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**Speaker 1** Hello.

**Speaker 2** Everybody. Welcome back to the Debrief podcast. After a couple of months hiatus, I'm joined here as always, with the 97th Air Mobility Wing Command Team, Colonel Baker and Chief Flores. We have a very special guest this afternoon. We've got Lieutenant Colonel Teddy Boyd, our 56th Air Force commander. How are you doing, sir?

**Speaker 3** Right, thank you. Doing great. I don't know about very special, but adequate is what I mean.

**Speaker 4** Adequately special?

**Speaker 2** Yeah, but a command team. Yeah. We've had a couple of months off the debrief. What have you guys been up to? What have you been up to lately?

**Speaker 4** Well, it's been a couple months because it's been incredible around the aircraft. We've been so busy doing so many great things. The first thing that comes to mind is we closed out our training year, which is the end of the fiscal year. So the end of September we closed our training year and we had a 15 year high watermark for the number of students trained. We'd graduated 2031 students this year, which again was the first time we crested 2000 since 15 years ago. And we're really proud of the team's collective efforts. And we talk about the number of students graduated. What I always say is it's not about the number, which is important because it demonstrates the magnitude. But every one of those students is combat power in the hands of your commanders. And as we know, with Ukraine going on right now, with our pacing challenge in the Pacific, we've got to keep generating and getting folks out the door and back into the field commanders hands. So that's exactly what we're doing. Super proud of the team. And they did it safely. They did it with excellence. And we're really proud. Chief, what have you been seeing around their patch?

**Speaker 1** Well, I'll tell you one thing I see right now is a different coffee cup, firm and chance. I'm disappointed. So I would.

**Speaker 2** Keep in the setting the Minnesota theme going. But I had my to go mug after lunch today. I need an extra cup of tea this afternoon.

**Speaker 1** So that's awesome. Yes, sir. So, you know, one thing that really stood out to me since the last time we filmed one, we have a new vice colonel, Patrick Brady Lee and Altus native. He just came to us from the Pentagon and he's been crushing it. The other thing is that we had an airshow recently, the first one in five years, amazing acts. And I think the most impressive part, really, it shows how much you trusted the team for requirements of getting things done was that we we executed October 1st which is always can be a minefield but the fact that we did that they showed how much trust and confidence you had the team to execute.

**Speaker 4** You mean with the change over the money is yeah.

**Speaker 1** Fiscal year close out can bring some some concerns but that was no problem to our team and the executed obviously.

**Speaker 4** It's pretty cool. Yeah I think we had about 15,000 people that showed up on their patch for that. It was a wonderful day. And again, open the gates to the community, demonstrate where the good use of the taxpayers dollar goes, and just demonstrate air power for our community and connect. It is amazing. I agree. And you have it, Colonel Brady, Leon Decker has been fantastic. The community obviously loves him. We love having him here and it's been great. Hit the ground running busy. Yeah that pretty good run down. That's a very few months.

**Speaker 2** Yes, sir.

**Speaker 4** Now we got Colonel Boyd. Colonel Teddy.

**Speaker 2** What of what have you been up to lately?

**Speaker 3** Oh, boy. The slew of ties lately. But it depends on how far back you want to go. Banner year for 22 for. For the Mad Hatter's. We did a lot of really impressive things. I think right now we have more students on the flight and we ever had. And I think at one point last week we had as many as the 54th, which is small but mighty of stairs and we're just cruising along and so return from weapons system council last week and got some really great reviews from the wing commanders, the other squadron commanders. Everybody is very excited about what we're up to today, tactical, datalink wise. And so when I told them that we were routinely on the beyond line of sight system, almost every flight, it blew some minds. And so I think Altus is really well positioned to, sir, as you said, deliver value back for the Enterprise and for War and AMC Sands. And so I think Altus is leading the way in a lot of aspects 46 way. So yeah, he shout out to the team, I agree.

**Speaker 4** The 56 Eric Ewing Squadron that Teddy commands here with our KC 46 newest Eric fueling platform in the Air Force. It's really maturing. It's it's come it's come a long way in a relatively short time here at Altus and across the board you've got your first full pilot, initial qual classes and boom initial qual classes. It's a milestone for the program. And then Georgi and I both seen at every turn the hatters are out there on the leading edge getting folks ready to get to the field and to combat power. So there's a lot of good stuff going on. So again, that's a two month snapshot. We could go we probably go on and on. But we we want to hear from Teddy here and we want to hear from you. What have you been up to, Herman Jansen in those two months?

**Speaker 2** I've just been I've been covering all those events. You know, the air show was an absolute success for the PR team. We got a lot of great products out of it photos, videos, news. In that time, we've also had some very important generals visit us as. Well, as secretaries. DAVIES and General, we've had a lot of very important visits and to showcase our mission to those individuals. But but, yeah, it's been it's been really busy.

**Speaker 1** Who who would you say was the most important visitor since the last time we filmed?

**Speaker 4** Be careful. I'm just kidding.

**Speaker 1** Answer honestly to you specifically.

**Speaker 2** I honestly know no offense to the generals, but that that air show and having all of those outside organizations, all those outside personnel come in for us to show off all of our our air power and everything we can put on. I think it just shows how much of a premier installation we are at the 97th Air Mobility Wing. You know, and I thought that was really important.

**Speaker 1** James. I felt like I was throwing a softball there. What's your promotion ceremony? Oh, yeah. Your mama was there. I was here. Oh, they're sorely missed.

**Speaker 2** And was that with the veteran within the best team? Sorry, Mom.

**Speaker 1** But I love how much you love the Air Force. Yeah, it's pretty amazing.

**Speaker 2** But. But, yeah. So, just so our listeners can hear, within the past couple of months, I did so on my. My Senior Airman Patch and my mother made the trip out to my surprise to thank thanks to my superintendent to who planned and plotted it all behind my back.

**Speaker 1** It's back in the shadows.

**Speaker 2** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. CHUCKLING And it was it was a great surprise. And it it was a great moment for me. Yeah. For me personally.

