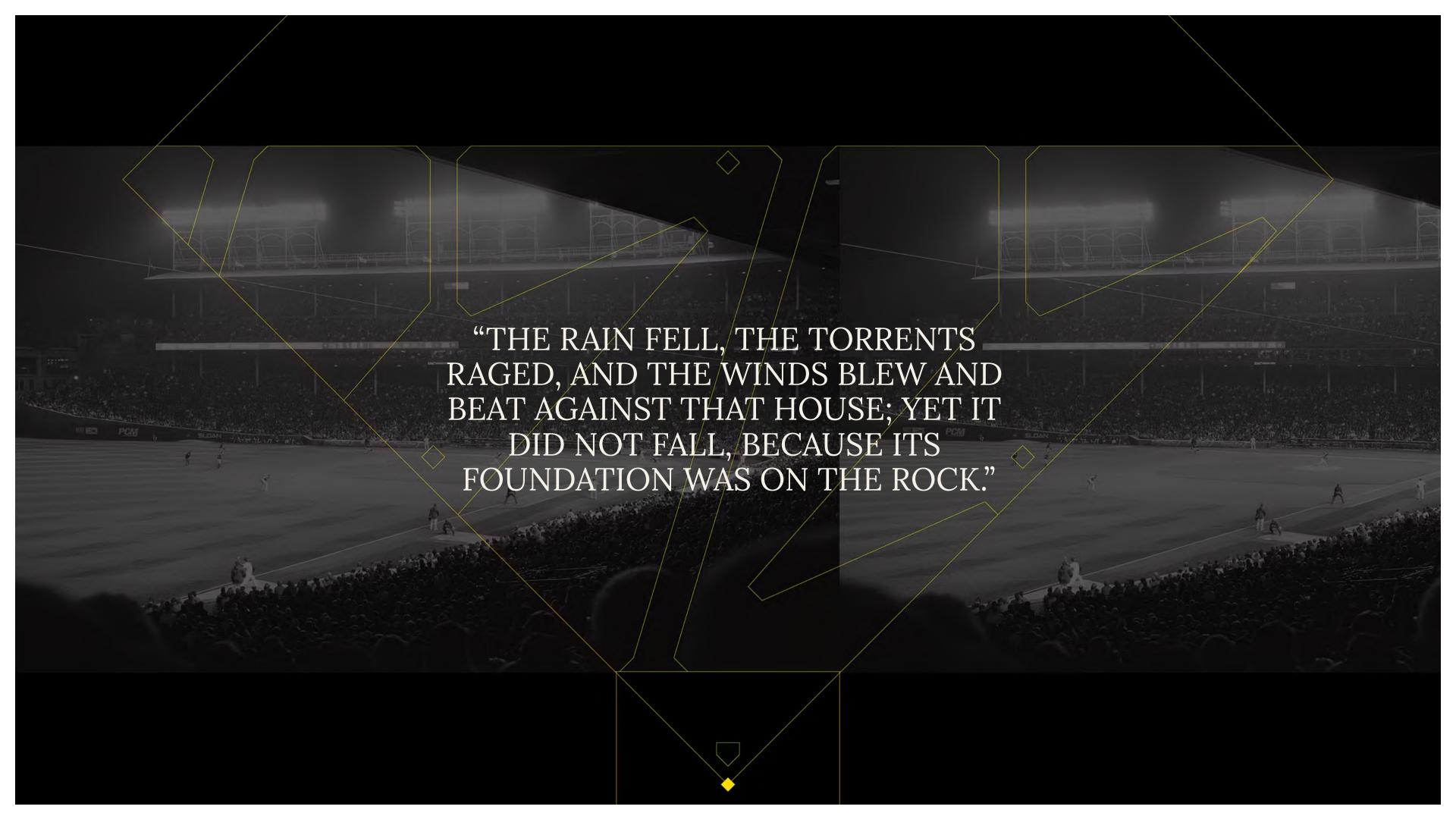
7PILLAR



BY NICK AND MIKE AHMED



IT ALL STARTED TO GO DOWNHILL THE DAY I (NICK) GOT DRAFTED BY THE ATLANTA BRAVES IN THE 2ND ROUND OF THE 2011 MLB DRAFT....

Let me say that again... It all started to go downhill the day I got drafted by the Atlanta Braves. Wait a minute, shouldn't that be the beginning of an upward trajectory, not downward? As a moment that propelled me to step into living out my childhood dream as a professional athlete? It definitely should have, BUT I had a faulty, crumbling foundation. I was building the "foundation" of my life and career on all the wrong things.



