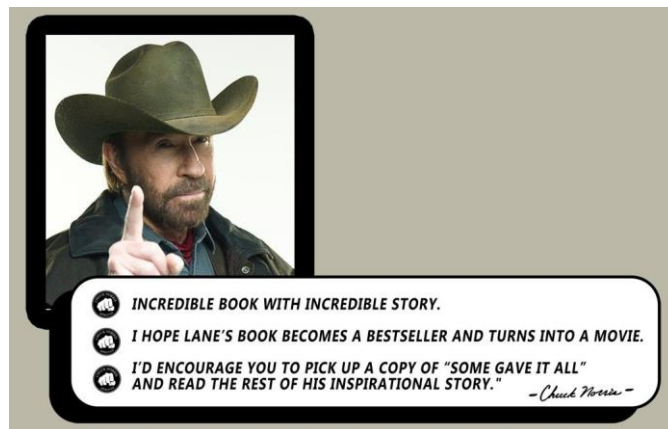
My book "Some Gave it All" in book stores everywhere and on <http://somegaveitall.com> endorsed by Chuck Norris and many other high ranking Marine Officers, chronicles my war experiences and dancing with the devil for five decades. I hope it can help YOU, veterans and other survivors of PTSD overcome the devil, stop killing themselves and live a more normal life.

**Other near deadly medical complications contributed by my service in Vietnam.**

In 2006, I developed an almost deadly viral infection to my brain thirty-eight years after my return from the jungles of South Vietnam.

I lost, my memory, sixty pounds, all my strength and almost my life while lying in a hospital bed waiting for doctors to find out what was wrong with me. Well, they never did and the VA wouldn't accept me! I was discharged from the hospital and advised by my son, Chris, to put me in a nursing home. It took me two years to physically and mentally recover on my own from that unknown viral infection that had invaded my brain and laid dormant all those years.

This story is the basis of my new book "Some Gave it All" which is in books stores everywhere. It is endorsed by Chuck Norris and high ranking Marine Corps Officers. It became a #1 seller on Amazon.Com the first day it was released. Visit the website <http://SomeGaveitAll.Com> for free previews and more veteran information.



The use of herbicides like (Agent Orange) used in Vietnam can cause numerous illnesses and death decades later. I was exposed to Agent Orange in many of the combat areas we did operations in.

For the purposes of VA compensation benefits, Veterans who served anywhere in Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975 are presumed to have been exposed to herbicides, as specified in the Agent Orange Act of 1991.

These Veterans do not need to show that they were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides in order to get disability compensation for diseases related to Agent Orange exposure.



Service in Vietnam means service on land in Vietnam or on the inland waterways ("brown water" Veterans) of Vietnam.

VA has linked several diseases and health conditions to Agent Orange exposure.

VA has recognized certain cancers and other health problems as presumptive diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service. Veterans and their survivors may be eligible for compensation benefits.

- AL Amyloidosis

A rare disease caused when an abnormal protein, amyloid, enters and collects tissues or organs

- Chronic B-cell Leukemia's

A type of cancer which affects a specific type of white blood cell

- Chloracne (or similar acneform disease)

A skin condition that occurs soon after exposure to chemicals and looks like common forms of acne seen in teenagers. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.

- Diabetes Mellitus Type 2

A disease characterized by high blood sugar levels resulting from the body's inability to produce or respond properly to the hormone insulin

- Hodgkin's Disease

A malignant lymphoma (cancer) characterized by progressive enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver, and spleen, and by progressive anemia

- Ischemic Heart Disease

A disease characterized by a reduced supply of blood to the heart that can lead to chest pain (angina)

- Multiple Myeloma

A cancer of plasma cells, a type of white blood cell in bone marrow

- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

A group of cancers that affect the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue

- Parkinson's Disease

A progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects muscle movement

- Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-Onset

A nervous system condition that causes numbness, tingling, and muscle weakness. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of herbicide exposure.

- Porphyria Cutanea Tarda

A disorder characterized by liver dysfunction and by thinning and blistering of the skin in sun-exposed areas. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.

- Prostate Cancer

Cancer of the prostate; one of the most common cancers among older men

- Respiratory Cancers (includes lung cancer)

Cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus

•Soft Tissue Sarcomas (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)

A specific group of malignant of cancers in body tissues such as muscle, fat, blood and lymph vessels, and connective tissues

Veterans who want to be considered for disability compensation for health problems related to Agent Orange exposure must file a claim.

During the claims process, VA will check military records to confirm exposure to Agent Orange or qualifying military service. If necessary, VA will set up a separate exam for compensation.

It took me fifty years to finally get disability compensation from the VA for Agent Orange exposure.

It was only after I almost died recently of a heart attack and had double by pass open heart surgery that they took notice and awarded my claim of 60% for ischemic heart disease.

### **Getting Help!**

The VA is doing better about treating combat veterans for PTSD but it is 50 years to late foe veterans like me that served in Vietnam.

I am an Ambassador for a Veteran Charity called Mission 22. They provide a number of services for veterans especially for those of us that still suffer from PTSD. You can contact them on their website at Mission22.Com.

***In conclusion,*** at the risk of sounding like a vigilante, I believe all men have a responsibility to the concept of justice, to protect ourselves, family, country, the weak and those vanquished by wrong.

Great men and women of courage and strength, are those who would risk their own safety to come to the aid of a victim.

But, whether they are soldiers, police officers, or simply men and women of truth, they must be able to meet force with skill, power and the combative mind set to survive.

The next time you see a combat veteran look at them differently. When you say "thank you for your service" you now know what that service means.