**Speaker 4** So.

**Speaker 3** Well, congratulations.

**Speaker 2** It's awesome. Thank you. Thank you. But, gentlemen, if we want to get into the meat and potatoes.

**Speaker 4** We do want to hear from Teddy Boyd in general.

**Speaker 2** Colonel Boyd, I'm afraid I'm going to. Throw a hard fastball out here right away. Tell me give me a little bit of your background and your and your childhood and what growing up was like in the boy family.

**Speaker 3** Fastball. That's a softball. Unless you're going to knife and use something really contentious. Yeah. So it's it's really interesting. I'm I'm given a keynote address at the Jackson County Health Department symposium on Thursday. And I was writing I was talking about some some life story life life lessons this morning as I was right now, my speech. And it was really interesting my entire life characterized by wanting to join the Air Force. I wrote the I wrote the Air Force Academy a letter in the fifth grade and told them that I'd like to attend. They wrote me back and said, Once you let us know when you can drive it. But it was it's interesting because my whole life became about attending the Air Force Academy. Everything that I did was either a zero sum is helping me get there or not helping me get there. And so I think kind of the first character trait is I was driven to to do something. And so from the Air Force Academy, I was not the cadet and the student that I wanted to be. And so that's part of my personal testimony, is helping people understand that regardless of who you are or where you came from, you have the chance in your career to just turn around, be who everyone, even base to base. Right. You carry a certain amount of reputation with you, but you always have the chance to start over. And I think

that's one of the the blessings of the military career. The second part is I was a C-17 pilot at Charleston for a very long time and first met Colonel Baker and Colonel Brady. Lee stood up there is the wing exec. And so I know you guys are in the 16th and I was in the better squadron in the 15.

**Speaker 1** 000.

**Speaker 3** And and that was a really outstanding experience for me. I was there for six and a half years and was a special operations u17 evaluator pilot, and just all of my dreams kind of came true. And I had this, this moment where I sat and I realized that my entire life had become about going to the Air Force Academy, going to pilot training, becoming a soldier pilot. And then eventually I was walking down the street of Charleston towards the same building, and I was like, Hey, this is the first time in 20 something years like I have achieved. And it was really interesting because from there my life became less about flying and more about leading people. You know, once you once you kind of reach the towards the top of the technical expertize and you get the taste of making a difference in somebody's life that either you go all in on that or you go all out. And we've seen people who do not want to be supervisors, do not want to be leaders. And and that's okay. Not everybody should be. But my life became about that. And I was the AFI flight commander at Charleston. It was 30 and 64 civilian and airmen, and that was a wild ride. From there. I did the Phenix Mobility Program out to Hickam, and I was part of the enroute structure as part of the Army's contingency response sort of exposure program and leadership development. From there, I was selected to go be the military to the president, and I served two and a half years at the White House doing what most people call carrying the nuclear football. There's so much, so much else, so much more than that. From there, I thought I'd take a break. You go to Johns Hopkins University because I thought it would be nice and easy going to school two, three, two or three days a week. It was not and but it was a life changing education where I got to learn from some of the smartest people in the entire world in strategic studies. We wrote 1000 pages a week and just crunched through academics and so from there came out to Altus and was blessed to work for my best friend in the Air Force. Keaton Ask you at the Oasis to be his. Do you highly recommend to anybody? Do you get the chance to work for a very good friend or work with? It is a it is an experience unlike any other in life. Then from the Oasis, I got the opportunity to be in charge of a task force called the Few Next Task Force. And I was charged with figuring out the brain, how the brain works, applying that to the adult learning aviation context, maximizing it through a full course of transformational technologies, and doing that in six months to completely rebuild the C-17 syllabus. And the the previous wing commander said it's it's this. I need you put the effort into it that is going to the moon and the Manhattan Project all wrapped into one. And so so in my testimony that I'm given as on Thursday, it's don't do what Teddy did, which is trade your personal health for, you know, for success in in sort of the work environment. And so I think I've been trading on that for a long time and trying very hard to realign my life into some sort them that's resilient and and sustainable. But June 16th, 2021 the opportunity of a lifetime and take command of the 56 s mad hatter's. And it has been a fast, incredible, fulfilling, outstanding journey with this squadron. It is hard to describe squadron commander. The highs, the lows. The. A long days that are also very short. It is. It's very interesting. And so it's been an awesome journey.

**Speaker 1** So as a commander, do you do this bit of a rhetorical question, but do you feel like the P on the outside looking in compensate for what you're actually asked to do?

**Speaker 3** Sure. That's a that's a fun question. I think we're paid very well for what we do in the military. I will say, especially talking to some of my peers on the maintenance side, they don't have that that equivalent pay structure. And I don't think we pay those guys enough for what they deal with, especially on the maintenance side. But I am very blessed to be here. And I took I took the long commitment. So I'm here. I'm here to make a difference. And regardless of what the pay.

**Speaker 1** Yes, sir. So I guess that kind of led on to what would you say? You say long days of a lot of work, a lot of ups and downs. What makes it worth it every single day to be a squadron commander and your world?