MY EARLIEST MEMORIES AS A KID ALL INVOLVE BASEBALL. I PLAYED BASEBALL IN THE BACKYARD WITH MY BROTHERS, WATCHED MLB GAMES ON TV, STARTED PLAYING ON A TEAM AT 7 YEARS OLD AND WENT TO FENWAY PARK TO WATCH THE RED SOX EVERY SUMMER. IT WAS ALL I EVER WANTED TO DO.

I set my mind and dreams on becoming a professional baseball player one day. As I continued to grow and work my way through little league, high school and college baseball, the biggest day of my life was soon approaching. My college team, UConn, was still in the midst of a run in the NCAA tournament as the 2011 MLB draft approached. My life was built around baseball and the success of climbing the ladder. I was right there, at the cusp of my dreams. The Atlanta Braves called and drafted me in the second round, and I quickly began my career as a professional baseball player. I had achieved the most significant thing of my life and was living out my childhood dream, but nothing changed...

I was still lying in bed at night, staring at the ceiling, unable to fall asleep most nights. I felt this emptiness on the inside that I couldn't explain or make go away. It frustrated me beyond belief because I was doing exactly what I had wanted to do since I was 4 years old: playing professional baseball. The problem wasn't baseball or that I had achieved another level of success but that I was putting all of my identity, hope, self-worth and value into those things. Simply put, I had an identity crisis. I was "Nick Ahmed the professional baseball player". I did not know who I was outside the game; all of my worth and thoughts about myself depended on how I performed on the field. If I had a good game and was moving up the depth charts then I was happy and felt good about myself. If I was in a slump or dealing with an injury, I was self-absorbed, my relationships suffered greatly and was often anxious or worried. I had an identity crisis and needed to make some massive changes. Unfortunately, I did not know where or what changes I needed to make. There were no resources or people around me to help guide and support me through this difficult time. That is until I started to reevaluate what was most important and met someone that changed my life and career forever...

I HAD ACHIEVED THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING OF MY LIFE AND WAS LIVING OUT MY CHILDHOOD DREAM, BUT NOTHING CHANGED...

THE CURRENT TANDSCAPE OF

IT'S NO SECRET THAT TODAY'S ATHLETES (AND COACHES)
EXPERIENCE HIGHER LEVELS OF STRESS, ANXIETY, AND
MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON. IN
FACT, 1 OUT OF EVERY 3 ELITE ATHLETES EXPERIENCE
SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION.

As athletes, we are constantly racked with internal and external pressures to perform at the very highest levels - trying to meet and exceed expectations we have for ourselves and that others have placed on us. Many of us - whether amateur or professional - base our identities and even self-worth on our ability to perform on the field. This is a recipe for inevitable disaster.

With almost three decades of combined experience in professional baseball (as athletes ourselves and Mike also being a coach) we know the world of high performance athletics like the back of our hand. We know what works and what doesn't. We know what leads to poor performance, burnout, fatigue, frustration and anxiety, but we also know what leads to long-term success on and off the field. Of course, on-field performance matters quite a bit, but we must be willing to admit that on-field performance is NOT the ultimate object to chase. Championships and achievement in sports are great and admirable, but they will never fully satisfy us. If we can agree on that, then we have to begin to take steps to organize our lives around what IS most important while at the same time refusing to sacrifice excellence in our craft. Ironically, once we take the pressure and obsession off of our performance, we grant ourselves the freedom to play and perform better on the field.

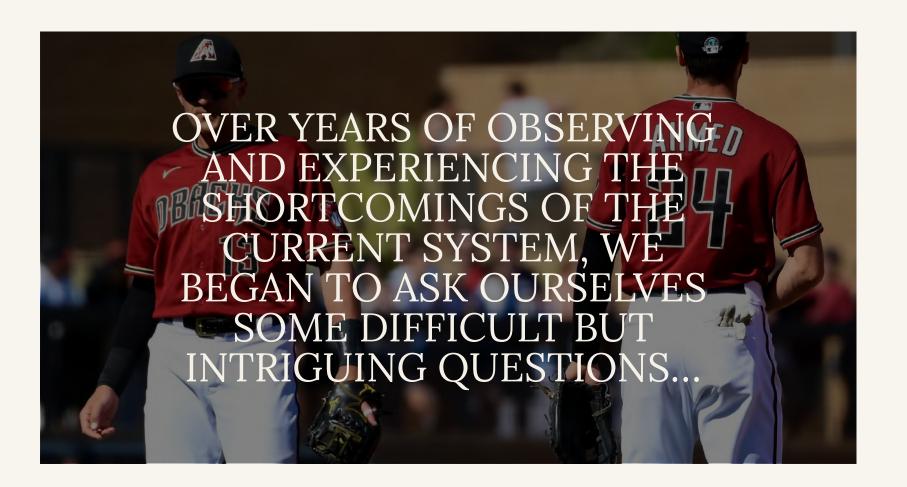
Unfortunately, today's sport organizations provide very few resources that help athletes and coaches organize their lives and training regimens in a way that will improve their on-field performance while at the same time help them build their lives so that they can experience greater peace, joy and sense of purpose. In other words, at a societal level, we are lacking a holistic, integrative model of success that meets the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of athletes and coaches. Based on our own experiences and observations from clubhouses to dugouts, classrooms to front office meetings, batting cages to weight rooms, from major league baseball all the way down to youth baseball, it is quite apparent that most athletes (and coaches) are woefully unequipped. Athletes and coaches are struggling to navigate the physical, mental, and spiritual challenges that come along with the pressures of high-level performance.

