



## IGNORANCE THE UNSEEN ENEMY WITHIN OUR RANKS

Abalinx 19 July 2016 Peter Adamis

As a youngster going to Primary school I like many others was subjected to corporal punishment of the day. That is being smacked on either hand by the teacher or senior school master or on other occasions by the Head Master.

In most cases I would be disciplined because I did not understand the English language at the time and I had grown up in an environment where I was free, wild and without being subjected to the harsh disciplinary measures of a school environment. I was bullied by other kids my age during and after school. I would then go home and receive a belting from my old man if he felt I had misbehaved or was not learning enough to get by.

Then about three times a week I would go to Greek school after Primary school and attempt to learn the Greek language. The priest and later other male teachers would belt me for not understanding the Greek language. Then when I got home I received another belting from my old man because he felt I was not trying hard enough. Mind you my father who is still alive and love him dearly was merely preparing me in his own way that life was hard. He had after all endured WW2 and was involved with a right wing conservative irregular force during the Greek Civil War.

I changed schools and I learnt to fight back and defend myself. I learnt the art of street fighting in quick time and how to disable opponents in three seconds using techniques learnt in the street over a period of years. I struck quick and efficiently, reminiscent of the modern day kick boxers but without gloves, but aided by whatever weapon came within reach of my hand at the time. I have used them all, cricket bat, bottles, bricks, stumps, chisels, spanners, wood, guns, knives and tools of every kind. All that I knew was to defend myself and never attack as it was felt it was the coward's way of throwing the first punch. I did not know until some 45 years later that I was driven by fear of being hurt and that it gave me the edge. Had known what I know now, my life would have travelled a much peaceful trail.

When I left the work force while still in my youth, I learnt the art of warfare. It was a deadly game that with equally deadly consequences. We trained every month in preparation to go to Vietnam and even had a trip to Papua New Guinea to enhance our jungle training techniques. We had been trained to use an old cliché; by the best of the best of those who had served in WW2, the Korean War, Borneo, and Malaya. Indonesian confrontation and the Vietnam War. We were alert, sharp, quick to react at any given moment and efficient with the rifle, bayonet, shovel and/or with our bare hands if necessary. I had learnt how to break another man's jaw with one blow and it was a terrible responsibility to bear.

At the same time of our training, every month we were also subjected to the compulsory Commanding Officers Hour where men of different faiths went to their different chaplains to be exposed to the moral and ethics of being a soldier. This was an important part of training as it instilled in us the righteousness of being a soldier and as such the guardians of our society. As an Australian of the Greek Orthodox faith I always went to the Protestants. I did not do this because I thought they were closer to that of my own faith for the catholic faith is, but I did so because the majority of my mates were of protestant background.

By the time I was posted to Singapore and Malaya I had been finely tuned in the art of war and as an old Brigadier friend of mine once said, they had trained us to meet any contingency or military challenge that could be thrown at us. We were hungry to meet those challenges and yet there was no identified threat at the time apart from the Vietnam War which was winding down. There was of course the other silent war that was being reduced to a few communist hiding out in the northern regions of Malaya headed by a once supporter of the allies in WW2. Ching Peng was his name and we had been briefed on his activities when we conducted our training in Malaya and also took our turn at guarding the Australian air force located at Butterworth on Penang Island, Malaya.

In my first four years I had in excess of 200 hundred fights of which I lost five. I say this because I was also a very aggressive and uncontrollable larrikin who was luckily enough to have that aggression channelled into the right direction. I only fought when I was attacked or in the defence of another. I confess that my last fight was at the age of 63 fighting a young man half my age over a land boundary. At the age of 58, I had another stoush with another young man who attacked me without provocation and when I was 49 I went on the offence and attacked three youth in the defence of my two sons who were attacked outside our home.

As young soldiers without realising it a sense of Australian values were being embedded deep into our psyche. Australian values such as you don't ever kick a bloke when he is down, a fair go given to every bloke, you called a spade a spade, a mate was a mate and a cobbler was for life, you never stole from your mates. You never lied to each other while fibs and stretching the truth were not considered lies. You stood up for each other no matter what the odds against you, you stood up after you were beaten down and had another go, you never ever gave up, you never got between mates, you looked after your woman and paid respects to her.

You pulled your weight in the barracks and certainly in the bush, you shared your tucker, beer but not your woman, you hated authority but respected the rank and would jump over a cliff for the leader of your group if he was worth his salt. You were certainly not afraid to speak your mind, you played hard, drank with your mates, told tall stories and the bigger they were the more believable they became. You feared no one but God and the RSM (Regimental Sargeant Major). These are but a few of the values that I had instilled in me and I embraced them all with a passion. After all I was an Australian of Hellenic origins.