**Speaker 3** Boy, applying leadership at that level is is really interesting, especially for somebody who likes to look at the academic side and see how it plays out in real life. And making a difference in people's life has always been what it's about for me. If you can make a difference in one person's life, it's worth it. And then you can stack those wins on top of each other. But more than that is the organizational change that we've seen in the 56th. It has gone through several inflection points, and I happen to take over right at the time the mission was increasing exponentially and a lot of different challenges were coming to head. And so it's been a really fantastic experience to try and lead people through that, inspire trust and inspire and help them achieve more than they thought was possible. And so it's really cool to see that come to fruition. In fact, that's one of the things that I that I talked to you about. The I've spoken at a few of the courses. The CEO, of course, most recently the Alpha course. And I told them that you can read the books and you can learn the theories, but it takes a lot of courage to actually follow the recommendations of of trust inspire, because it is so much easier to go for control, say you will do this because it takes immediate effect. And in the military we have a top down structure and they more or less have to comply. It takes a lot of faith to help somebody, to inspire them, to lead them transformational and coach them along because it's a lot slower. And it's not the pace that any of us want to achieve, but it is more sustainable and actually just makes your heart smile when it all comes to fruition. So yeah.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. I love it. You hit you hit some things your little roll up. One of the things that you hit on is this. It's really a it's been an ongoing conversation and it ebbs and flows since at least since I've been around and serving and leading and and particularly in the flying world. And that is, you know, we have this conversation about fly away tracks or flight tracks versus leadership tracks and whether not to get in the details or go down rabbit holes on those. But what I did want to say and where you where you started talking about through your journey when you realized like the technical expertise was there, kind of gone along this path. And then I decided that, you know, you decided that you wanted to, you know, lead airmen and make a difference and team and the team dynamic. And what I've always said when we get into those conversations about at what level do we want to lead and serve, is it the same things and the same principles that give you satisfaction as an aircraft commander or a section commander, as a flight commander? You know, those kinds of smaller scale leadership opportunities, the fulfillment that you get from that is the same fulfillment that you get from squadron, from group, from wing. And so that feeling of serving airmen and growing a team doesn't change. For me, that's a universal and that's the thing I'm always trying to get through in that conversation. I feel like I can sometimes never get the right amplitude for that to soak in as it's the same thing. The thing that gives a young captain aircraft commander satisfaction is the exact kind of leadership that matters in the flight, in the squadron, at the group and at the wing and above. So anyway, I'm glad you brought that up because it gave me a little give me a little segway to to talk about that.

And I think the tenets are the same I really do to some for the audience out there as we as our Air Force, you know, wrestles with that.

**Speaker 3** Sir sir, I dabbled in writing an article about flight leadership, you know, the leadership in flight and comparing it to kind of formal leadership. And I came to a lot of the same conclusions is I equate there's a great analogy that says that as the leader of an organization, you're basically the lead of a call it a sick ship like Operation Vanguard Blitz today. And if you're at the front and you haven't told people where you're going and you're just yanking and banking all over the place, it is nearly impossible for people to keep up. And so the the steadier, the more clear, the more you can have wingman consideration towards the trail, into the formation. It is it they are very similar aspects.

**Speaker 4** Absolutely. And when you're building the plan. When you're building the plan through your team, right. It's not a hierarchical, top down, building it out. You're getting their input, you're giving them buy in. Right. And you're setting the plan so it can be successful so that when you do have to go with the branch plan, that it does come off the rails.

**Speaker 3** And so to that point, one of the main lessons I've learned in in Squadron Command is it's less about the destination, more about the process, less about the right answer, and more about how you got to the right answer, where, you know, by nature of the experience that we've had over 17, 18, 20 years, we know what the right answer will probably look like. But if we just sit there and tell people what to do, one they have no buy in to, they don't get a chance to learn themselves. And then three, they're less likely to take ownership of that. And so it takes it takes courage once again to sit back and say, I know where we should end up, but how do I help facilitate people to discover the right answer themselves?

**Speaker 4** Yeah, it's harder. Charter communications are definitely harder. Then you've got a feedback, follow up. And you know, the thing we talk about, it's a form of empowerment. You're talking about empowerment, right? And we know that fundamentally, you know, to empower is the right way to go, especially when we need to work through distributed control. And we're going to have to have our folks fight forward. But there's also a level of accountability that comes with that at the respected level of echelon. And there's also the communications that are harder because of it. And I think it challenges us in a lot of ways to be better as leaders and to provide more commander's intent unless do X, Y and Z.

**Speaker 3** Absolutely. I think we talked about it at the L.A. I have a well, I think one of our leaders, our Air Power Leadership Academy, we talked to some frontline supervisors as they as they look to elevate their their leadership game. And I had told them that the one of the absolute kits of leadership is delegation. Because done well, it is empowering. It's inspiring. And you can really achieve a lot undone poorly. That looks a lot like micromanagement. And so I think you draw it all the way back to kind of commander's intent and we talk through I've sat and thought a lot about commander's intent and I mentioned it at the Squadron Commander Breakfast several months ago, but it comes down to the context. So why we need to do something, the purpose, why this task matters, the problem, the mission statement that that is and then the products. So what the vision looks like because I have to be able to give people enough specifics of the neither of us are disappointed at the end but enough room to run so they can exceed my expectations. And at the end is the process and the left right boundaries. Talk to these people. Don't talk to these people or, you know, don't elevate past our echelon of command. And it's been really interesting. So when I delegate tasks like that, it's amazing to see what people come

up with. And not once since I've been in command using this format as somebody come up with exactly what I thought was going to happen and not once was it less awesome than what I had in my head. And so if you just give people the boundaries, it's amazing what they'll come up with.

**Speaker 4** That's great.

**Speaker 1** Yeah. Best analogy I use is me to tell you what kind of sausage I want. How you make it is up to you when I see it. Does it come out a certain way? Then I'll give you more feedback, which is all the elements that you talking about, sir, but it's awesome. The empowerment is huge and I think that's how you start building future chiefs, future squadron commanders. As you said, the things that motivate us really fall into those things that that sense of empowerment, this sense of accomplishment. You got it down there rather than someone holding your hand. And that is very important.

**Speaker 3** Absolutely. Can't understate the the concept of a buy in. I mean, it is really, really powerful. And I think CCF said it really well at 80 last year when it started talking about command, mission type orders, trust and inspire. And there's a certain amount of leadership, acceptance and willingness to you not get what you wanted out of the deal. And it's basically the concept of grace. It's like, oof! And so any time that I get something back that I that doesn't quite meet my expectations, I'll look inside and say, Man, how did I how did I fail to deliver enough specifics on this? Then you can pivot that. I know both of you are student students of leadership, and you pivot that right back towards situational leadership model, where you enter into the conversation with somebody, you think they're in this quadrant of the chart and they prove you wrong, that they're maybe not there. So you need to give them more specifics and more specifics if they fail to meet that and if they aren't even meeting the minimum expectations, that's where the less coaching and more directive sort of feedback comes in. But it's, it's all on that spectrum. Yeah.

