

KNOWING YOUR LIMITATIONS

Knowing your limitations will ensure you don't jeopardise yourself or your team. Knowing your limitations will ensure you don't make rash decisions by letting ego or pride or embarrassment control your decision making.

And knowing your limitations is extremely important when operating in a Special Operations team and it's another critical aspect of mental toughness. Being able to recognise your limitations and make a tough call takes courage. Courage to know and accept the truth and take the appropriate action, even if you suspect others may think negatively about your decision.

The importance of knowing your limitations is so...

1. You will know when to back yourself and take positive action, commit and go hard for the win. You will know when it's time to go all-in and take the plunge... without any doubt.

And

2. You will know when to step back or sit a situation out, when the odds of success are not in your favour. When... if you engage and take the plunge, that, more than likely, you'll lose... and for no real gain whatsoever... this is about living to fight another day as they say.

Why is this important?

Well, having an 'all or nothing' attitude and constantly diving head first into situations is sometimes, simply not the best way to move forward and achieve what you want. It equally may have a negative impact on your progress and force you into unnecessary setbacks.

Regarding your selection process...

You don't want to turn up to a special forces screen test and fail abysmally... you don't want to turn up to any special operations entry test or selection course and spectacularly fall short. In doing so they might never invite you back and you'll jeopardise your chances of having a proper crack at it.

Know your limitations and understand when and if you're ready.

What are your limitations and which ones can you improve versus those you will always have to take into consideration?

Limitations I can improve on... i.e. running, pack marching, swimming, navigation, shooting, aptitude, memory, cognitive learning processes.

Limitations I will always have to consider... i.e. medical conditions (yourself or others), sickness, injury.

Thinking back to your planning cycle for selection...

What will prevent you from turning up to selection 100% ready to perform at your best? i.e. breaking a leg 8 weeks out, getting the flu 1 week out, rupturing an ACL 6 months out.

TRAIN TO WIN, NEVER TO FAIL

Within Special Operations we want soldiers to have a 'winning at all costs' mentality. To continue until the job is done, regardless.

We want soldiers to have the attitude of, *"Just because I'm shot, I will continue with the task and deal with the situation."*

We don't want soldiers who are shot or injured to think, *"I've been shot, that's it. I can't do anything else so I'm just going to lie here."*

If a soldier was injured and could continue the fight, that's what we wanted. Just because someone is shot or injured, doesn't mean they're out of the fight.

This is what mindset you must have. Never train to fail, always train to win.

Never teach yourself to lose. Always finish anything you do with a win. Anything to get that 'win'.

If you're conducting physical activity, always finish with a short sharp, high intensity burst to complete the session. This could include running sprints, rowing sprints, bag punches, medicine ball slams, sledge hammer hits. Anything to get you pumped and have you finish the session as a winner.

In a selection or reinforcement cycle scenario...

You could have had a horrible day where nothing went right. You could have fucked up on the ACQB course or during your movements phase on selection by dropping your 40mm gold tops... (which I did)...

Or alternatively... just in your every training or regular life... you're having an ordinary day to say the least and nothing is working out...

Never finish that day or that training session or that iteration on selection without getting a win up.

This could be anything...

1. Finish a task you've been working on all day or an element of that task.
2. Clean your equipment.
3. Complete a hard physical training session.
4. Talk to your SGT about an issue you've been putting off.
5. Study the area you're having trouble with.
6. Conduct some further dry practice of your pistol shooting.
7. Conduct some meditation or mindfulness training to clear your mind.

Anything to get that 'win'. Don't leave angry, beaten, dejected.

Leave a winner, no matter what.

List some ways in which you can leave certain areas of your life a winner... no matter what!

Work: _____

Home: _____

Study: _____

Training: _____

List some areas you know you have trouble with and are susceptible to leaving in a negative mindset.