A huge percentage of today's athletes (especially with the rise of social media) have their identities and self-worth totally absorbed in their sport and performance. Oftentimes, athletes are more concerned with their external image and meeting the expectations of others rather than living out their God-given identity and purpose. Our unquenchable desire to "succeed" has warped our priorities and has placed an undue burden on athletes and coaches at all levels. If we see ourselves as "athlete-only" or even "athlete-first", we journey through our lives and careers with a shaky or compromised foundation that is always changing based on our performance. And, even if we find "success" on the field, there are many other areas of our lives that will collapse when storms of life come our way.

The current solutions to these problems employed by professional and amateur sport organizations are simply not working because they are not deep enough, and they are not integrative. The solutions presented often only scratch the surface, and they seldom ever cross the disciplines of mental health, spiritual health, nutrition, recovery, lifestyle, and relationships to provide a comprehensive and holistic blueprint for success. Like good doctors, our aim should be to get to the root cause of things like performance anxiety, broken relationships, lack of purpose, and physical and mental burnout. There is so much energy and money given to athletic development and even "mental skills", but resources for spiritual and mindset training, personal development, life and legacy building, and even proper nutrition and recovery are sorely lacking. These are the things we need to prioritize as they provide meaningful experiences, form us spiritually, last a lifetime, and help us set a foundation for strong, sustained on-field performance.

Another issue with the current system is that the landscape of mental skills or peak performance coaching focuses first and foremost on in-game performance tips like visualization, mental cuing, breathing, etc. Because of this, it misses the mark in teaching athletes and coaches how to LIVE well and doesn't provide the tools necessary to process life and game events in a positive, encouraging way. Regardless of how well you can visualize, breathe and create routines, you will still be met with recurring performance anxiety, sleepless nights and burnout if the foundation of your life is not built on the right ideas, perspectives, and practices. Although in-game mental skills are important, useful and necessary, they will never lead to sustained success across all areas of life.

From youth sports, to high school and college athletics and even professional sports, there is a sheer lack of in-depth identity, mindset and lifestyle education and training. This is indisputable given the alarming levels of mental health concerns, substance abuse and relational difficulties across all levels of athletics. As athletes and coaches, we have to ask why we are ok with training physically in the gym or with our skills on a daily basis, but we often don't put the time in to train or grow in our mindset, identity, lifestyle, and relationships? The current systems of peak performance and player development ultimately fall flat. They do not integrate ideas and practices from multiple disciplines into a singular training program that aims to meet the physical, mental and spiritual needs of the athlete.



THE GENESIS OF 7PILLAR

THREE YEARS INTO MY COLLEGE CAREER, I (MIKE) REMAINED AS FOCUSED AS EVER ON ACHIEVING MY CHILDHOOD DREAM OF PLAYING MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL. NOTHING ELSE SEEMED TO MATTER MUCH TO ME.

Even though I was well into college at a fairly rigorous academic school, I had one thing on my mind - baseball. It was not that I didn't care about school or was lazy in my studies - I graduated high school very close to the top of my class and maintained a GPA above 3.0 in college. The issue was that I had no real interest in pursuing any career in an Economics-related field. I chose this as a major at the time because "it made the most sense" and "it was the closest thing I could get to a business degree" - not exactly a captivating vision for a potential life and career outside baseball.

With baseball top of mind and heart entering my junior year at school, I worked at my craft with the ultimate hope of playing professionally shortly after our upcoming season. Even though I experienced some ups and downs during the season, I, like Nick, achieved my first step in becoming a Major League baseball player after getting drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 20th round of the 2013 MLB draft. However, I soon realized the life of a professional baseball player was not always as glamorous or fun as I thought it might be. Being a mid-round pick from a small school, in a small conference, I had an uphill battle to reach the big leagues. Even with that in front of me, I honestly never let it get to me at the beginning of my career. Baseball was baseball and work was work. I was in the game and that was really all that mattered.