**Speaker 1** Yeah. What do they say with it. With empowerment must come competence. So as part of assessing a person do is make sure that the competence is there. If not, you work towards it to make sure we empower them, you know, setting them up for failure.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. It's kind of like the coaching idea. You don't want to put an unprepared team on the field. They should be competent in their respective positions. Otherwise you're putting that person in a bad spot and you're not going to accomplish your objectives. So totally, totally agree with that. That's a good general aphorism.

**Speaker 2** Yeah, cowboy. I want to get back to kind of your personal life and personal and professional influences throughout your career. Were there people outside of the military even before you joined, that really influenced you and shaped you? And then after you joined the military, were there individuals throughout your career that really, really shaped you and made you want to, you know, got you to this point?

**Speaker 3** Absolutely. Absolutely. And if somebody gets to a spot in their career where they they're like, I got here on my own, I think they really need to take a step back and do some self-examination. I'm only here as a product of the people who had the grace to coach me beforehand and give me the chance to fix my mistakes and get to where I am. And that's what you see before you. I started really young. I come from a very strong lineage of military service. So my dad was a Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot, did the crazy artillery scouting in Ford helicopters. Before that, his mom was a code breaker in World

War Two and his dad was a Navy. I was as an enlisted Navy seaman. And then my mom's dad served under Patton in World War Two and the Battle of the Bulge. And so, I don't know, it was just a really strong influence. And I never thought I never had a conception that I would do anything else. So how did why did I want to go to the Air Force Academy in the fifth grade? Well, I knew I wanted to fly. My dad left the Army, retired from the Army, and then became an airline pilot. I wanted to fly. Something about flying just captivated me. And then I knew I was going to go to the military. It was never even a question. See, but those two together, there's Air Force Academy and. And that's how it goes. I'd be remiss if I didn't think of my dad for all the. All the lessons growing up he had. There were some very, very tough, very tough lessons that he afforded me. And but I would not be who I am without him. After that, my very first squadron commander was was then Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Lamontagne. Now Lieutenant General Lamontagne. And the sky's the limit for that just phenomenal leader. He pulled he pulled me in to be as exact as a lieutenant and I did not want to exac. And he he saw that I did something well and caught me in the parking lot and I was just trying to fly and gain confidence. And he goes, Daddy, I'm going to I'm going to have you be my next exactly that, sir, whatever you need. And then as I expect for him for a year. And that was really interesting. And then and then after that was now I was then Lieutenant Colonel Reavis on course and now Brigadier General Sanchez and learned so much more for her, I expect for her for, I think, two years. And then after that was Lieutenant Colonel Dave Owens, who is a former vice presidents. Military aid from that it was cash is Bentley. Colonel Cash is Bentley. And so I have had just a phenomenal slate of squadron commanders growing up. I would not be where I am without those. And you pick things up from each one and you just try and understand why they do what they do and then try and understand how you would either do the same or do it differently. And I encourage everybody in all the classes I teach that leadership is a journey, it's an experimentation. And so you've got to be taking notes. And after every single job I take notes what I learned from this job. So you just kind of do some reflection in over a thing that I do in small circles, the 19 lessons I learned at the White House and just, you know, base core memories and starting to write out the ones that I've learned from Squadron Command. But sir, as you know, there are too many lessons to learn. And it's I have a whole sheet every single day. So if I were to do that.

**Speaker 1** 97 lessons. Yeah.

**Speaker 4** 97 you might have from. Or maybe you'll have.

**Speaker 1** Yeah.

**Speaker 4** 56 this one for you.

**Speaker 3** I'll run out of.

**Speaker 4** Words a lot of times we'll have conversations and I definitely say this in the front office and I say to squad commanders too, if you are not growing professionally and personally every single day in command, particularly our front office in key jobs, then you're you're really missing something. And so I can appreciate that. I can appreciate the perspective of trying to tie those threads together and see what are the big ideas here? What are the big things that were at work? Because it really is it goes far beyond the business that we're in is not 9 to 5 business. Right. This is the national defense, the United States of America. And it it involves every component of our lives. And so there's so much to learn every day. It's such a rich environment out there for growth. It's just



incredible. I think once you can get to a place where you can look at it through that lens, it really opens up a lot more. And the experiences and and I think I've heard you touch on this maybe some moments where you where you figured out is, is the experience one of personal growth, or am I so driven on this path that I can't see the forest through the trees or whatever it may be? But it's great conversation, have important conversations.

**Speaker 3** Sir, as you know, I go about 1000 miles an hour, everything I do. And with that comes a lot of mistakes. But my only commitment, my entire life, has been never to make the same mistake twice. I try very, very hard to figure out why things do not go the way that I thought they would or the way I wanted them to, and then make sure that I that I don't do it again. And so I only consider it a failure. You know, one of the best interview questions is, you know, tell me the last time you failed. Right? Or what is failure mean to you? And I only consider failure if I failed to learn from my mistakes.

**Speaker 4** And it's good as a good perspective. Well, you mentioned Teddy, if you don't mind if I ask one here, one little thread that I'd like to pull. And this is definitely about Teddy Boyd in your in your elevator speech of your experience up until now. You mentioned at one point you said when I was at the academy, I wasn't the kind that I wanted to be. What did you what did you mean what did you mean by that? Do you mind going into a little bit a little bit of detail on that? What was the lesson there? It's got to be a life lesson.

**Speaker 3** Sir. So many lessons. So many lessons. I think I was ill prepared. And I think this is not a criticism of of my upbringing. I think it goes back to the kind of control versus inspiration and trust and development and coaching. Right. And so I think once I didn't have the strong presence in my life telling me what to do, I didn't know what I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I know that now, after a lot of exploration of my own personality, I really dislike somebody wasting my time. And that, it turns out, is a personal tripwire for me. I think it's because my brain works so quickly. I want to go here and the academy is very much about you will do what we tell you to do when we tell you to do it. And so I had an internal rebellion against that, I will say. And I also wasn't a very prepared student. Things came. I transferred from a city school to a very country school. I graduated 50 people from my school to the point where I had been doing self-study academics for many years. And then when I did my senior year of high school at Kent State University and some basic classes, and so I was ill prepared on the academic side. I also played football my freshman year, and that was more of a job than it was a hobby. And so I think the storm of things just caused me to be completely overwhelmed and ill prepared. And so in the rebellion and the inadequate academics and the inadequate time management, I just I failed on a lot of aspects. And so from there, I didn't do very well academically. But then I will tell you, I had a class called Management 303 and it was it was the only purpose of this class was to bend your mind. It was amazing. Hey.

