

Ep#190: Transitioning From The Military to Starting Your Own Firm with Daniel Kopp



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Caleb Brown

[*New Planner Podcast*](#) with Caleb Brown

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Welcome to the *New Planner Podcast*, where it's all about helping you successfully enter the financial planning profession and accelerate your financial planning career.

This podcast will help you understand the profession, become familiar with the various career paths available to you, and avoid the mistakes that limit your success.

Join your host, Caleb Brown, to explore the human side of creating a successful planning career through interviews, personal experience, and insights from the trenches.

Let's get started.

Caleb Brown: Welcome to the 190th episode of the New Planner Podcast. This is Caleb Brown, your host. My guest today is Daniel Kopp, who is the founder of Wise Stewardship Financial Planning. Daniel joins the show today to share how he became interested in financial planning, his military journey, how he opened up his own firm, and how he's helping other military members with their financial planning.

Listen in as he shares how he became interested in money from an early age and why he joined the Air Force after high school, then why he ended up leaving the military and starting his own financial planning firm. Stay tuned until the end where Daniel shares the structure of the details of his firm, he recalls the highlight of his career thus far, and offers tips to newer planners. I hope you enjoy my interview with Daniel Kopp.

Hey, Daniel, welcome to the new planner podcast.

Daniel Kopp: I'm so glad to be here, Caleb. Thanks for inviting me.

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Caleb Brown: Yeah, well, you had me on your show, so I just feel like I want to return the favor and I really appreciate you making time and really just wanted to start with, if you would, just how financial planning even got on, if I remember right, you're a military guy, so how did financial planning even get on your radar?

Daniel Kopp: Oh, wow. That's an interesting kind of sort of winding story. I'll give the shorter version of it, but for whatever reason, I was one of those kids that was always interested in money. I ran the bank of Daniel. I lent money at usury interest rates to my younger siblings back in the day. I opened my Roth IRA when I was 18 and started putting money away from my lawn money that I'd earned.

I don't know. I was always interested in it. My grandfather taught me how to read like the stock pages and pick out dividend rates and stuff like that. Wasn't something that grew up a lot in my home per se. Went off to college, had no idea that financial planning, much less financial advisor stuff.

I was always into the military. So I went to college at Purdue University on a four-year ROTC scholarship. Fortunately, they gave me the option to pick any major I wanted. I didn't know financial planning was a thing. So I picked something interesting, economics, right? And I studied that there. I loved it.

It was really fun. Graduate commission, head on off, go do this air battle manager thing. But I always loved personal finance. So I'd stumbled my way through almost during college, got an internship with a certain mutual insurance company that shall remain nameless, but you know, they slid the sheet across the table.

100 names. What? That doesn't sound like what I want to do. I don't want to go sell stuff. You're going to ask me, my friends, and family network. Anyway, so I was not that interested in that, but I got involved through the Air Force, through the financial counseling programs that they offered and the VITA program, the volunteer income tax assistance.

Then I found stuff like Ramsey's Financial Peace University that was able to help teach through the church that I was involved in. I'm like, "Wow, this is great." Helping people one on one. With money is really fun. I really

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enjoyed it. I just didn't know there was a career field. So I'm standing in the Air Force base at gym one day, looking through Apple podcasts, and somehow I stumbled across XYPN radio.

And this was back when they first launched in the first couple of episodes. And I heard Carl Richards talking to Alan Moore and I'm like, it was like the clouds parted and the sun shone down and it was like, there's this thing called the CFP and comprehensive, holistic financial planning done in a way that's a fiduciary, not some of the other conflicts of interest that are out there. I was hooked. I mean, that was it from there. I was like, this is what I'm going to do.

Caleb Brown: Love it.

Caleb Brown: So you, at Purdue, you just missed, they had the CFP program.

Daniel Kopp: If they had it, no one ever told me about it. And I didn't know it even existed until much, much later on. I don't know how I missed that. It was there. It just, I didn't, no one told me. I talked to a lot of people. No one said, "Hey, you've thought about this thing over here."