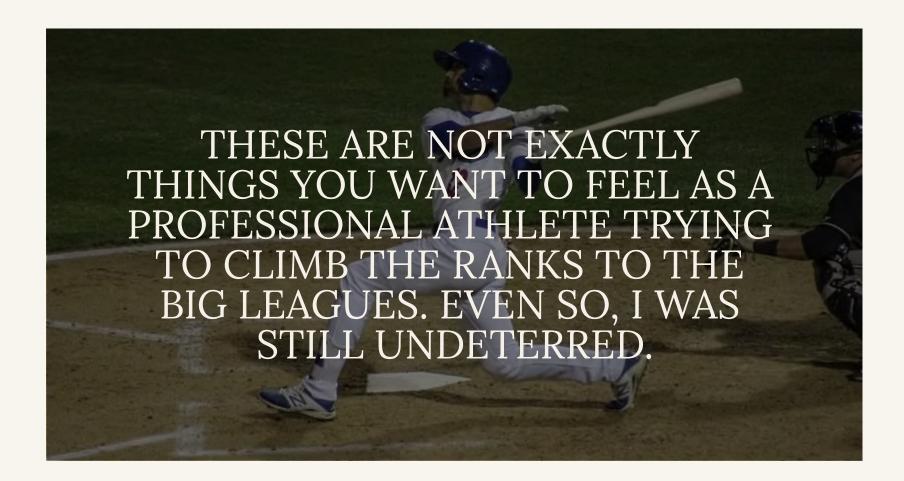
As a first-year player, I enjoyed playing the game and competing more than most (if not all) of my peers, but that did not mean life of a professional baseball player was easy. Even though I enjoyed it and it seemed as though baseball ran through my veins, there were times of performance anxiety, physical injury, chronic pain, and many personal sacrifices. As I continued to play, I saw these things derail the careers of many of my peers. Even though these challenges were real and I faced them on a daily basis, it was not inside me to give up or give in when things got hard. On the contrary, the adversity that I faced was the impetus for me to begin asking deep, soul-burning questions regarding the purpose and meaning of my life and the career I was pursuing. Was being a professional athlete really going to fulfill me and bring me that lasting joy I was expecting...? Did it make sense to go through all of this adversity for almost no pay and slim chance of achieving my actual dream...? My hunt for the answers to these questions led me down a new path.

THIS NEW PATH IS WHERE I BEGAN TO DEVELOP PERSPECTIVES, IDEAS AND EVEN SYSTEMS THAT HELPED ME THROUGH TIMES OF ADVERSITY.
THESE THINGS EVEN LED ME TO BECOMING A HEALTHIER, MORE DYNAMIC ATHLETE AND A MORE RESILIENT PERSON IN THE LONG RUN.

I scratched by during my first 3 professional seasons as a mediocre hitter at best. What kept me around was my versatility on the defensive side and because I was a "good clubhouse guy". Even though my offense wasn't there yet - there was still some upside. Finally, my fourth year into professional baseball, in high A, I began to have real, notable success. This was the breakthrough I was looking for, and I could now really see the potential of playing in the big leagues. My childhood dream felt like it was actually within my reach. After finishing up my 2016 season in high-A hitting over 20 homeruns (I had a combined 5 total my first 3 seasons), I was assigned to AA for the first time. After a slow first month to begin the 2017 season, I turned it on for the next 2 and was named a Texas League all-star. However, chronic low back pain led to an acute injury - a strained oblique - and I missed the next 2 months of the season on the IL. After a short rehab stint in rookie ball I was ready to rejoin my AA team. Unfortunately, on the day before I was supposed to return, I reinjured my oblique on the final swing of batting practice. The timing was devastating, and I missed the remainder of the season including playoffs.

After rehabbing through the off-season, I was finally healed from the oblique injury, but I came back to a diminished role in AA. As they say, professional sports are much like a conveyor belt. The next player is always right behind you ready to take your spot. To add insult to injury, I didn't perform well on the field. I was average at best and I lost feel for my swing - the tool that made me even more of a dynamic player the past two seasons. My oblique was as good as ever, but for some reason, I didn't feel myself physically. My swing wasn't where I needed it to be, I felt clunky and unathletic on defense - something I had never felt before - and my health seemed to be taking a downward trajectory. Now, in no way am I likening myself to a superhero, but in all honesty, I felt like a superhero

who lost his superpower. Overall, the 2018 season had been mentally and physically exhausting. After wrapping up the season which was personally disappointing (we won the Texas League Championship - something I'll never forget), I did a slew of serious health testing over the off-season to try to get to the root cause of why I had been feeling so off. I saw a number of doctors and all the testing I did checked out good. But, I still didn't feel like myself. During Spring Training 2019, I finally got some answers. I had been dealing with a serious parasitic infection in my gut that standard testing had not detected. Over the past year, I had lost 15 pounds, often had no energy to lift and train, and felt like my athleticism had been ripped away from me. These are not exactly things you want to feel as a professional athlete trying to climb the ranks to the big leagues. Even so, I was still undeterred.



