

EDITORS' CHOICE
THE WARMEST WINTER JACKETS

Outside

LIVE BRAVELY

BEAT STRESS
FEEL BETTER
LIVE LONGER

PLUS:
**DAVID
GOGGINS**
WANTS TO
CHANGE
YOUR MIND

TOTAL HEALTH GAME PLAN

7 SMART
STRATEGIES



TRAVEL
MY GLORIOUS, TERRIFYING
KURDISTAN ROAD TRIP

CRIME
THE GLOBAL HUNT FOR
A NOTORIOUS EGG THIEF

ADVENTURE
THE CURIOUS OBSESSION
OF HIGH POINTERS

ENVIRONMENT
ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE
REFUGE UNDER SIEGE

The Warrior Mentality

LEGENDARY SPECIAL FORCES VETERAN **DAVID GOGGINS** HAS WRITTEN A GAME PLAN FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE. PREPARE TO SUFFER.

BY CHRISTOPHER KEYES

DAVID GOGGINS'S new memoir, *Can't Hurt Me*, is written in part as a self-help manual, but the opening line delivers some uncommonly blunt advice for a genre better known for telling us we just need to learn to love ourselves: "You are in danger of living a life so comfortable and soft that you will die without ever realizing your true potential." It's an apt summation of Goggins's worldview. The retired Navy SEAL has spent the past two decades exploring the outer limits of human performance, both as an elite Special Operations member and an accomplished ultra-endurance athlete. But earning that résumé required overcoming an abusive childhood, a murder in the family, rampant racism in his small Indiana hometown, a learning disability, obesity, and more—a catalog of obstacles that might sound comically overstuffed if it weren't all true. To survive, Goggins found strength in regularly putting himself through hell—literally, if you count his three rounds of attempting the notoriously grueling SEAL Hell Week—and believes there's no shortcut to mental toughness. We phoned Goggins in Avalon, New Jersey, where he'd just finished his daily six-hour morning workout.

"My lifestyle, the way I do everything, it's **not for everybody**. I don't want to waste your time. I am asking people to go way within themselves to find a lot more."

"I ended up self-publishing my book. I had a nice offer, \$300,000. I was getting ready to sign, and I was like, **You know what? If somebody were to give me \$300,000 right now to relive that book, I would tell him to go to hell.** So I turned it down."

"You need a good foundation to start life. My foundation was so jacked up. I had a very abusive father, and it just kind of snowballed from there. My mom's fiancé was murdered. I saw a little boy get killed. I had white splotches on my skin from stress. But that's why **I don't give anybody a get-out-of-jail-free card**. I realized through my journey in life what we're all capable of doing. We have all the tools we need inside our minds."

"I didn't go to school a lot. One reason was a learning disability that caused me to fall behind. When I was 17, my mom got a

letter saying that I was about to flunk out. I had to come clean. I went to the mirror in the bathroom and looked at myself and saw I was a clown. I saw my future, and it wasn't pretty. I was talking to myself out loud. A million cuss words. **I believe that in order to find peace, you must be willing to go to war with yourself.**"

"I was 23 years old when I got out of the Air Force. **I went from 175 pounds to 297.** I got a job as an exterminator. I'm 43 now, and it would have been very easy for me to still be 300 pounds and spraying for cockroaches, having never known what was inside myself. I think that's the scariest thing."

"I got pneumonia the first time I went through SEAL training. The second time through, **I fractured my patella right before Hell Week. And I went two more weeks with that broken kneecap.** Jesus. That's when I realized my body is able to handle much more than I thought was humanly possible. My mind was shackling me."

"**Mindset is the great equalizer.** I came from nothing special. What was different about me was that I wanted to figure myself out."

"You can have everything you want in life, but **when you quit something that is meaningful to you, you will be haunted by it.** You will try to fill that void with everything—running races, material possessions, whatever. You can never fill the void."

"**A lot of people have reasons why they can't.** Whether you're black, white, purple—it doesn't matter. So I tell everybody my story. It is very humbling for me to talk about how dumb I was, how bad I stuttered, how insecure I was, how fat I was, but it makes people say, 'Well shit, man, I have no excuse.'"

"I don't believe in all these quick fixes. **I believe in the permanent fix.**"

"You can have everything you want in life, but when you quit something that is meaningful to you, you will be haunted by it."

"I called Badwater 135 ultramarathon organizer Chris Kostman up on a Wednesday. I tried to get in based on my SEAL experience, but Chris wasn't hearing that. I hadn't run more than 20 miles in over a year. He told me, 'There are two qualifying races left, and one's on Saturday.' So I had three and a half days to get ready for a 24-hour race. This was in 2005. **Now I've done more than 60 ultras**, but that was still the worst pain I've gone through in my entire life."

"Life is not friendly. Life is not you always being happy. You have to get the tactical advantage early in the morning, which means get up, go for a run, go to the gym, do something that prepares your mind. **You want to start off your morning winning.**"

"My daily routine is: I run, I go to the gym, and **I stretch for about two, three hours.** I've missed two days in the past six years."

"**I'm not big on people who are good at multitasking.** I'm really big on people who are able to focus on the task at hand."

"Motivation is crap. Because once you're in an extreme situation, motivation goes away. Right now it's 69 degrees outside, it's sunny, with a little bit of wind. I've got a nice TV in front of me. If you were to watch a motivational video in this environment, boy, you're going to think you're a badass. You're motivated now. But what happens when you get out of this nice environment? **Life has to be damn near perfect for you to be motivated all the time.** But if you're driven, I guarantee you will find a way."

"**I wish there was a different word besides discipline.** Discipline sounds too easy."

