

Why Jay Glazer United Veterans And Pro Athletes | Clips | Dad Saves America

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SUMMARY

Jay Glazer discusses the profound impact of connecting veterans with professional athletes through his initiative MVP, inspired by a young boy named Logan. The program aims to help combat veterans who struggle with mental health issues by fostering relationships with athletes who share similar experiences of adversity.

- *Logan's story inspired Glazer to create MVP, connecting veterans with pro athletes.*
- *The initiative emphasizes shared struggles and the importance of perspective in overcoming adversity.*
- *Glazer highlights the significance of scars—both physical and emotional—as symbols of resilience.*
- *He addresses the mental health crisis among youth, advocating for the value of adversity in personal growth.*
- *The conversation touches on the alarming suicide rate among veterans, emphasizing the need for community support.*
- *Glazer encourages celebrating the lives of fallen comrades instead of mourning, promoting a positive outlook on Memorial Day.*
- *The ripple effect of one person's struggle can lead to significant change and inspire others.*
- *Modern life, despite increased connectivity through technology, often leaves individuals feeling isolated rather than connected.*

- We had Nate Boyer on the show a short time ago. I know you've talked about that Logan played a role in - [Jay] Logan inspired it. - Inspiring you. - [Jay] Logan really started it. - So tell me about how we go from Logan to what you're doing with Nate? - His grandma Susie was working with Vets down in Virginia, and they called and said, "Hey, we know you have these players," da da da. And it was really like, "Hey, what if we bring players to, we're helping all these Vets?"

And I was telling 'em what a lot of my friends were going through. So I started calling around the NFL and said, "Man, let's get somebody down there. We have this place." And I hadn't met Susie's grandmother yet, I knew Chris and Logan, but it was amazing what she and everybody did down there in a place called Boulder Crest. And I said, "If we can get somebody down, football-wise," and look, I know, and I first told Nate about it too.

He's like, "This isn't the same job. You can't put these together." I said, "No, you can put them together, it's not the same job, but it's the same suck

when the uniform comes off, and they both look up to each other." So I'm like, "Dude, let's put 'em together, and let's get combat vets, they look up to pro athletes. Pro athletes look up to combat vets. Let's put 'em together, remind them what their greatness is." And had I not met Logan through all this, none of this would've happened.

So first guy we did was a guy named Oren O'Neal, played for the Raiders. He agreed, he was in a really bad place. I flew down there, it was, I think, like 11 combat vets and Oren. He was the rookie of the year for the Raiders one year when Lane Kiffin was the head coach, he blew out his knee, back, and never played again. He was really, really angry and bitter. And I walked in there to Oren, so this is really the first time we put 'em together, but we wanted to see if this was gonna work out or not.

Are the vet's gonna be like, "Fine, that's fine," and the football player's gonna be comfortable with the vets. But I walk in there and Oren's in there, and I'm like, "So what's wrong with you?" And he's like, "What do you mean?" I said, "What's wrong with you?" Like, "What's so messed up with you that are you pretty much suicidal?" He said, "Man, football took my life, took my identity." I said, "What happened?" He said, "Man, I got hurt.

Herniated L4, L5." Blew out his whole knee. So like ACL, MCL, PCL, patella, everything. I said, "I never did my knee, but I ruptured L4, L5 three times, L1, L2 twice, and herniated C2, 3, 4, 5. What else you got?" And he goes, "Well, I have this too." "Oh yeah, I've dislocated my elbow, and tore my bicep." I go, "What else you got?" And he goes, "Well, nothing else." I said, "Well man, I broke my ankle twice.

Woke up during the surgery actually when I was getting better from it. Tore my calf, tore this bicep, tore this shoulder, tore this labrum, had that healed." And he goes, "What?" I broke my nose seven time. And he goes, "Man, you act like you're proud of it." I said, "You're DAMN right I am. Absolutely. I'm proud of every scar I have because what else am I gonna do? You gotta be proud of your scars, man." I said, "You got these injuries playing in the NFL.

Little Oren probably would've been his dream. And if you told little Oren you're gonna blow out all this stuff, but you get to play in the NFL, he'd say, 'sign me up,' right?" - Perspective.
- Perspective. "Am I just supposed change the way I think?" I said, "Right now, right now, Oren, right freaking now." And he did. And it's changed his life. We just had an MVP fundraiser a week ago and

saw him down there. Looks amazing.