As a young married man life was certainly no bed of roses. My first wife and I had six children, lost two and with four sons we tried to make a go of it. It ended in a bitter divorce case where I lost all the custody cases but won the smaller cases of access to the boys. I would travel a round trip of some 400 kilometres to pick up my four boys every fortnight. I never gave up on them and I have never given up on them now. It was tough but what else could I do. I was devoted to my four sons. After some four years of seeing the boys every fortnight, my ex-wife gave up and returned my boys back into my care as she could no longer put up with the arrangements made by the family law court.

For the next eight years we never saw the ex-wife again and mind you it was not a picnic bringing up four sons alone and still serving within the military as a regular Army soldier. Despite the hardships, I look back on those days with my boys and I consider them some of the best years of my life. But that another story for another time. Suffice to say, I eventually made contact with my ex-wife again and my problems began anew. I will not go into details other than to say that all my teachings, values, traditions, morals, ethics went out the window and I felt that my sacrifices were in vain. Still now after some 35 years later, I look at my sons with pride and hope that those values I instilled within them will resurface and become good citizens of society. I am pleased to state that I am more than happy with their current lifestyles and from a fathers point of view would like to add the finer touches to enhance their lives.

Moving onto another phase, there are some who say that the best things in life are worth waiting for and in my case never a truer word was spoken. At the age of 50, I met the love of my life, Yovanna, a Canadian of Hellenic background. She has certainly enhanced my life, encouraged me to return back to university and to develop my skills by turning them into something that was productive and constructive. I ended up gaining two degrees and a number of diplomas not including the numerous certificates along the way. I say this with pride in my wife who was my beacon, my foundation stone and certainly my best friend.

Together we endured some hardships, ups and downs like all married couples and if someone tells you that they have never had a fight with their spouse, you can be sure they are lying. The children and their issues, three heart attacks, severe depression, stress, an unresponsive employer and finally cancer taking its toll on the body is a testament to my wife that she has stood by me through it all. I have written this with the utmost respect for her and for bringing back to reality at times when I feel I was losing it.

It was not until I was working for a community based organisation in the role, equivalent to that of Chief Executive Officer that I used my military discipline to stop myself from causing harm to others. Whilst I was being employed by the community with assets of 60 million dollars, I was subjected to death threats, car tyres slashed three times, abused by the college parents because they were unable to pay their children's school fees.

Assaulted by the son of a departing Principal, spat on, intimidated in the street, abusive telephone calls, being undermined by an egotistical Principal, working 18 hours per day for three years, subjected to harassment by members of the committee and staff, made the target of vicious rumours and other acts of psychological warfare that would have driven another to a psyche ward. During all this time, these acts were reported to the Police who felt they were powerless to act and each complaint was forwarded to the Committee of management for them to act upon.

On many occasions the committee of management ignored my requests for support and/or help and even when I went seeking, medical support my employers ignored those requests to alleviate the struggles and hardships I encountered. The roles and responsibilities I had were for three men and yet no support was given. I ended up seeking psychological help, surviving three heart attacks and psychological damage coupled with severe depression.

Now many of the readers would probably be following the thread of this discussion and believe that it is ones story of evolution and development with a touch of military to make it an interesting story. But no that is not the case as this is the first of a series of articles that will be written over the next two years with its conclusion at the next Victorian state election. Therefore it was of importance to me that the reader obtains an idea of the author's background in brief as we progress throughout the articles over the next two years.

It is also of importance to note that these articles will also form the foundations of political articles and what has driven the author to take action or expose others in the public arena who flout, misuse and abuse their position at a time when they are supposed to be serving the people. Call it a cleansing, call it what you like, but I will endeavour to assist in the bring about a return of Australian values and usher in a generational change at the political level. All articles being published will be based on fact or information that is evident that a felony has occurred and or has already been published.

I have witnessed many injustices in my life and I for one have not only been misunderstood but been called by many negative name s of which none are true. I promised myself when witnessing such injustices that I would do everything in my power to right the wrongs and assist those in need. I dislike sycophants and yes individuals with a passion and more so those who abuse their position and status in life to the detriment of others. Those in the know have reason to fear the unknown for I am not giving up and fighting the good fight.

As always, my apologies for the poor grammar, punctuation and savagery of the English language. All that I can say is that it is great to be alive and one does not give up in the face of adversity no matter what challenges we face.



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