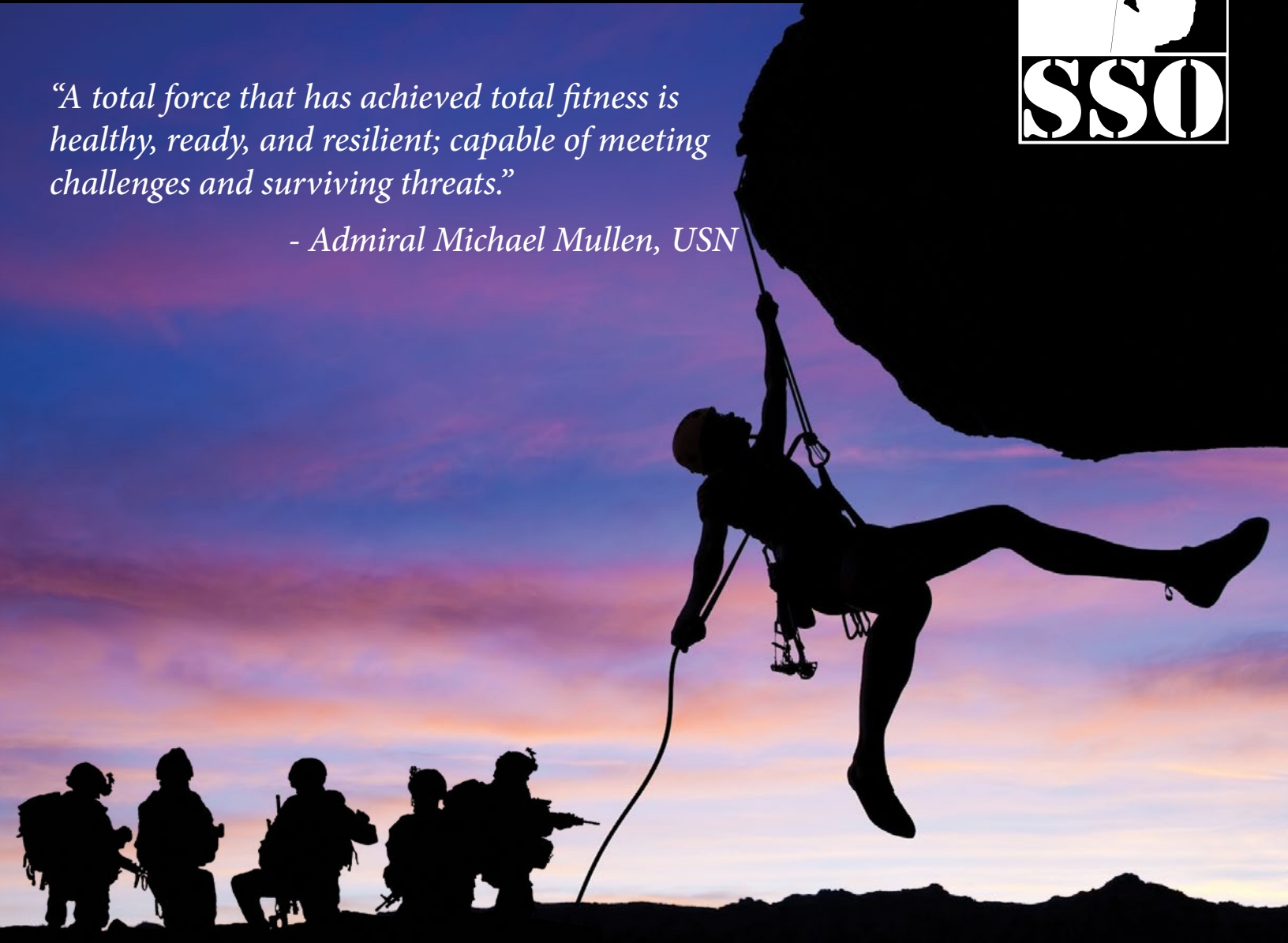


Commander's Guide



“A total force that has achieved total fitness is healthy, ready, and resilient; capable of meeting challenges and surviving threats.”

- Admiral Michael Mullen, USN



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HOW SSO BENEFITS THE COMMANDER

"Research indicates that spiritual fitness plays a key role in resiliency, in our ability to grow, develop, recover, heal, and adapt." General Robert Neller, Marine Corps Commandant (ALMAR 33/16)

Spiritual Fitness and Outdoor Adventure Contribute Directly to Mission Readiness by...

- Reinforcing moral and ethical decision-making.
- Improving physical fitness, stamina and resilience.
- Providing an outlet for healthy and safe risk-taking.
- Strengthening teamwork and trust in peers and leaders.

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Vision

A scenic view of a paved road with a double yellow line leading through a desert landscape with large, rounded boulders under a sunset sky. The road is asphalt and the yellow lines are bright. The boulders are large and rounded, typical of a desert environment. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

A Christ-centered adventure company, strengthening resiliency and moral and ethical decision-making in our nation's warriors through spiritual and physical fitness in an outdoor environment.

Mission



"Strengthen faith, develop character, heighten spiritual fitness, enhance resilience, and promote core values and virtues so that Marines, Sailors, and their families may best serve their country."

U.S. Marine Corps Publication MCTP 3-30D

Spiritual fitness and outdoor adventure experiences are shown to...

- Improve self-confidence, social skills, communication and motivation.
- Improve mental capacity, concentration, ability to learn.
- Provide an outlet for healthy and safe risk-taking.
- Improve physical fitness and stamina.
- Decrease the stress of daily life.
- Decrease mental fatigue.
- Strengthen teamwork.
- Improve resilience.