As Spring Training 2019 came to a close, I didn't make a roster out of camp. My career, which seemed to have an unlimited ceiling just a year and a half ago, was starting to spiral downward. I was frustrated and confused, but was determined to get back on track. A month and half into the season, I was traded to the Seattle Mariners and assigned to their AA team in Little Rock, Arkansas. After going through some natural protocols to heal my gut and fix my health, I was beginning to feel a little better physically, but was playing at a C level at best. At the end of the 2019 season, I became a free agent for the first time, and was offered a fresh start and a new chance with the Arizona Diamondbacks. As 2020 Spring Training kicked off, I was almost feeling myself again. I even got to experience one of the highlights of my career - playing second base across from Nick in a big league Spring Training game. (We almost turned a double play together). However, only a few days after that game something new came out of left field (no pun intended) that once again attempted to derail my career - Covid. The next couple of weeks were a worldwind. At first, we were told we were just going to have to take some extra health precautions. That turned into us getting sent home from camp for the day. Next we had an indefinite pause on the 2020 season. I waited it out in AZ for a while with my wife and young daughter, but decided to fly back home in early May. A couple of short weeks later, I got a phone call from the farm director, releasing me from the club. This was not a total surprise to me as I was on a 1-year contract and the 2020 minor league season had been cancelled for good. Even so, it's always a little bit of a shock when you lose your job and have no plans for the future, especially during a time like Covid.

As the summer progressed, I spent my time training myself and coaching local youth,

high school and college baseball players. I had no clue what the next step would be in my career. At this point, I had a young family to consider and I was getting older (relatively speaking). If I decided to continue my playing career I would have been 29 years old, likely playing my 4th year in AA. That's even if there was a team that would give me another chance to play. I had a lot to consider and I needed to do some serious work to create a vision for my life and for my family for the next few years. Then, out of the blue, on an October night while I was cooking dinner for my family, my phone rang. It was Andy McKay, the farm director for the Seattle Mariners at that time. We chatted and caught up for a few minutes, before he offered me a chance to interview for a Mental Skills coaching position. I had no prior training or education as a mental skills group - the guys that I had connected with and became close to as a player two years prior. The following day, Andy called me up again and offered me a coaching position on the spot - not as a mental skills coach but as a development coach for their low-A team in Modesto, California.

Due to the uncertainty of my playing career and my desire to make an impact on a younger generation of athletes, I took the job. It was a tough way to end my playing career but I would make that decision again in a heartbeat. For me, the trials and struggles I had endured as a player in combination with the fact that my identity was not tied to being a "baseball player" actually made this decision fairly easy for me. The things I learned along the way and the systems I had developed for myself as a player helped mold me into the person I was. Even though I didn't achieve my ultimate goal of playing in the big leagues, I knew I had a ton of value to provide to the next generation of athletes.

My first year coaching in 2021 was an unforgettable experience. I learned a lot being "on the other side" and had a ton of fun in the process. I was expecting to return the next year but was informed that off-season that there was no longer a role for me. I was one of 2 or 3 unvaxxed employees who ultimately lost our jobs because of our personal decisions. After searching tirelessly for another coaching position in professional baseball, I was ultimately turned down for any position due to a blanket MLB policy, which required vaccination. At this point, I had to change my thinking and approach. Once again I had to reconsider my future. What was next for me? How could I continue to make an impact on a sport that I loved so much, that had taught me so much and that I knew inside and out?

My desire to make an impact as a coach, combined with my personal experience and the current societal craziness surrounding Covid led to many discussions around Nick's table. We discussed how to solve the current problems and trends inside the world of athletics - the problems which we had faced and overcame ourselves. We wanted to come up with new, innovative tools and a comprehensive training system that would equip and empower athletes and coaches. We committed to provide a tangible way to not only navigate and succeed in their careers but to also flourish in all parts of their lives as well. And so with this commitment. TPillar was officially born!