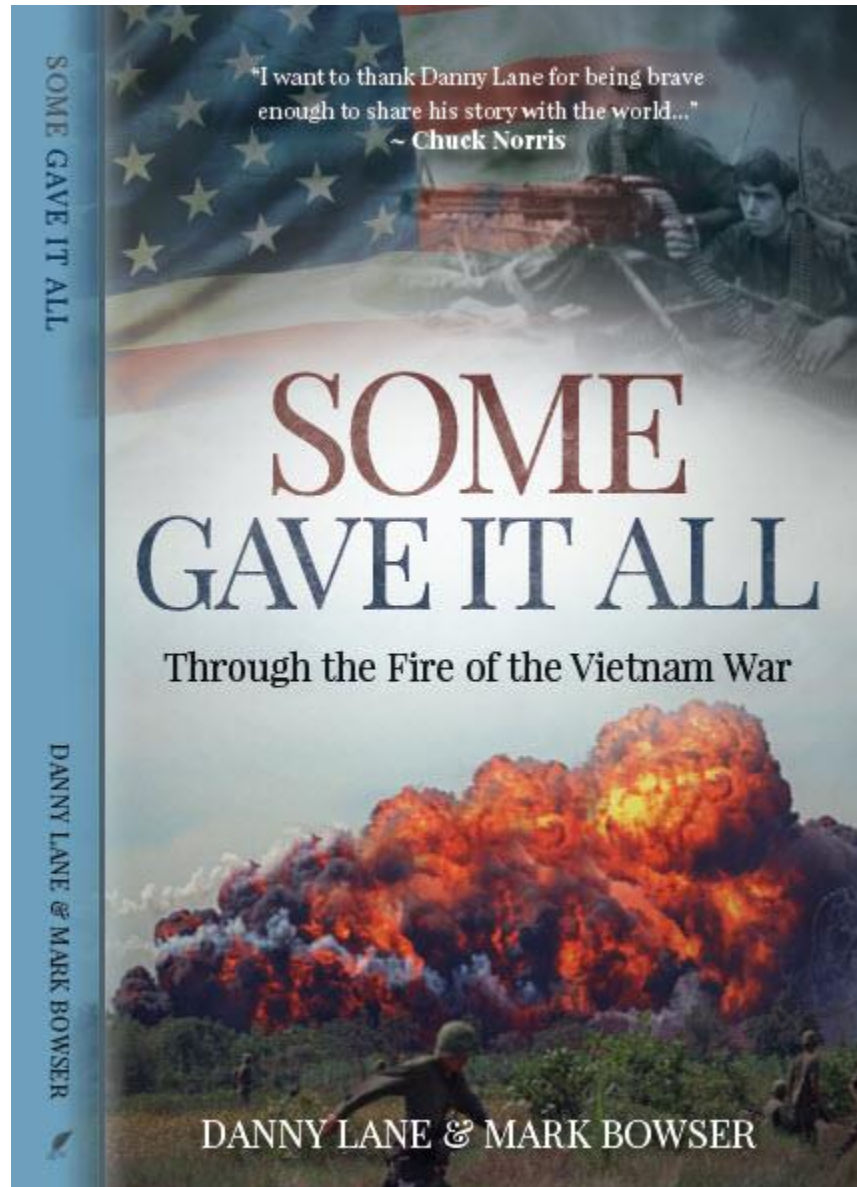
Thank God there are people in your world that are willing to sacrifice their lives for your freedom.

You must understand that they are changed forever. They never come home the same person that left. I didn't!

God Bless America,

Danny Lane, United States Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran 1968-1974  
Retired Police Officer/Bodyguard/Martial Arts Master/Criminal  
Investigator/Author

"Some Gave it All - Through the Fire of the Vietnam War"  
Published by Made for Success Publishing and distributed by  
Ingram Content Group.



"Gripping! Suspenseful...the more I read, the more the storyline came to life and the more immersed I became!"

~ Colonel Steven B. Vitali USMC (Ret)

"Some Gave it All... brutally powerful, inspiring depiction of sacrifice, honor and faith... It reads like an action movie. "

~ Art Camacho, Award Winning Motion Picture Director

Based on an incredible true story, a young Marine fights an unbelievable battle in the abyss of Vietnam. Get a front row seat to the intense action, courage and sacrifice he and other Marines endured.

Experience the ferocity of battle; the deep bonds of brotherhood; and the stinging sweat of fear that hangs persistently over the jungle canopy.

Imagine lying in a foxhole when a "Broken Arrow" goes into effect as the enemy sappers overtake their position, forcing these young soldiers to fight the enemy hand to hand.

This is the gripping story of Marine Corporal Danny Lane and other young Marines that stood the faith with God, and the Marine Corps during the most agonizing times that no one would want to endure.

Instead of a hero's welcome, he and other survivors came home to a country that didn't honor their sacrifices.

"War is Hell" but for some, surviving is worse!

"Some Gave it All is a must read for anyone who wants the real skinny on the brotherhood of combat...you will find yourself mesmerized and brought into the action like never before."

~ John Ligato, Marine, FBI Special Agent(Ret.)  
Author of the John Booker Series

**DANNY LANE** is a highly decorated US Marine. He was awarded two Purple Hearts, the Marine Combat Action Medal and other commendations in Vietnam. He is a retired police officer, martial arts master in the Chuck Norris System, bodyguard, private investigator, writer and co-author of *Spy Combat Tactics*.

**MARK BOWSER** is an author of multiple books and is one of the busiest Professional Business Speakers in the United States. Mark's books include *Sales Success* which he wrote with Zig Ziglar, *Jesus, Take the Wheel*, and *Unlocking the Champion Within*.

A share of the proceeds from this book will be donated to Kickstart Kids.



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