**Speaker 1** I know I don't left. Enjoy.

**Speaker 3** I don't know. Break your mind if you if you so inclined. But I did it right before the break between sophomore and junior year and it was I can't even tell you. Actually, the only lesson that I can actually talk to you about is, is Colonel Kevin Davis was was my instructor and he put up a bunch of proofs. So recommend promotion recommendation files. And he asked us cadets to say, Do you think this person got promoted or not? It was eye opening. Really? Yeah, of course I got promoted and they saved the world and transported £1,000,000,000 of cargo is like no passed over. And it caused me to question everything that I knew about the Air Force. It was really pretty funny and something about

that summer in between my sophomore and junior year, which for my listeners, that's where you make the decision on whether you stay in the Air Force Academy or not. I recall signing on the dotted line because from there, if you leave the academy in an unforeseen way, you now owe money back or you serve in the enlisted ranks. And so there's a big choice between sophomore and junior. And I made the personal decision, but not only did I want to graduate and I wanted to do well, and I wanted to bring my very low GPA up to at least a 3.0 because that is the minimum bar to get you into grad school from there on. And so I spent the next two years sleeping every other night and just pulling 24 hour days every other day and studying and brought my GPA up to 3.03 in a graduate with honors from the management department and started my my career on that track. And so I failed physically as well. I went from football player where lots of calories to burn to bodybuilding and in powerlifting and did great. And then one day when I started sleeping every other night, I didn't have I didn't work out. I also didn't know anything about resilience and the things we teach these days. And so I struggle with weight for a good portion of my career. And so I think what I tell people is that life in general is about learning what works for you and what doesn't work for you in sort of every aspect. And I share this testimony with with every OP's Air Force class that comes through. So in between your sophomore and junior year, you have academy cadets who go visit bases. And so I make it a point to have an hour and a half with them at lunch. And I share this because what I tell them is once you commission, you have the choice. You can be whatever officer you want, regardless of who you are. At the Academy, I've seen just very substandard cadets. A lot of Division one athletes that I knew become outstanding, outstanding officers. And I've seen a lot of folks that were at the top end of the cadet ranks. Cadet, squadron commander, cadet group commander, turned out not to be really great in the active duty. And so I just encourage them to to use that opportunity to to make life what they want out of it.

**Speaker 1** Hmm.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. It's just incredible. I don't know about the sleeping every other night. I don't think.

**Speaker 1** There's not a lot I would.

**Speaker 3** Not recommend.

**Speaker 4** Not recommend you just all nighter and then go to the next day, sleep bed day at a normal time and then all nighter. How long did you do this?

**Speaker 3** It was not good. Well, we had the summers off, but two academic year had to get really creative because I couldn't. So my roommate would go to sleep, but I couldn't have the light on. And then I would just sit in the hallway and then the the night I don't know, the night responsible person would come yell at me for for sitting in the hallway reading a textbook. And so I had to get really creative about where I studied but would not recommend. But um, I think it's been interesting to see in my life when I get determined about something, I'll, I'll absolutely make it happen.

**Speaker 4** It sounds like that's also the thing that you've got to keep bridled in some ways, right? And so something you're still working on.

**Speaker 3** It's a flashback to when I said trying to realign my life to something that's more sustainable. It's been interesting every the last boy up until this last year I lost leave. It was

eight of the last ten years. And I'm sure it was more than that. It was it was not good. And so I've been asked to do big projects everywhere I go. It's it's really interesting. So out of the White House, they they wouldn't they decided that I shouldn't take my leave and that I should do a very interesting top secret project for them on national security and and prepare nuclear preparedness. And so so I did that and then brought in to the few next task force. And they I worked six. Yes. All right. Transformation. And I worked 16 hours a day, almost seven days a week for seven straight months. And that and then rolled right into command. And so it was not ideal. It's not ideal. So what I'll tell the the mental health symposium is don't do it. Teddy did it's a journey. It's about figuring out what works and what doesn't.

**Speaker 1** And so, sure, I imagine you felt like you had to work 16 hour days, seven days a week. What if you could do anything different to still get to the same end result without killing yourself? Would and maybe that's now your job. You seem sort of like someone. They just work and that's just life to you. But what are some things that maybe you could have done differently? Same in result, but.

**Speaker 3** So I think in that project there's not a lot I could have done differently. When you're told it's the Manhattan Projects and in the space race wrapped into one. And that's the level of effort I need from a person that you love and respect mentor over many years. I do. If somebody I respect asked me to give that level of effort, I will do it. Now, going going forward, it's it's about where to draw those boundaries.

**Speaker 4** So how do you so this is this is great because this is now going to roll into conversation about how do you put your team in a posture so that you know, the pace that you're talking about there is a is a pace that probably unsustainable for maybe even for you, but certainly, you know, many that that will not be sustainable. So how do you get your team in a posture that. Is sustainable and that that doesn't take it to the red limiter and then you break the machine. So how do you how do you balance that? And what's the perspective on that as a as a commander now? Because your your team's going to key off that and it's going to set their their tone on climate. So what have you. Hey, working on that.