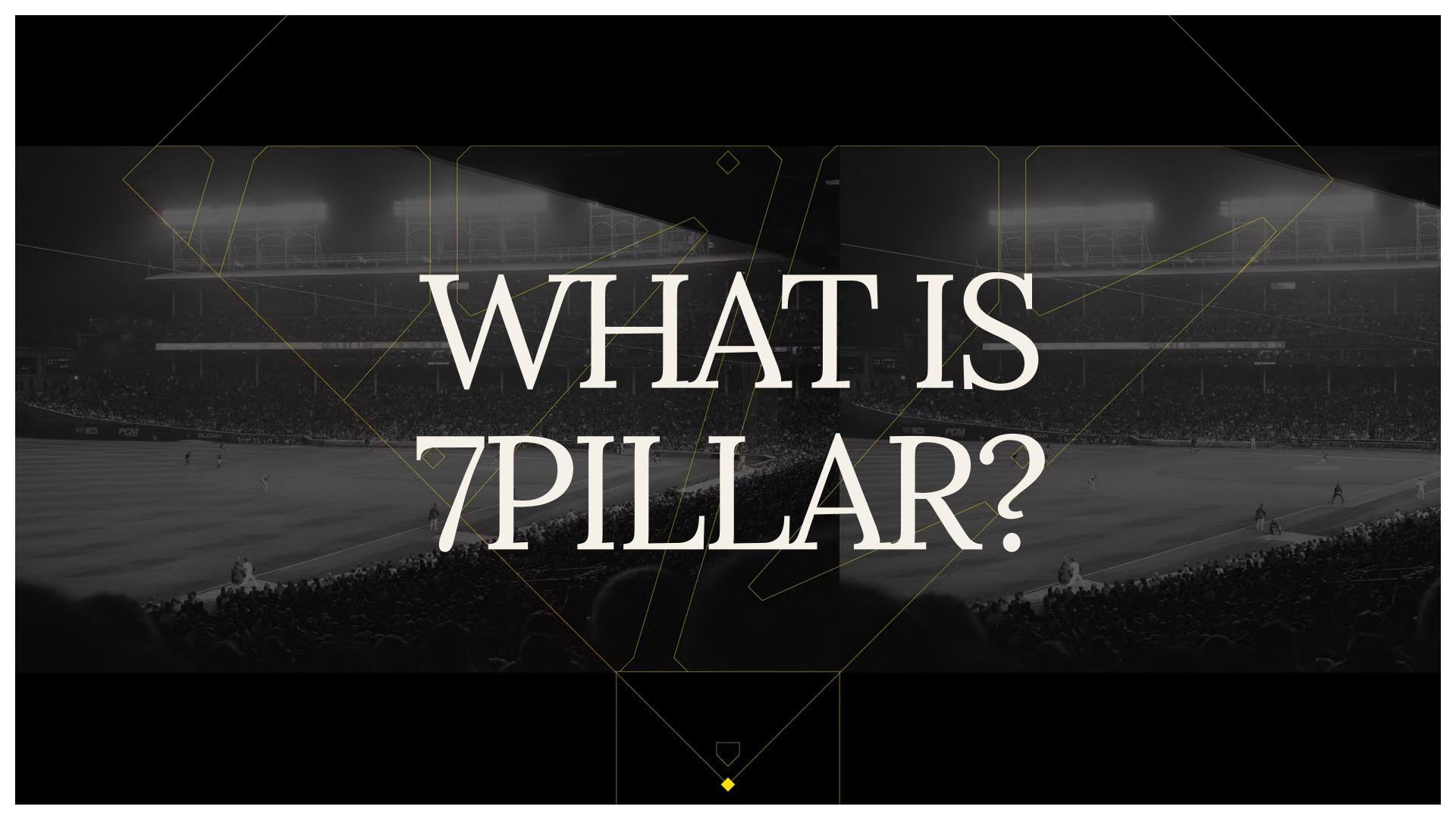
not only navigate and succeed in their careers but to also flourish in all parts of their lives as well. And so with this commitment, 7Pillar was officially born!

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

OUR BIGGEST CONTRIBUTION SPORTS, HUMANITY

Throughout my career I dealt with several injuries, chronic pain, serious health issues, being at the bottom, being at the top, getting traded, getting released, and being rejected multiple times for personal health reasons, and yet, I've still come out on top. I am on a mission. We are on a mission. To rethink mental, spiritual and physical training for athletes. To find a better way to evaluate <u>and</u> achieve success in sport and life. To give athletes and coaches the tools necessary to conquer adversity and deal with the extreme challenges of high level-performance. We want athletes to be able to pursue and sustain success on the field AND experience lasting peace, joy and purpose regardless of the status of their career.

Right now, there is a societal-level miscalculation of what it means to be "successful". This is alarming given the levels of mental health concerns in sport, but in general society as well. We want athletes and coaches to have success on the field, but off the field as well. There are so many things in our careers that could have derailed us and set us back, but in both our cases, we were able to find true success and fulfillment inside and outside of our careers. It takes work. Lots of work. But we have done an enormous amount of work to help YOU, the athlete or coach, to develop the right patterns of thinking that will lead to thriving and flourishing on and off the field. As an athlete or coach, YOU can achieve lasting success if you develop an unbreakable identity, maintain an ambitious and competitive mindset, and work to optimize exceptional physical and mental performance. We have developed the first and most comprehensive humancentered approach to coaching and player development. Will you join us in transforming your life and career?