Caleb Brown: Something else you mentioned to you, or you mentioned the Dave Ramsey financial piece. I mean, this is, and I know you guys probably have covered this on the Military to Financial Planner podcast, but if you're in the military and you have spare time, go through that program, the Financial Peace program, and then get trained on it and then start teaching the class.

I mean, that's a good cornerstone to work from. I mean, I see whether it's church or through the chaplaincy or whatever it is, just start doing that, the Airman's Readiness Center or where we are. Talk to us a little bit more about your military career. So why did you want to go be in the Air Force?

Daniel Kopp: Well, in addition to my interest in personal finance, I was always interested in military history. I mean, I can remember checking out books at the library when I was seven years old on World War II. I was a nerdy kid. So as I looked ahead in high school and sat down, had some

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serious conversation with mom and dad being like, “Hey, you're going to kind of be on your own for paying for college.” Somehow, I don't know how I knew, but somehow I knew that I wanted to do it reasonably cost-efficient. I didn't want to go into loads of debt, things like that. And I was also at the time interested in like the service academy. So I was looking at them as well. Ultimately it worked out that I got an ROTC scholarship.

And so I kind of made it easy button just to go to Purdue on a full ride. I didn't have any grand visions at the time, but again, like once I got into the program, really loved it, loved the people I worked with. Once I commissioned and got out into the Air Force, I mean, amazing people, great mission, had a great time doing it.

It was only when I found something that I liked even better that it started to do. Ultimately, this is where my personal journey intersects with the professional side, right? So I was planning on being a lifer, staying in until retirement and maybe beyond for a long 20-plus year career. My wife, Sarah, at the time though, started having some pretty serious health issues and that really made me rattle back on my Air Force career and start looking at the same time that I found out about CFP and financial planning in general.

Caleb Brown: Gotcha. And that was just, I mean, I guess I mean, the deployments and the PCS, I mean, that's just tough on the family, right?

Daniel Kopp: It was. And in the summer of 2015, I became, you know, Sarah's kind of full-time caregiver, which lasted for about two years there.

And yeah, it just, I could not continue to do both. Ultimately, she ended up going into hospice and then died in August of 2017. So that really was kind of like the final bell of this chapter is going to have to close. I'd already had my separation paperwork in, I'd been almost completed with the CFP at that point in time. But needless to say, that rocked my world entirely.

Caleb Brown: Daniel. I'm sorry to hear that. Thanks for sharing that. I had to go on mute for a moment.

Daniel Kopp: You didn't know that, Caleb. I thought you knew that already.

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Caleb Brown: I did not know that.

Daniel Kopp: Okay.

Caleb Brown: Oh man. I'm sorry about that. There's probably a lot to unpack there, but that's beyond the scope of this. But anyways, I appreciate you sharing that. So pick us up. So you got out of the air force and did you have a job lined up or what? Or were you just sort of trying to find your way?

Daniel Kopp: Sort of. So at that point, right, everything's kind of falling apart. And I was in kind of a place of, "Well, what happens next?"

Thanks to tremendous support from my Air Force family, my church family, grief counseling, mental health, the chaplain, like leaning into those people and those resources took the time to grieve, step away. Sarah and I had planned to take a sabbatical where we'd set funds aside to be able to step away and not have to do anything right away, we'd prepared financially for the transition.

So we had enough cash sitting there that I had time and space to figure out what was next. Ultimately, this was now a solo journey, but thankfully Sarah and I had these conversations leading up to that. And she encouraged me to go ahead with this transition. This is now where, looking back with the benefit of hindsight, the personal lessons learned on the grief side enables me now in my firm to work with people who are walking that similar journey.

So I went and looked at a couple of firms at that point in time. One was in California, one was in DC. I didn't want to move to either of those locations. So I said, I work with my own financial planner that I had at the time, a lot of other counselors, lots of people that I've been talking to. And they're like, "Well, what's the worst that would happen if you launch your own thing? And a few years you decide it's not working or you don't like it, you'll have a few more years of experience and you can go get a job somewhere else."