**Speaker 3** Sir? So a senior, him and Mixon, Mickens asked me that at his A.L.S. graduation, almost verbatim. And so what I told him is that, number one, you've got to be exceptionally, exceedingly clear with people what your expectations are. And I said at least once a month to my command team, hey, if I'm answering emails on Sunday, I absolutely do not expect any sort of response. I don't expect you to look at your email over the weekend. I do not expect please do not. What works for me in my workflow does not have to dictate your life. And I asked that it doesn't. And so it's one of those things you can say it upfront, but then if you let your expectations creep, then you've you've negated it. And so I make sure to reinforce that with my team. I've read a lot of research that says that that's not effective strategy, but it seems to be working pretty well as long as you mean it empathically and genuinely. The other part is some of it is setting the example. I would say I will never ask somebody to do something, one that I'm not willing to do, but two, I will not ask somebody to go an extra inch before I go the extra mile to fish for myself, that I'm running into the wall where that is maybe not a sustainable model, but I think it demonstrated, at least for my my personal and my leadership style, it demonstrated how much I cared for people. And when I did ask them for things, they took it very seriously. I walk around and kick people out of the squadron, or at least they did initially and made sure that people knew that I wasn't doing loyalty checks. I don't I don't care. And when

you're here, when you're not here, what is you saw my command philosophy and expectations is I don't be here just to be here. Go home when the job is done. As long as you're improving the unit and yourself along the way, then we're going to be square. And so I try to hold do that in everything that I do, but, you know, model the way I've always have always been. The 12:00 I sort of model for things and it seems to be working.

**Speaker 4** All right. And families. How's family holding up?

**Speaker 3** Great. Yeah, great. I would say at the White House, we intentionally put service for service before family and faith and a lot of other things. I don't know that I would not do it the same way that we did Squadron Command. We know that it's not just me who signs who signs up for that, it's the entire family. And so what it comes down to is how do you how do you how do you distribute the time? Because the notion of work life balance is completely incorrect. Do you always spend more waking hours at work than you will at home doing anything else? But it's about the quality time the. And so sorry, I have to ask who won the chili cook off and tell you the reason. And this is a great segway into I love cooking chili. I have a fantastic chili recipe, but I, I takes very intentional steps with my family and my oldest, Louie's turned eight years old and we got her she struggles a little with she struggles with confidence and some other things. And she finally wanted to go to a swim meet. So her very first one meet was in Oklahoma City on Saturday. And so coming from a, you know, Division one sports background and sports my entire life, it has been interesting to see my girls who do not follow in that that footsteps. And so how do you continue to coach and encourage and the purpose of sports? And so it's it's fun. It's a I see that my family's my first mission and just an opportunity to create amazing leaders right there at home. But we try to pack as much quality family time in as we can. So there's a book called Total Total Leadership. That is the first book that I've quoted in this in an hour. Right. Amazing. Usually it's a lot more than that. But Total Leadership by Stu Freedman, who's a UPenn professor. And it's how do you if you can overlap the four circles of your life, your family, a community, professional and social I think is the other one maybe and get as many four way wins as you can. And so what we did is, is we bought a camper and so we bought a 35 foot fifth wheel. We use it aggressively because I didn't want to get to the point where my kids are teenagers and then I'm trying to fight my way in to spend quality time with them. I want them to think that it's normal. And so we camp a lot. We can't very aggressively. And once you can pack all of that family stuff into a 35 foot trailer and spend time outside together with with limited distractions, it has been really great for our family. I will say I'm glad communities two years it was this is not a model that could be sustained for a very long term, but we have found a really great rhythm. Thanks for.

**Speaker 4** Asking. Yeah, sounds it sounds like you got it in balance. What you're.

**Speaker 1** Saying. No. So I worked for seven. The first quarter commanders. And it is it is the absolute crucible leadership. And it really is. It amazes me what you all do. I mean, specifically you, sir, but squadron commanders are all in. And I mentioned the paycheck earlier. And of course, you're humble enough to make sure you don't minimize other people in their pay. But I'm asking because the the the amount of effort you put in, the weight of effort I'll put in, there's no paycheck that can make up for it. But it's the little wins every day when you when you see that airman get it or you help that family or get over that finish line. The next milestone for the unit that that to me is a bigger than a paycheck.

**Speaker 4** Yes, team growth. It's absolutely the growth of your team. And of course, leading a team to execute the mission with excellence is is incredible. But it's esteem

growth, personal and professional growth. I think you hit on a lot of those different things. And Teddy, this comes up all the time about work life balance and there's a lot of different theories out there. And my thing has always been that, you know, our Air Force, it's not binary with our with our Air Force and where the time can or should be spent. In other words, we say service before self, and sometimes that gets twisted and people say, Oh yeah, it means you put the service before family. And what I have always boiled that down to is it means it's not about you or us or the individual, it's about the group. That is the essence to me of the service before self conversation. And when you look at our organization, we're actually designed to wrap our arms around family. Now that may where every second is spent and logged is not the conversation I'm really having. What I'm saying is that there are times when there's a lot of time logged by the member and the family, you know, and that could be time away from the family. But the structures that we have in place to care for that family and support that family and their ability to serve through their member at different times, it's not in opposition to each other. It is not binary. The service is designed, our air force is designed to wrap its arm around families. And so I think it just depends on how you look at it. And when you start looking at it through that lens, it can be really powerful to understand that, you know, this is a you know, this is a it's a it's a cycle and it's a constant. And we're all rowing in this boat together, and that helps me process it. And I think it's a powerful thing. So I think you hit on so many elements of that. I appreciate you bringing it up. It's been a really good it's been a really good, really good version of the debrief.

**Speaker 1** I think we knew that.

**Speaker 4** We knew there's going to be news. We're talking about this guy.

**Speaker 1** And of course, he's humble it when I go around the base and I talk, I mean, professional development really big to the command chief. And when I hear the by name requests come back, Colonel Boyd's typically at the top of the list, if not at the top of the list of folks who want to come back. He's engaging. He goes, people find introspection. It's pretty amazing to watch him in action.

**Speaker 4** You feel the energy, feel the passion for what you do. It's that's one of your superpowers, I think is so.

**Speaker 1** Deliberate and deliberate about every phase of his life. It's pretty amazing when we talk about that intellectual curiosity. He's at the absolute high end of.

**Speaker 4** That high end of the spectrum, for sure. And what I love, though, is I think a real beauty of the stories. You found a way to keep it all and what I'll call a relative balance, right? You found a way to channel that energy, that passion, that that drive in you, that makes you want to be the absolute best that you can be, but not at the necessarily not at the expense of other things that really matter to you, you know, like family and servicing and your health care.

