

SWEAT UNFILTERED- December 8, 2015

I'm offering you my personal story of grit because there's absolutely nothing special about me. I was born with no great talent, beauty, or charisma to set me apart from anyone, however, grit is the one great equalizer in this world. It is the one quality you choose to seize when you come face to face with your rock bottom to summon the guts, the drive, the persistence, and the resilience to GET. SHIT. DONE. (#GSD)

Before 2012 the only practice I'd ever had with grit was on the gym floor. There's a moment of fatigue when you work out hard where you are forced to decide between proving you can finish strong or calling it quits.

The amount of times I have chosen to suck it up and given it one more set proved to me, on a much smaller scale, that my mindset could make me do what my body would not will on it's own.

Never in my life, though, did I realize that I'd have to call on that same desire to keep going when it came my way of life.

We got our loan for Sweat July 12th, 2012. Lawrence lost his job July 13th, 2012. A one income home became a zero income home and from there NOTHING and I mean NOTHING went as we expected.

For well over a year, Lawrence and I made the hardest, most humbling decisions we have ever made in our lives.

And while as a family we remained not only intact but stronger than ever, on a personal level, I was left **RAW**.

I was tired of waking up every morning yearning for my safety net.

I drained myself daily daydreaming of my easy, previous life.

I was lethargic from constantly trying to seek refuge in things that no longer existed.

I'd go to bed consumed by my past and wake up empty by my present.

And then...I made the decision... to let it go. I literally let my old life die.

I hit a point where I stopped thinking of life before July 13th 2012 as the dream that I was supposed to chase after again. I stopped believing that I or my family was somehow missing out because we didn't have the same things that our previous life had outlined for us. **I stopped hunting for a past that had nothing to offer my future.**

The magic of growth happened when grit took over, when I stopped boxing myself in with an irrelevant past and literally began to carve out my new normal.

Grit for me has meant a mixture of spirit, courage, action, resilience (#SCAR). It's those 4 attributes that I have allowed to replace voids in my personality that created a victim mentality.

SPIRIT- I am not the smartest or strongest, but my determination and passion set me apart. I don't have big corporate dollars but I care more. I want every inch of what I create to have more value and more purpose than anything else out there. #loveyourpeople is THE business plan.

#gritandgratitude

COURAGE- Take your calculated risks, put yourself out there, daring is not the same as recklessness. You don't need to know everything before taking a step forward. You just need to know what's here, what's in front of you. #doyou, experiment, and forget the norm.

ACTION- My education and work ethic are not automatic tickets to success. This world owes you shit. It's your mind, creativity, and decision making that will set your life in motion. #GSD mode is always on.

RESILIENCE- Follow opportunity to the ends of the Earth. Failure is temporary and does not diminish your conviction. Expect to fail...often...and get the hell over it quickly. Learn and get better.
#musclesandmindset

And so there you have it... my new normal is a SCAR. No safety net but **truly** happy and fulfilled none the less.

I cried writing this email reliving some of my old fears and remembering some really dark moments so let me be clear...I never **ever** want to relive what I went through. It has changed me, for the better, but it was isolating and crippling too.

If you've never been through a long phase in your life that has brought you LITERALLY to your knees on the daily...good! I hope your luck continues! I hope the rest of your life is smooth sailing. CHANGE SUCKS. It hurts. I'm grateful I made it out better than before, but damn let me not romanticize that getting bruised and burned by life is lousy.

I had a choice in my outcome, however, and I do hope to have planted in many of you a seed of self empowerment. I did not choose to be broken but I absolutely had a hand in how I reacted and rebuilt myself.

One more rep or call it quits? I chose what I practiced. I chose what I trained for. I chose to #GSD.