So I did that. And of course, the firm took off like a rocket ever since working with people. So I specialize in working with active duty military

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because I know that world really well. Within that I sub niche with like active duty mill to mill couple.

So typically officers married to each other trying to decide, should we stay in? Should we get out? What does that look like? And then the other side is younger widowed people, often gold star widows. So I have a significant chunk of my clients that are gold star widows. So again, that personal journey, that grief journey that I've been on, it helped intersect on the professional and the CFP side as well.

Caleb Brown: So rewarding, I mean, it's just what a great population to work with. And I shared a little bit about this when I was on your show, but when I was doing a lot of my MHN counseling when my wife was getting her PhD, and I was at Fort Hood, Texas, and I mean, one of the most rewarding and funnest jobs I had, but also 1 of the toughest was being in that survivor outreach services area.

I mean, you talk about just the life planning, sort of the listening, I mean, it's just to listen to what these surviving spouses are going through. And wow, a delicate situation. So I mean, I mean, one, they need the help, but also early on, I mean, that's a great way to sort of practice some of this stuff and get ready because you're going to face it with every client that you deal with eventually. And man, I'm just glad to hear you say that.

So in other entrepreneur, I mean, like people out there that are thinking about starting their own firm and exactly what you said, what's the worst that could happen?

You don't make it. And then you go get a job somewhere else. I mean, maybe the ego is bruised a little bit. Maybe the bank accounts take a little hit, but you're going to get through it. You're good. That's the worst case that can happen, really. So you launched the firm, I guess I'm assuming XYPN, right? I mean, that was sort of the—

Daniel Kopp: Full support there.

Caleb Brown: Full support there. And then just talk to us about how, 'cause you really didn't have any experience. So how did you gain the skills?

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Daniel Kopp: Yeah. So I'd finished up the CFP education right about that same time. I'd had, I forget how many hundreds of hours of that I've been tracking on the counseling side doing the VITA program, things like that. And then with my CFP board mentor, who also then served as my attestor for those hours prior to launch. So when I launched, I did not officially have the CFP, but I quickly got the remaining hours as I got to that first two years of the firm. And the worst thing that could have happened, right, is I could have taken on clients or given bad advice.

So that was probably one of the things at the forefront. So I was very careful early on not to get over my [...], right? Working with clients within my skill set as I broadened it up. Now, the beauty of course of XYPN, and then when I joined with other military affiliate firms there that ultimately ended up forming the Military Financial Advisors Association, or MFAA, is even though I was solo, I was never alone, right? So I was in great mastermind groups from the very beginning of people with other different experiences that I could lean on within our military space to do that. So very carefully and then realizing wow, I love this stuff. It's really good. Clients are coming. People are willing to pay me, right? This is going to work.

That realization started to happen about year two. At the same time, I recognize I'm like, man, There's so much more I need to learn about this. So I went back to school and went to Kansas State and got their masters in their personal financial planning program and chose the financial therapy sub designation because we're going back to the people working with people in their reef journey.

The thing that I found is that many of the widowed clients that I was working with exhibited what I now know is money-avoidant behavior, right? So based on some of their early childhood, their family of origin experiences, they developed money beliefs, money avoidance, goes back to the Klontz Money Script Inventory and often deals with things like rich people are greedy, money is bad, moral beliefs that are associated with money.

For whatever reason, these people kind of got through their life, they get married, they delegate financial management to their spouse, so they didn't have to do it, they didn't have to worry about it, right? Suddenly their

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spouse dies, now they're confronted with it, they can't avoid it anymore, and so that really was key for me unlocking and working with a lot of these widow clients who are dealing with things that go beyond dollars and cents and even go beyond grief, but I like the actual money beliefs that they have.

So that has been really transformative. Highly recommend that program to anybody who's interested in going deeper in that way.

Caleb Brown: Do you ever have any pushback or maybe you don't know 'Cause I just don't sign up as a client, but from these widows or [...], you're like, "Hey, Daniel, really love working with you, but I kind of wish you were a woman." Did you get any of that?