**Speaker 3** So still working on that. So I appreciate those compliments. I don't think any of them are, are deserved. I, I just see the things that I haven't done well in life and it just motivate me to to keep going. I appreciate both of you giving me the grace because I have had you know, one of the things we don't talk about in here is the is the wing commander, group commander, squadron commander, mentoring and coaching that goes on. The background is I made plenty of mistakes and squadron commander is not all sunshine and

roses for sure, but I appreciate specifically the grace that you guys have given me. Thank you.

**Speaker 4** Yeah, you bet. And know it's all. We're all learning. It's learning. Every day is learning. Every day is, you know. Hey, look at what can I what can we all collectively do better? So that's great. And some of that. So answer, how are we doing on time and how are we looking for this.

**Speaker 1** I say we go an extra 5 minutes. Yeah. If you guys can before you. I feel like we have a talent here and why not let our listeners.

**Speaker 2** I did have one last question.

**Speaker 4** Know there is this this is how it goes.

**Speaker 2** I want I wanted to ask you, what's what's post military career looking like for you? What's going to be civilian, Terry Boyd or a retired lieutenant colonel? Retired possibly colonel.

**Speaker 3** If I get the retired lieutenant colonel, I will consider it a win. There are days, I believe, that I will retire as a captain. That is basically how I live my life. Thanks for asking that. This was a conversation we had in the hallway before you showed us, as you know, and you've seen me talk it all the professional development things. That is my calling in life. Right is to glorify our maker and and change the world by developing leaders with humility and love. And that's what I do. And so any chance that I get to get the opportunity to get up and share the mistakes and the lessons learned and the things that I'm working on is is a good day for me. It energizes me, regardless of how long the day is or how little sleep I had so post-military it. My my goal in the military is to continue serving until I'm no longer useful. I'm committed after 24 years of service. That's where it ends. That's where it ends. If that's not, then that's not so. It's it's been an interesting road to get to all of those perspectives. And I love it. And so whatever is next, this is great for me. But my post military career is to continue that life mission. And so I'm working on a philosophy called leadership physics that you've seen in a couple of the slide, slide decks, but it's about taking them. I can read two or 300 books a year and trying to plot them around in a different framework. And so it's it's a concept I call leadership physics. And so I think you can plot the leader the concept of leadership on a on more or less a scientific spectrum. Leadership is 100% not science. But I think some of the scientific principles apply to how you understand it. And it started with are you a start with y kind of leader or leadership challenge kind of leader. And I got this in my head. I was like, Why can't I be both? They're both good. And if they can if they're both applicable, then, you know, where do they fit in to the thing we call leadership? And so I said, Here's what I'm going to do. I remember exactly where I was at. I was in Hawaii in my very first in the first year in Hawaii, it was five, six, seven years ago now. And I was like, It's easy. I'll take all the best leadership books and then I'll point a little arrow and point to where they fall into the thing we call leadership. It is five, six, seven years on and still have not finished that because it turns out it doesn't exist. And so I'm of the firm belief that we, the world, would be a better place if we had more better leaders and leaders would be more effective if they understood how the whole leadership thing fits together. And so by reading all of these things, they all start to congregate and aggregate around certain ideas. And my whole goal is to break leadership down in its most basic, fundamental constituent parts and then help people understand that every book, every movie, every interaction with another person is a leadership lesson they

can take and start categorizing. And I can't help but think every interaction I see in life, whether I'm picking up a pizza from Domino's and I see the poor ship manager is 19 years old yelling at his 14 year old people. And I just, you know, I can't help but look at it in a military or in a leadership perspective. And so my whole goal is there's a whole set of things behind it, but a set of kids books and in everything to help grow leaders from the start so that we can make the world a better place. So that's my goal.

**Speaker 1** Whenever that answer, let's bless our listeners are in the 56, there's like a whole 35 number of folks out there wishing they were in the 56 to be investing like this. I'm convinced, Colonel Boy can teach a robot the art of leadership with his approach. It's pretty amazing to watch or listen to.

**Speaker 4** This is great. I think you're going to I think you I think you got a bright future, you know, whatever that looks like, you know, there's those energies and passions or or definitely lead you in a very in a great path that's exciting. To sign us up will be your first will be your first your first book purchase at the at the roadshow or whatever. You should.

**Speaker 3** Appreciate that. Appreciate it.

**Speaker 4** As long as you promise you'll give us, you're not going to charge us to autograph the No us.

**Speaker 3** When you're out there now, I'll be paying you to take it off my hands and leave me leave me a one star review on Amazon whenever it gets written.

**Speaker 1** That's really neat, you know? So all the things you talk about, I mean, I think one of the first things to build trust is reliability. And I will say any time I email you or anyone else in this, when e mails you, you are like quick to goodness. You are responsive as as all can be. And that's pretty amazing. You know, a lot of and I've seen the spectrum, I've seen civilians to airmen to chief reach out to you and you deliver on that and all. None of that stuff matters if you don't build reliability. We trust you reliability. And that's pretty awesome that you do that.

**Speaker 3** Appreciate that feedback, Chief. I don't I don't always and I set the mark, as you know, there were emails than there are minutes in the day, but I try to make it count when I do. You had the concept of trust and that is the currency of leadership. And Stephen IMR. Covey Right. The younger Covey has the book called The Speed of Trust that just captivated me. And trust can be so many things. And he breaks it down into character and competence or characters. Do you believe the things the person is saying and competence is? Do you believe that they're the right person to tell you that or they're capable of telling you that? And he breaks it down even further. And I just am captivated with trust because when it's not, their life doesn't make sense. And so well, actually one of my my message for the this is a sneak. Pete, for all of you people who'll be there on Thursday at Jackson County Health Department Mental Health Symposium on Thursday is it's about resilience in yourself, leading yourself well and then being a great follower, right? So helping lead your boss by being a good follower in the last part is leading your people in a way that builds their resilience. And so I'm showing basically what it does, how you do that in the wrong way. So the kind of toxic leadership behaviors and then how you do it in the right way. And it all comes down to trust, love, clarity and and helping people achieve more than than they thought was was possible.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. You hit on followership, too. We don't talk enough about that. We we talk a lot about leadership as we should. Right, as we should. We should set the maintain high standard for our leaders. And we all I'll prescribe to that all in on that. But we don't I really feel like we're all followers on some level as well to ensure we spend enough time talking about that and what what really good followership looks like. And we probably need to pass that out a little bit more. I think institutionally we really need to spend more time talking about that, particularly in this day and age where there's just a lot of negativity in the social media space and out in cyberspace, and that can be challenging for leaders to be able to process and either overcome or to to work through. So I think we could we could probably collectively do a lot more in that space. I'm glad you hit on that. Probably one for the next. Maybe in one of these future debriefs. We do we could we could talk about some examples of good, good and bad.