IDENTITY

Personal identity is the foundation of our life. It determines how we think, live, and interact with the world around us. When we fully understand who God created us to be, we will become all that we are capable of becoming. We will walk into our lives, our sport, and our spheres of influence with confidence and make great impact in the lives of those around us. We will experience more success in all areas of life, and we will be able to overcome failures and setbacks, as they will no longer have the power to define who we are.

MINDSET

Mindset is the second piece of the foundation on which our lives are built. It is the ultimate driver of our thoughts, behaviors, and ability to perform. Not only do we need to cultivate the right perspectives and thought patterns, but we also need to understand the root causes of issues like performance anxiety, burnout, and other mental health challenges. 7Pillar offers high-level mental training tools that will help you perform at your peak and experience confidence, consistency, and stability in your life and sport.

LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle is the culmination of our identity and mindset. It is how we live out our personal beliefs, and it is the standards we hold ourselves accountable to. After we intentionally build a strong foundation, we must allow these beliefs to infiltrate every area of our life. If we don't, we will be missing out on the fullness of life that is available to us. 7P illar is a way of living that allows us to reach and sustain our potential, first as a human, and then as an athlete.

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are the currency of life. We will only truly thrive as people and as athletes if we learn to develop meaningful, healthy relationships. When we intentionally surround ourselves with the right people, we will grow into the best versions of ourselves and make the greatest impact on the world around us.

NUTRITION

Food is much more than fuel. When we choose to nourish our bodies with the most nutrient-dense, life-giving foods we will experience optimal health, energy, and vitality. In today's world, consuming cheap, processed foods has become the norm but has left us chronically sick, injured, tired, inflamed, and stressed. Developing a deep understanding of how food impacts our bodies and utilizing practical, science-backed nutrition tools will give us a tremendous boost to our overall health and athletic performance.