Mission

REACH service members with the gospel of Christ where they are, **CONNECT** service members with other Christian service members, **BUILD** a Christ-centered foundation for living, **SUSTAIN** Christ-centered relationships through small-group Bible study and mentor relationships, **DEPLOY** on short-term missions locally and abroad outside the military context, and **IMPACT** the world for Christ both to and through the U.S. Military.

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Leadership



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Fire Captain, LA County Fire Department/USMC Veteran

Buz Buzbee

Military Pastor – North Coast Calvary Chapel

Bob Shank

Founder & CEO of The Master's Program

The Spark that Ignited

Soul Survivor Outdoor...

From LtCol Rick Wolf USMCR, Retired

Observations while serving as the Officer in Charge of the Marine Corps Twentynine Palms Wounded Warrior Detachment...

- Military service members need bigger meaning and purpose to life than themselves.
- Many issues military commanders face can be traced to addressing symptoms rather than root causes and are often due to a lack of a firm moral and ethical foundation.
 - Alcohol abuse.
 - Depression and suicide.
 - Substance abuse (prescription and illegal drug use).
 - Divorce and other marital and family issues.
 - Sexual assault, abuse and misconduct.
 - Misconduct on the battlefield.
 - Commission of violent acts.

Wilderness Events

Wilderness events with members of the Wounded Warrior Detachment provided an opportunity to begin to address the root causes of many issues.

- Focused on building or re-building a solid life foundation.
- Gave service members a chance to relax and let their guard down.
- Provided an opportunity to unpack the stress of daily life.

Events Included

- Outdoor adventure activity (rock climbing, skydiving, surfing, etc.)
- Meals shared together around a campfire.
- A motivational discussion by a fellow service member who had "been there, done that," and had Christ as their foundation for living.

The success of the Wounded Warrior Detachment events was so significant that it prompted Col Willie Buhl USMC Retired, former USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment Commanding Officer, to comment that this was "**one of the best all-around spiritual/physical evolutions he had participated in at the Wounded Warrior Regiment.**" He went on to further say that "**the combination of getting away from it all, fireside chat, interesting/relevant/powerful speakers, decent food, prayer breakfast and unique physical challenge of rock climbing made for a superb healing time.**"

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Challenges



Military service members are trained and prepared for battle against flesh and blood, but often don't recognize that war is ultimately a spiritual fight.

Many service members have...

- Little or no ability to cope with the physical, mental and spiritual battles they face before, during and after deployment.
- No understanding of life's ultimate purpose.
- Their own moral compass with no common foundation for living or reference for moral and ethical decision-making.
- Questions and are looking for answers, belonging, and a cause bigger than themselves.

Fitness



Growth in spiritual and physical fitness through wilderness and outdoor adventure experiences positively impacts...

Mind

- Psychological well-being.
- Willpower and fortitude.
- Self-confidence and self-worth.
- Stress management.
- Problem solving skills.

Body

- Increase physical fitness, endurance and wellness.
- Opportunities to master physical challenges.
- Develop new skills.

Spirit

- Moral compass, firm sense of right and wrong.
- Reinforce moral and ethical decision-making.
- Meaning, value, and sense of purpose.

Social

- Build trust in peers, leaders, organization.
- Increase social interaction.
- Strengthen teamwork.
- Build and strengthen personal relationships.
- Increase motivation to act on behalf of others.

Why



Military service members are a positive force for change in our culture and across the globe.

They are already...

- Willing to lay down their lives for fellow service members and their country.
- Accustomed to service to others and taking on a leadership role.
- Seeking to belong and be part of a band of brothers.
- Looking to serve a cause greater than themselves.

But need a clear understanding of...

- What drives them to be part of something larger than themselves.
- Their greater purpose and why they were created in the first place.
- Who and what is really worth dying for.

Military service members are in a unique position to impact not only those in the military, but also those in their communities and the business world after completing military service.

Support



"It's hard to be resilient when you don't have a spiritual foundation and something that sets your moral compass."

-Dom Ford, Col USMC

SSO supports commanders and chaplains by strengthening unit readiness and increasing spiritual fitness through...

- Encouraging development of a solid moral, ethical and spiritual foundation that strengthens core values and contributes to good order and discipline.
- Increasing fortitude and courage through recreation and spiritual renewal.
- Assisting commanders with keeping unit members in the Green "Ready" Zone of the Operational Stress Continuum, per MCTP 3-30E.
- Strengthening resilience against stress reactions, injuries and illnesses.
- Discussing relevant life foundation issues.
- Encouraging a healthy lifestyle.
 - Providing positive alternatives to unhealthy life choices.
 - Encouraging activities that strengthen physical fitness.
 - Aid in strengthening mind, body and spirit.

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Strategy



"I went mentally and physically prepared to Afghanistan but I don't believe I was spiritually prepared."

*-Chad Robichaux,
USMC Force Recon - Afghanistan Veteran*

How Soul Survivor Outdoor establishes a "beach head" to build and strengthen military service members and their families through outdoor adventure...

Command Engagement

- Empower commanders and chaplains by helping deliver a robust religious ministry program.
- Aid in providing meaning and purpose for life that counteracts tendencies toward negative behaviors.

Active Duty Military Partners

- Engage in one-on-one mentorship with service members.

Chaplain and Church Partnerships

- Support military chaplaincy.
- Partner with local churches adjacent to military bases and stations.

Para-Church Partnerships

- Partner with existing military and campus ministries.

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Partner



Partnering with Soul Survivor Outdoor

A unique opportunity to positively impact an entire generation of military service members by providing a solid foundation for living.

Join Us

We are looking for commanders and chaplains that share our vision of seeking creative ways to engage military service members in a discussion of life's deeper issues, and establishing or re-establishing a moral and ethical foundation for life and decision-making.





To join us or find out more, contact us at:

info@soulsurvivoroutdoor.org

or call us at:

(760) 230-4170