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**If You Want to Change the World?
University of Texas 2014 Commencement Address
By Admiral William H. McRaven
Your Life Your Health
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Few things in life are as valuable as passion and purpose. Physical health is strengthened by emotional and spiritual well-being. We often go through the motions of life and living without having the core of our being torched. Commencement addresses are such events. I have personally been through multiple such experiences and remember little from any of them and what I do remember is often because of the ordinariness of the event.

This May, the University of Texas had a commencement experience which not only challenged the graduates but millions of other are being inspired by the address delivered by Admiral William H. McRaven, the commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command. The most benefit from this address can be gained by watching and listening to the address which can be found in many places on the world wide web. The following transcript of the speech has been provided by the University of Texas. Its length requires that it be divided into two parts.

Taking the time to read it, then listen to it and keeping a copy will benefit you and your family.

**University of Texas Commence Address May, 2014
Admiral William H. McRaven
Part I**

I have been a Navy SEAL for 36 years. But it all began when I left UT for Basic SEAL training in Coronado, California. Basic SEAL training is six months of long torturous runs in the soft sand, midnight swims in the cold water off San Diego, obstacles courses, unending calisthenics, days without sleep and always being cold, wet and miserable.

It is six months of being constantly harassed by professionally trained warriors who seek to find the weak of mind and body and eliminate them from ever becoming a Navy SEAL. But, the training also seeks to find those students who can lead in an environment of constant stress, chaos, failure and hardships.

To me basic SEAL training was a life time of challenges crammed into six months. So, here are the ten lesson's I learned from basic SEAL training that hopefully will be of value to you as you move forward in life.

Every morning in basic SEAL training, my instructors, who at the time were all Vietnam veterans, would show up in my barracks room and the first thing they would inspect was your bed. If you did it right, the corners would be square, the covers pulled tight, the pillow centered just under the headboard and the extra blanket folded neatly at the foot of the rack—rack—that's Navy talk for bed.

It was a simple task—mundane at best. But every morning we were required to make our bed to perfection. It seemed a little ridiculous at the time, particularly in light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough battle hardened SEALs—but the wisdom of this simple act has been proven to me many times over.

If you make your bed every morning you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right. And, if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made—that you made—and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

During SEAL training the students are broken down into boat crews. Each crew is seven students—three on each side of a small rubber boat and one coxswain to help guide the dingy. Every day your boat crew forms up on the beach and is instructed to get through the surfzone and paddle several miles down the coast. In the winter, the surf off San Diego can get to be 8 to 10 feet high and it is exceedingly difficult to paddle through the plunging surf unless everyone digs in.

Every paddle must be synchronized to the stroke count of the coxswain. Everyone must exert equal effort or the boat will turn against the wave and be unceremoniously tossed back on the beach. For the boat to make it to its destination, everyone must paddle. You can't change the world alone—you will need some help—and to truly get from your starting point to your destination takes friends, colleagues, the good will of strangers and a strong coxswain to guide them.

If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.

Over a few weeks of difficult training my SEAL class which started with 150 men was down to just 35. There were now six boat crews of seven men each. I was in the boat with the tall guys, but the best boat crew we had was made up of the little guys—the munchkin crew we called them—no one was over about 5-foot five. The munchkin boat crew had one American Indian, one African American, one Polish American, one Greek American, one Italian American, and two tough kids from the midwest.

They out paddled, out-ran, and out swam all the other boat crews. The big men in the other boat crews would always make good natured fun of the tiny little flippers the munchkins put on their tiny little feet prior to every swim. But somehow these little guys, from every corner of the Nation and the world, always had the last laugh—swimming faster than everyone and reaching the shore long before the rest of us. SEAL training was a great equalizer. Nothing mattered but your will to succeed. Not your color, not your ethnic background, not your education and not your social status.

If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart, not the size of their flippers.

If you want to change the world get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

Every day during training you were challenged with multiple physical events—long runs, long swims, obstacle courses, hours of calisthenics—something designed to test your mettle. Every event had standards—times you had to meet. If you failed to meet those standards your name was posted on a list and at the end of the day those on the list were invited to—a “circus.” A circus was two hours of additional calisthenics—designed to wear you down, to break your spirit, to force you to quit.

No one wanted a circus. A circus meant that for that day you didn't measure up. A circus meant more fatigue—and more fatigue meant that the following day would be more difficult—and more circuses were likely. But at some time during SEAL training, everyone—everyone—made the circus list. But an interesting thing happened to those who were constantly on the list. Overtime those students—who did two hours of extra calisthenics—got stronger and stronger. The pain of the circuses built inner strength-built physical resiliency.

Life is filled with circuses. You will fail. You will likely fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core.

But if you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.