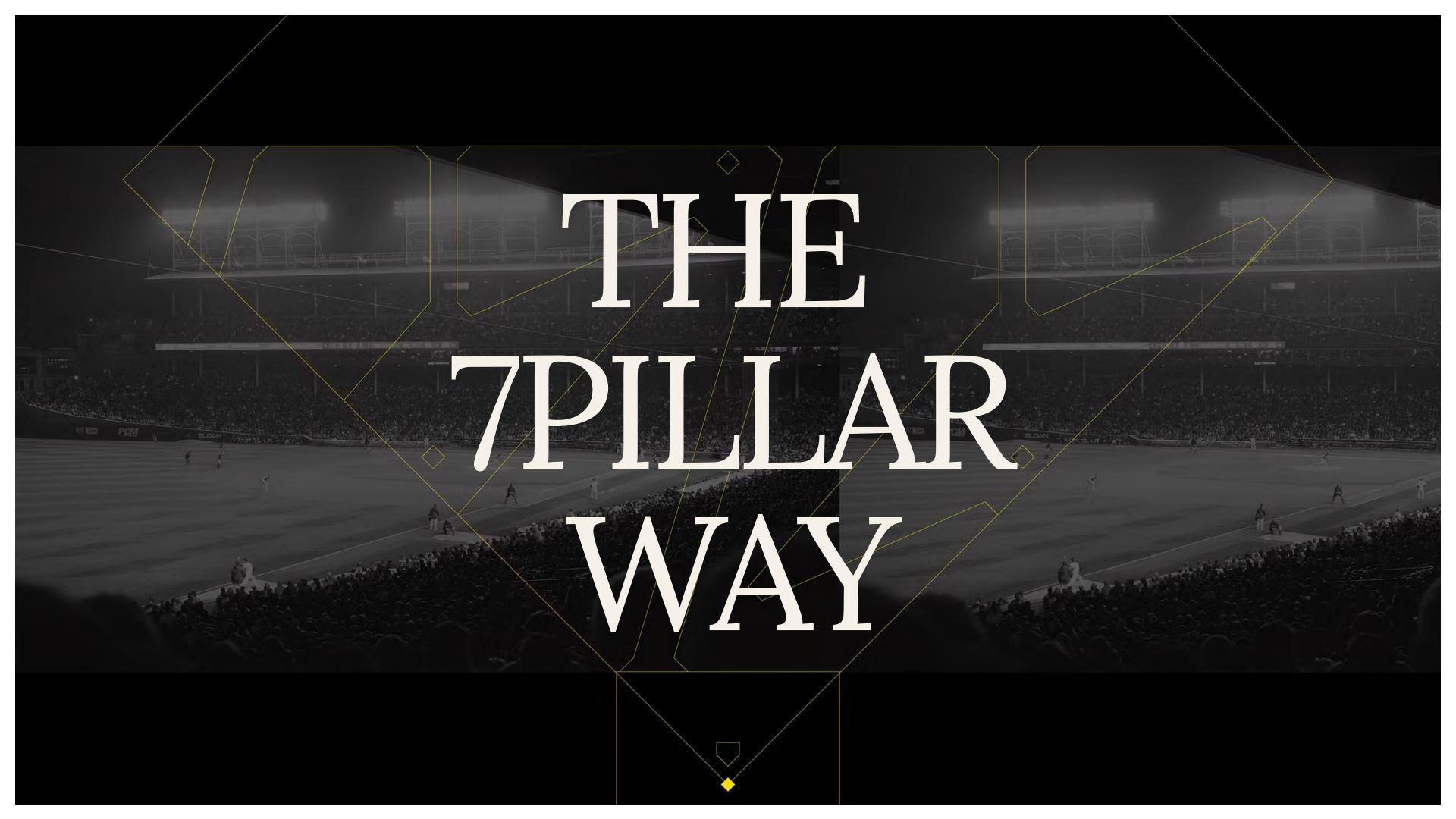
FITNESS

Movement is medicine. Exercise offers numerous benefits, including improvements in strength, speed, endurance, cognitive function, mood, injury prevention, and more.

There is no one size fits all method, but an effective fitness program will include strength training, speed and agility work, cardiovascular training, and mobility.

RECOVERY

Recovery is an often overlooked but crucial aspect of overall health and elite performance. For us to maximize our abilities and live in an optimal state, we must maintain a balance between stress and recovery. In other words, we can only grow stronger if we are able to adapt to the demands of competition and training. These adaptations do not happen while we work, but rather when we recover. A complete recovery program includes sleep, rest, breathwork, and other biohacking essentials.



OUR MISSION IS TO ELEVATE THE TRAINING EXPERIENCE, ENABLING ATHLETES AND COACHES TO ACHIEVE THEIR PEAK POTENTIAL AND DEVELOP AN UNBREAKABLE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS IN SPORT AND LIFE. WE ARE BUILDING EXCEPTIONAL ATHLETES, SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE, AND IMPACTFUL LEADERS.

How?

Our training system bridges the gap between athletic excellence and personal growth. The 7Pillar platform will help athletes and coaches:

- Develop an unbreakable identity and mental foundation for sport and life.
- Develop habits and routines that teach you how to live an abundant life.
- Optimize physical and mental performance on and off the field.

Our platform is a dynamic ecosystem that offers:

- Daily Training: Daily meditation with prompts to help build a strong identity and mindset.
- · Courses: In depth masterclass style training courses.
- Community Challenges: Join us in tangible challenges to help reinforce the importance of living out the 7Pillar way.
- **Team Building Curriculum:** Short form teaching messages for coaches to guide their athletes through on topics such as mindset, teamwork, leadership, and adversity.
- Performance Resources: Digital Journal, Audio Tracks, Health and Performance Protocols, Schedule

For the Athlete:

A 7Pillar subscription will grant access to the application which will serve as a daily touch point for the athlete to train, learn, and grow within each of the 7 pillars. Our platform will provide a daily message, both video and written, and contain several resources to help the athlete build a strong mental and spiritual foundation. The 7Pillar platform will train athletes how to practically apply these lessons and create habits for excellence and success on and off the field.

For the Coach:

In today's competitive landscape, the role of a coach transcends teaching physical techniques or designing workout routines. Coaches are mentors, motivators and leaders - pivotal figures in the personal and professional development of their athletes. But with the increasing demands on coaches to deliver results, guide personal development and stay up-to-date with evolving training methodologies, many find themselves stretched thin.

The Impact We Create

We are redefining the way in which athletes train for competition. By giving athletes an extensive catalog of tools and top-tier education in all of the 7 pillars, we are building better athletes and better people. Not only do we aim to help athletes perform at their peak on the field but we are building confident, disciplined and resilient individuals ready to take on challenges beyond the sports arena. By taking a human-centered approach to development, we are redefining success and freeing both athletes and coaches to perform at their best and enjoy the magic of sport.

Why Now?

As the demand for well-rounded athletes and leaders continues to grow, the need for tools that support holistic development has never been greater. 7Pillar is at the forefront of this movement, providing a solution that is not only innovative but essential for the modern athlete and coach.

Join Us.

Being an athlete or coach is about more than wins and losses; it's about becoming the person you were meant to become. With 7Pillar, you're not just an athlete or a coach. You're a legacy builder and a changemaker. Invest in yourself and in the next generation of athletes. Together, let's redefine the future of sports and unlock the full potential of athletes everywhere.

Sport. Life. Legacy.
What are you building?
What are your standards?

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WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

OUR BIGGEST CONTRIBUTION ISN'T TO SPORTS,

IT'S TO HUMANITY