Daniel Kopp: I've never heard it, right? Because they can clearly see on my website that I'm me and I'm not a woman. So if that's the case, right, they're not reaching out. The thing that I found is that grief is a language on its own and there's a commonality there regardless of gender and the fact that I can say the unsaid thing or know the unsaid thing is enough for most people to make that pretty easy connection. Now, just because I have experience doesn't mean I have the technical expertise and for the listeners, right?

You can have technical expertise and emotional empathy, a high EQ to come in and help these people. You don't have to have gone through this experience yourself. It just makes it that much easier for me to connect with them from the beginning.

Caleb Brown: So talk to us a little bit more about your firm. So it sounds like you didn't really have any trouble getting clients. I mean, that's usually people's biggest hurdle. So what's your magic elixir?

Daniel Kopp: Oh man, I was known as the finance guy. It certainly in my military circle. So like when I opened the firm, it was, as my friend says, a line out the door, sort of, within people within my space. So I had done a little bit of blogging, I'd done some other work in the military personal finance space.

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I'd got to know other people in that space, like bloggers and podcasters and YouTubers by going to a couple conferences, FinCon, MillMoneyCon, things like that. And so I also got referrals early on for people who said, "Oh, I'm not the advisor, Daniel is, he's in this military space." So that helped to kind of power things.

And then the biggest thing was also Facebook group involvement early on. So I was actively involved in a bunch of personal finance groups for widows or military on Facebook where people come in and ask questions. And I did not sell ever. I would just go in and answer the questions, but I would do it in a really good way, right?

Comprehensive, holistic. Occasionally, I would throw in, "Oh, by the way, I happen to be a fee-only financial planner. I'm a CFP, blah, blah, blah." Very rarely did I do that. Oftentimes, other people would tag me and say, "Hey, Daniel, come answer this question." And the funny thing is never ever, I went back and looked at this recently, did the people that I was answering the question ever reach out or become a client. Instead, it's all the lurkers. All the people who are sitting there, sometimes they comment, but most often they would not. And I would get somebody book on my calendar via my website and they say, "Hey, I saw you answer this question in this group. I have that same question. Can we chat?" So that was really helpful early on when I had more time than clients. I don't do that anywhere near as much anymore, but certainly early on.

Caleb Brown: Isn't that funny how that works out? And I think it was Jude Boudreau or some, one of my next-gen buddies. He said one time, like he was keeping stats if some, if a client and a prospective client meeting says, "Thank you for your time, they're not going forward." He had it down. I'm like, that is amazing. So I've always tried to pay attention to those little things that the clients say, but awesome job on the marketing, man, that's tremendous.

So just where are, so you, is it—what's your structure right now? Is it you and you're doing financial planning for some sort of subscription fee or something?

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Daniel Kopp: Yeah. So I serve 44 households right now. The goal is to get to around 50. So I'm getting close to capacity right now. I offer investment management as a sub-option.

So it's optional if clients want to delegate that to me. So of the 44 households, about two-thirds of them are in the advice-only model. So that's an XYPN retainer, annual fee billed monthly, right? I do about 10 to 12 project plans a year. I call it the foundation's plan. So that's three to five, six planning meetings, fixed fee, half at the beginning, half at the end.

And then I also do a lot of back-office support. So it's solo, but I have like investment research team. I have estate planning support through EncoreEstate planning. I have tax preparation that's built into my firm. I pay for it from a team of enrolled agents that work for another firm that I subcontract to.

Same thing with LIS support on the insurance piece. So again, the beauty of this profession and the technology right now is that I can be the lead financial planner responsible for the client relationships. And I have back-off support for all that stuff I mentioned plus bookkeeping and editing and podcast support and marketing.

So I have a bunch of contractors that work for me doing little bits here and there. But I am doing all the client work, which is what I love. This is my most favorite part of the business and allows me to do that and delegate out everything else that I'm either not good or efficient or best at.

Caleb Brown: Dan Sullivan, the Who Not How author would be so proud of you on doing this, man, just nailed it, Daniel. I love it.

Daniel Kopp: It's so funny. I never thought I would like the entrepreneurship side as well, but man, it's been so much fun too.