Lost a ton of weight, is doing incredible work now. Man, so proud of him. It's that perspective. For me, listen, do I wish I didn't break my nose seven times? Absolutely, yeah, it sucked. I wish I didn't wake up during surgery from my ankle. Absolutely, that was traumatic. So I wish it didn't happen, but I'm freaking proud of it. Every time I sit with you or anybody else, I walk in there and it's stuff I've overcome.

My scars are my currency, my money's not my currency. My achievements aren't my currency. The stuff I've overcome, that's your currency. We all have scars. We don't all have the successes we may want, but we all have scars that we can lean into to build us up. When we walk in a room, have a little bit more pride in ourselves. - This is one of the reasons I was excited to talk to you because so many of our kids, they feel pain, they feel there's a mental health crisis among young kids in particular.

What's your message for someone who feels like they have pain? - Yeah. - And they feel like they're a victim and they can't do anything? - Yeah. I've been that's the question, "What's the best gift you can give your son?" And I said, "Adversity." Greatest thing you could ever give 'em. Again, I went through 11 years to get me where I am and made me who I am. Nowadays you transfer, you go to the transfer portal and you just transfer to another team if you don't like what's going on.

You don't have the Michael Jordan story of getting benched in high school to make him who he is. That adversity makes us who we are. That makes us gangsters, that makes us fighters. It's the same with suicide now. People are just like, "I'm not going through it, get some help." And like, man, if you can go through this pain and get through the other side that will lead to your dreams coming true. - Why do you think we don't do that with our kids the way we used to?

- I think we are afraid of how they're gonna handle it. My own son, man, I'm just afraid because we're controlled by the outside forces and their influences and so many influences. And look, even like the suicide, I try to villainize suicide and I've gone through it. We even want our vets this 'cause I'm like, "Hey, it's selfish." They're like, "It's not selfish. It's a mental illness." And I hear you. I'm just trying to villainize as much as I can.

If you wanna be mad at me, you can be mad. And for people who have mental illness, sometimes there's, it is, it's like, you know, you're dying by suicide. But a lot of times we confuse our problems for mental illness and we're killing ourselves over problems, over money issues, business problems. And that to me, I say it's selfish and I try and put that out because I want people to think about somebody else. Like man, when you do that, you're leaving us with your problems and your problems are dumb.

I also have a friend named Kevin Hines who jumped off the Golden State Bridge and he said him and every other survivor the moment they jump, they immediately regretted it. So I'm like- - Imagine being in that moment right there. - Yeah.

- That's- - Right.

- That's a nightmare. - People have issues. They kill themselves. And whenever this happens to like a teammate to one of our vets that say, I'll say, "Be careful call your teammates, call them.

Because it's the power of suggestion. 'Cause when somebody else does it and you think your life sucks, you're gonna go, 'Man, my life sucks. Jimmy over there is getting a ton of love right now. And everybody's out having outpouring a love. Well, I want that love too. So I'm gonna do this.'" And that's why you see kind of groups do it. And that's where it's scary for our kids. And you're afraid to push your kids because something that really wasn't an option when we were growing up, we see it constantly now.

- Yeah.

- And it's only, it's become an option and it should never be an option. Like again, the things that we talking about overcoming, thank God we're still here to do a lot of the great things that we've done. - I understand that you had a moment where you found out about how much suicide there is with vets and that you had been working with- - It's 22 a day. That number's not okay. It's not okay.

But you know what, it's not fair to them also, but it's not fair like how they get treated when they come back. Like they should be making all the money, not us. And they're so selfless, like they don't know me or my kid or anything. They leave us to go fight for us and just to make

us feel comfortable. And yet, you know, we have
Sylvester Stallone come in and talk to our group and he said, "Look, I made 'Rambo' or 'first Blood' just to show
like the
issues that vets go through coming back from the Vietnam War."

And guys are going through the same issues with the VA and when they come
out, when they're transition. So it's not gotten better
with the government. So it's gotta be on you. You've gotta change it. It's gotta come from between the ears, your
ears and behind your rib cage. So it's heartbreaking, staggering. And a lot of times I'll say stuff in there in our
group to our vets
and they get so mad at me and I'm just trying to give another, and I'm like, I don't
mind if you get pissed as long as we don't kill ourselves."