**Speaker 3** But there's some really we think about leadership in that it's I'm in charge of this organization moving in this direction. And I will tell you, sir, being a squadron commander made me realize that, no, I am both the leader of an organization, but I'm a follower in my boss's organization. And I think you're absolutely right. We do not talk about it at all. We talk about followership in basically the sense of do what you're told. Correct. But it's so much more than that. And I started peeling back. This is if I was to pick one failure and there's of the many and soaring command is followership 100%. And so I've been you know, what do I do when I build something? I try and learn why. And so I've done a very extensive reading on followership. And there it's an emerging field and everybody's coming to the same the same realization that followership is its own thing. And unless you're the president of the United States and even he answers to the American people and Congress, you're your follower first. And that has been a real enlightening study of research or a course of research for me. And so I think that is probably the number one leadership lesson I'm taking out of Squadron Command, which is really interesting because it's it's hard to be a good follower.

**Speaker 1** Syria, as a squadron enlisted leader, I mean, I've always been and I proudly say this the pride made to the commander, which means I'm their ultimate follower. And I love it because you really get to see behind every toxic leader, there's usually a group of toxic followers because anyone can tell the the emperor has no clothes on. And a lot of the times it doesn't happen. They just watch the the boss burned at the stake and at any point someone could have stopped it. And I used to brag to people I've never had a bad boss me because part of it you don't let them, you tell them like, Hey, have you thought about doing this? And if you don't say that, you can blame them for not for not doing it. So it really is a team game when it comes to that.

**Speaker 4** It absolutely is. And you've know this and this is one of the things that Colonel Board was hitting on there is. It's at the Scottish command group command wing command level. It's not a lot of go do. It really shouldn't be in that way. Or is there is there direction? Is there guidance? Is there moving an organization and aligning it? Absolutely. But very rarely even in the military sense of the word. Do we need a go do? Yes. Is there a time and a place for it? Absolutely. But a lot of times it is. You mentioned it earlier. Colonel Boyd mentioned it. It is. Am I am I getting back something that meets my attempt that may look a little different, that I need to be a little flexible on, that meets the intent of the organization, meets the needs of the organization. And then I need to flex and and I have no problem saying there is an element of followership in that. And it's not leading by committee, but there is absolutely a followership component of what does the team need. And that really is something that you should follow as a leader, should be very sense of that. And if you're



getting feedback from folks like your CEOs, your chiefs say, Hey, boss, you need to be thinking about this, or, Hey, this is what the team needs or what the team is feeling. That's a form of followership from the from the head echelon, right? From from the hierarchy. So it's fascinating. We could really I think we're teed up some great you may.

**Speaker 1** Need a bonus. If you wanted to do that a.

**Speaker 3** Feature, I would I would blitz, read all the things and I would come prepared and I'll throw the book recommendation out. It's called The Courageous Follower. It's written by a Georgetown University professor who spent a long time in national security enterprise. And it is fantastic. It's about how do you how to follow with courage, but how to speak up with courage and the four dimensions that he comes up with it. It's it's one of those ones you got to sit down with with a cup of coffee in the in the morning and really chew on it.

**Speaker 1** So as he saw an Alan back there taking notes, so it's hashtag leadership, angry words. It's okay.

**Speaker 2** You know, forget it. But but as our listeners can tell, we can probably go all afternoon. But unfortunately, we've got to wrap this up. But it's been an absolute top seven episode of the debrief.

**Speaker 3** How many have there been? Seven? Yep. Adequate. That's all I was going for. Right? That's it.

**Speaker 1** That's harsh. You made senior, Evan.

**Speaker 3** You made. I would have.

**Speaker 2** Been real good, but it's been it's been a pleasure and it's been a great episode. And I really hope our listeners take a lot from this. And it. Colonel. Colonel Baker, Chief Flores, as always, you gentlemen just kept it flowing. You know, and I really appreciate your time. I appreciate your time. Lieutenant Colonel Boyd, do you have any closing comments, sir?

**Speaker 4** I just to say what I always say. Thank you. Thanks for being on the show, too, Airman Jansen, for putting this together again. This is this is how we learn the purpose of the debrief. We went back to the original concept of it, which was to figure out what went wrong, why did it go wrong, and how do we fix it. To your point, try not to make the mistake twice, but. But learning from the rich experiences that are out there. So here they are. And I think Vicki crushed it on this.

**Speaker 1** Oh, my gosh. We don't even usually we throw in the word debrief to emphasize it. It was it was evident.

**Speaker 4** It was one big dbrs.

**Speaker 1** Omnipresent. Yeah, frankly.

**Speaker 3** So word of the day. Word of the day that Callander do.

**Speaker 4** Absolutely.

**Speaker 1** A great job, sir. I mean, is she as good or better than advertised we knew were going to kill it tonight. Yeah.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. Thank you.

**Speaker 3** Thanks for having me. This has been a tremendous opportunity to sit and talk. Leadership with both of you is something that I think everybody should get the chance to do. But there's only two of you in so many hours in the day, so I appreciate you spending time.

**Speaker 4** Well, we're going to start not sleeping every other night.

**Speaker 3** I do.

**Speaker 1** Not recommend or do not recommend that we're.

**Speaker 4** Not going to do it.

**Speaker 1** But the debrief is.

**Speaker 4** We'll learn from. But thanks. Thanks, Teddy. Thanks, Lou. Take on board after that.

**Speaker 2** And with that to our listeners, that was a wrap in other episode of the Debrief podcast. Thank you very much, everybody. Have a good one.

**Speaker 4** Thanks, Alan.