**Write up**

My friend Dave, we are calling him Dave because he has asked that I not use his real name or include any “identifying” information. In the modern day where people are doxed, and identities are stolen over seemingly innocuous data, it is hard for me to argue. We will call him Dave and any likeness of Dave depicted will be a proxy.

Anyways, my friend Dave likes to live a quiet, private life. For that reason, I thought it would be interesting to interview him and get more insight. He didn’t really want to discuss much, but I think that is insightful to his character.

Dave is a material engineer and works to determine *“what’s the best thing to make it out of”.* He seems to enjoy his work and is grateful for what it has provided for him. But he will be the first to say the reason he had the opportunity to go to school was because of his time in the Army. He faced great financial hardship prior to his enlistment.

He doesn’t have much to say about his deployment, which is understandable, but he does make the distinction he is a “combat veteran”. I have no frame of reference for what it might be like to be in combat, other than I hope I never find myself in that situation. But it helps me to understand there is a lot of bravery and strength of character with Dave and perhaps part of the reason he prefers a quiet, private life.

Dave has a great love for his dog Shelby, she is an adorable terrier/mutt. She was initially standoffish to me but immediately warmed up after I gave her some treats. She is indeed a very quiet, and at times a suspicious dog. They say dogs take after their owners…

It seems that “self-reliance” is also important to Dave as he puts a lot of effort into his home greenhouse, so he doesn’t have to get produce from the store. He also enjoys the peaceful nature of tending to plants and the sense of accomplishment from seeing them bear fruit. I believe this because it was hard to get him talking but once I mentioned the tomatoes he really opened up. I believe this is a point of pride to him.

When I let Dave ask a question, I was very surprised by what he asked. Behind all the sarcasm, cynicism, and scars of his exterior he asked me a very vulnerable question. “Have you told my mother you love her today?” In this single question he revealed a very vulnerable side to me. It was sort of a “head nod” moment where he “told me” to value love and family without saying so.

The reason I wanted to make my page about Dave is because I think a lot of us know a Dave. Maybe they are that guy at work, who is kind of a jerk. Or the guy at the party who doesn’t say a single thing to anyone all night and just sits in the corner and looks pissed off. Before we write these people off as jerks, I think it is important to see the human in them and understand there is probably a reason they are that way. I would encourage everyone to share a positive word with you Dave.