

With the slightest of bumps, the plane touched down at Spain's Jerez airport causing Jake to look up from his laptop as he posted his latest assignment for his Associates Degree in cybersecurity through the **United States Naval Community College**. His transfer leave had been filled with time spent with friends and family back home where he had time to retool his workouts and **nutrition plan** to elevate his **Body** to the same level as his **Mind** and **Spirit**.

Gathering his gear, Jake walked off the plane and across the tarmac to where he knew IT2 Rosen was waiting for him. Rosen had reached out to him as soon as his orders had posted as his **Sponsor** and had helped answer every question every step of the way as Jake transferred from USS BULKELEY (DDG 84) and made his way halfway around the world to the HSM 79 Griffins.

Eighteen months ago, he didn't think he was going to reenlist, but here he was, about to become an IT2 through **Advance to Position (A2P)**, continuing to be **Forged by the Sea**.

Thinking back to the day he had mustered a little late and definitely bleary eyed, his lips tightened in determination once again.

His Leading Petty Officer onboard BULKELY, IT1 Hill, asked him to stay behind when the rest of the division was dismissed to carry out the plan of the day. IT1 sat him down and said, "Look, I'm not going to ask you what **Honor** means to you. Navy defines it as "**I am accountable for my professional and personal behavior. I will be mindful of the privilege I have to serve my fellow Americans.**"

Jake just sat there, waiting for the lecture to be over. Surprisingly, it was, and it wasn't. IT1 laid it out, "We are going to meet every day at 1100 for **Extra Military Instruction (EMI)** over the next five days."

They did just that. Pulling apart the definitions of **Honor**, **Courage** and **Commitment** and really talking about what they meant made Jake realize how far he had drifted from his vision, goals, and purpose when he joined the Navy. When he raised his hand at the NTAG, he had **acted despite his fear** and at muster, he had not **upheld the highest standards**, nor was he **getting better as a person**.

When EMI was over, but they kept meeting and Jake learned about the **Warrior Mindset** and how to use its cycle of **Commitment, Preparation, Execution, and Reflection** for nearly everything in his life. It was **Plan, Brief, Execute, Debrief (PBED)** for his brain. Simple stuff really, but really powerful stuff when practiced and used. Things like **mindfulness, recalibration, SMART goals, flexible thinking and energy management** were things he already did, but now he knew what they were and how to do them better. Key to it all was his own **Warrior Ethos** and cross walking his personal values to **Navy's Core Values**.

Throughout it all, IT1 wove in the maintenance required for a Sailor's **Mind, Body and Spirit**. Each of these three areas had to be 'full up round' or a Sailor would find themselves out of balance and not hitting peak performance. Together, they explored ways to **manage and then leverage stress to get tougher and more resilient**, how to **fuel the body**, get **quality sleep**, and to **connect with something greater to sustain a sense of purpose**.

The bottom line was that Jake was **accountable to himself and his Team** to be a **Great Person**, but he wasn't alone while working on it.

Two months into these discussions, Jake asked IT1 Hill how she had gotten so smart. The response was silence as she unfolded a single piece of paper and slid it across the desk. It was the **Culture of Excellence (COE) 2.0 Placemat**. Everything was here under **Great People!** His eyes darted to the right as he quickly scanned the **Great Leaders** and **Great Teams** columns. Simple. It wasn't rocket science. He was excited to expand into this and he knew it wasn't going to be a 'one and done.' This was going to take sustained effort.

Now, here he was under the Spanish sun with a new chevron ready to go onto his collar. He did **'...represent the fighting spirit of the Navy...'** because he knew what his values were; what his Navy's values were; and how both influenced his mindset and drove his behaviors. With the Griffins, he was going to become a Great Leader and an even better teammate.