Like Memorial Day, we have Memorial Day and the
first Memorial Day I said, "What are you guys doing to celebrate Memorial Day this week?" They got so mad.
(John laughing) They get so pissed. "We don't celebrate Memorial Day! It's when our brothers got killed!" I said,
"I know, why aren't
you celebrating them?" And they were like, "What?" I said, "Why aren't you celebrating them?" I said, "Listen,
when I die, none of y'all are wearing
black, nobody here."

You're gonna celebrate my life. You think your brothers are up there happy if you're sitting there with
a loaded gun on Memorial Day or a fifth of Jack Daniels or something? Or do you think they'd
rather you celebrate 'em? So let's celebrate 'em. Let's celebrate our brothers and sisters." And we started taking a
hike to get a little closer to brothers and sisters on that day. And now our whole group,
that's what they view it as.

And they started going
to the cemetery down here in L.A., walking up to people saying, "Who are you celebrating?" And trying to
change that perspective. And could start with one person
that just changes the way. And we have a vet named Denver Morris which really kinda led the charge on this.
And a guy named AJ Perez
were our first two employees. They really led the charge. When we started talking
about it differently, they fought back hard and then they said, "Wait, you know, it's
kinda right and yeah, why aren't we celebrating them?"

And I understand why our vets are angry and pissed and I probably would be too if I was in a lot of their
positions. - Your work with MVP has
made a real difference for the folks that are in it. - [Jay] I hope so. - In terms of like how many have succumbed
to suicide that are participating. Can you share kind of
what that has looked like? - I just know there's a

lot who are continuing it who haven't since, so I don't know the number.

I don't wanna put a number on it, but there's an awful lot. And even if there's one, like yeah, it's amazing. Some of my best friends in there now are people who we're going to. We have a vet named Kirstie Ennis who's now trying to climb Everest, who's amazing. She called for permission one night to let her go. I'm like, "No, I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna say yes. Like we need you and I think you're gonna help more people."

She's like, "You're not giving permission?" I said, "Nope." And she's, you know how many people she's helped out since? Like, oh my God, that girl's a freaking walking hero or walking blessing. Like I'm minuscule in what I do talking about it. She has been incredible how many people she's helped out. And that's what you do. Like, you just never know. I have a thing in the book, "You never know what lies around next Tuesday." And we brought little Logan in on our anniversary one year.

Everybody raised their hand and said, "Logan, so glad you helped start this." And they gave their story and what they would've done, "And I was suicidal and I didn't. I'm so glad that you're still here that you were able to start this with us." And they went around the room and Logan turned to me and he said, "Hey Jay, it's pretty damn cool." And I said, and I think he was 14 at the time. I said, "I know Logan."

I said, "Man, you never know what lies around next Tuesday." I said, "Who would've thought you getting leukemia would've ended up starting this whole beautiful foundation where we would save lives? And not only would people not commit suicide, but they would go on to do great things and to lift up in power so many other people. And you never know what lies around next Tuesday." - It's really interesting when I think about how much impact one change, one person can have on so many people.

Like what Logan's life did for you. - And by the way, I say you never know what lies around next Tuesday 'cause Tuesday, it was a Tuesday when I got that call from my agent. Like, "Hey, you

can exhale. You got your-"

- You got a job. - Finally got a job, yeah, but go ahead. I'm sorry. - That impact, that ripple effect. - Yeah, ripple effect, yeah. - And I think there's a weird thing about modern life and all the screens where on one level we're so connected to so many more people.

It seems like we should feel more impactful. And yet I feel like- - Well, we see more people, we're not connected. - Right. And so it's it's got this strange inverse effect. - [Jay] Yeah. - In making us actually feel smaller instead of bigger. - You don't even know if you're connecting with the person you're talking to. - Right. - It's scarier. - [John] Right. - We're walking down dark alleys more than we ever have. - If you enjoyed this clip, we've got more where that came from.

Be sure to check out my full conversation with Jay Glazer and one of the best ways you can help support us is to subscribe to the channel so you won't miss our interviews and short videos as they come out each week. (upbeat music)