

Q&A

1. Tell me a little about your background. Where were you born and raised, and how has your upbringing influenced your life?

I was born and raised in Southern California and am the middle of 3 siblings. Being the stereotypical middle child is what's probably influenced me the most in terms of my drive to overachieve and establish independence, even though my childhood overall was fairly normal.

2. What are some significant life events or experiences that have had a major impact on you, whether positive or challenging?

After high school, I left my small town to enlist in the U.S. Navy, where I spent the next 4 years in a highly masculine work environment, traveling the world while working on F/A-18 aircraft. I learned a lot of valuable skills and traits during my time there and was even lucky enough to meet my future spouse during my service. Through all the good times and bad times, I still look back on those days fondly and believe that they put me in a position to achieve all the things I've achieved today.

3. What are your proudest accomplishments or achievements so far, whether in your personal life, education, or career?

I had a successful military tour where I participated in 2 overseas deployments and countless training detachments. I have bachelor's and master's degrees in clinical psychology and a master's degree in forensic psychology, and I am currently in my 3rd year of a PsyD program for neuropsychology.

4. Could you describe your current occupation or field of study, and what motivated you to pursue it?

I'm currently enrolled in a neuropsychology PsyD program with a focus on administering psychological assessments to patients with Alzheimer's, TBIs, learning disabilities, and other cognitive ailments. Psychology has always been a passion of mine, and I knew that I wanted to pursue it in some capacity. Although I initially thought I would do something more geared towards counseling, along the way, I discovered assessments and have never looked back.

5. Are there any particular values, principles, or philosophies that you hold dear, and how do these guide your actions and decisions?

I don't know that I have any real strict ideas about any of these outside of just not being a jerk to people. I know that I have a high sensitivity towards people with narcissistic tendencies, meaning they only care about themselves. For my own mental health, I'd prefer to keep my distance from this personality type. On the professional side, I think that everybody, regardless of their perception of their own mental health, should seek out regular therapy.

6. Do you have any hobbies or interests that you're passionate about, and how do these bring joy to your life?

My life is pretty heavily focused on school right now, so outside of occasionally relaxing with a good TV show, I don't really have that many hobbies. I do get pretty absorbed in mobile gaming sometimes, so that's something. I'm also a fanatic reader of fantasy novels (witches, demons, other worlds, etc.), particularly those geared toward adult audiences. I think last year alone I went through about 150 books. I also recently picked up photography as a bit of a hobby, and have done a few photo shoots for friends, family, and members of the local community. On the rare occasion that I find a larger chunk of free time, I do enjoy getting outdoors and doing something to get the heart racing, like skydiving, bungee jumping, cliff jumping... basically any sort of jumping from heights.

7. What are your aspirations for the future, whether in terms of career, personal growth, or life goals?

I still have about 3 years of pretty heavy education left before I get my degree and transition into the professional world. I don't know that I have any concrete plans beyond just getting through this degree program. I often find that my tastes and aspirations grow and evolve as I learn and experience new things, so I try to stay open to whatever new opportunities present themselves.

8. Have you faced any significant challenges or obstacles, and how have you worked to overcome them?

Family has probably been the biggest issue for me over the past couple of years. I've had a lot of trouble maintaining a healthy relationship with one of my siblings, and my parents haven't handled it in a way that I think would be most productive. This has driven sort of a wedge between us, but I think we're finally coming to a point where we've kind of reestablished our boundaries and have a healthy understanding of where everyone is at. Family is never easy.

9. Are there any causes or issues you're deeply passionate about, and do you engage in any activities to support or raise awareness for them?

Finding a way to make mental health more readily available and accessible to the masses is probably the cause closest to my heart. I also really like the idea of eventually returning to my military roots and working closely with the veteran community as a mental health professional. Once I make it through school, I'll have a better understanding of where I might contribute to these 2 areas.

10. What message do you want this personal site to convey to visitors?

I don't really know to be honest. I guess if anything I'd say that I hope it highlights the value of taking care of one's mental health. Beyond that, I'm okay with just "advertising" a few of my interests to students at Bellevue.