Caleb Brown: Yeah, I mean, you found your highest and best use and you've just been very stingy saying, "Nope, I'm not doing anything outside that." And that's I think why you've had the success that you've had. So I'm an 04. My spouse is an 03. We come to you, what happens next?

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Daniel Kopp: So I like to break financial planning down into modules. So if you're doing a brand new client, the first module is always a life planning-esque module. So this is where I take an amalgamation of tools from things like Kinder's Work, Money Quotient, Sudden Money Institute, or the Certified Financial Transition, as well as the Financial Therapy. And we'll spend that first meeting talking about what's important to you. What was your first memory of money? Where do you see yourself in three years? Like painting the picture. And then the primary intervention that I use from the therapeutic side is solution-focused financial therapy and narrative therapy. So narrative therapy is letting clients feel like they're the author of their own lives, right? That's empowerment that they are in control of the things that they can be to match what's next. And solution-focused therapy is very scaling questions. What has worked in the past?

Let's focus on what works and what doesn't and pivot quickly. Now, do I tell clients that I'm inducing those interventions? Very rarely. It's the Carl Richard Reitz's trick, right? We're going to work towards that. Once people are clear on the goals, right? The whole Stephen Covey, make sure the ladder's leaning on the right wall, things generally start to fall into place from there, particularly for that client couple example, right? Well, are you both going to stay in? Well, there's a lot of trade-offs and sacrifice associated with that. Now let's get to the numbers, the nuts and bolts piece. But once the hopes, fears, and dreams are clarified, it gets that much easier to do the financial plan.

Caleb Brown: How much is it going to cost me?

Daniel Kopp: Well, so I am probably on the far right of the how deep and in-depth and comprehensive holistic. So tax preparation included, estate planning included and that starts at 7000 a year right now.

Caleb Brown: Gotcha. Okay. So that's financial planning tax estate, 7k. And then if you manage my assets, I guess that would be what my TSP plan and then any outside money that is built separately.

Daniel Kopp: So I'm not going to bill on assets held at the TSP or 401k or something like that. That's included in the advice only. If clients choose to

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delegate asset management, I have a dollar-for-dollar fee offset, so they delegate over x number of dollars.

There's a AUM percentage based on that. And if their planning fee was 10,000 a year, if they send over enough assets, that the planning fee is offset by the AUM and the planning fee goes away entirely. I did that a couple of years ago to kind of reduce the conflict of interest that I really disliked. It's like work with me, pay me this way. So it's worked really well explaining it, and most importantly for me to have the confidence to share that.

Caleb Brown: It always helps to be able to sleep at night, right? On knowing that you're charging [...]

Daniel Kopp: Yes. And to be clear, I start at 7,000 a year. Now, I did not do that. I'm the classic case of under truck.

When I launched the business a couple of years ago, my minimum annual fee was 1400 a year. I'd like to become a client. So now I added in some of those additional features later on, but that was dramatically undercharging. I was undercharging quite a bit. So things have moved up and now I feel very comfortable and confident where it's at now.

Caleb Brown: Everybody does this, including yours truly. And a lot of other entrepreneurs out there. I mean, kudos to those people that can come in and just, "Yep, it's going to, I'm going right to the top."

Daniel Kopp: Yeah, as a career trainer, I did not have that confidence in the first 2 or 3 years, but having seen over and over again and finding who's the right fit. And the irony, people have shared this on your podcast before, the irony is the people who pay more value it more. Assuming it still makes sense. I have found in line with what like the XYPN and benchmarking surveys that once you get in that 2 to 3 percent of adjusted gross income, an annual retainer fee above that gets uncomfortable for people.

Not that they don't say yes, but maybe they don't stick around. So going back to who's my ideal client, comfortable paying 7,000 a year, they got to

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be making generally that mill-to-mill officer money or officer plus second career or something like that to kind of make that work on that side.

So again, but I'm not the best fit, nor should I be the planner for everybody. That's the beauty of certainly what we create within military financial advisors associations. Plenty of other colleagues that I can happily refer to that might have a different fee model that services them.

Caleb Brown: Gotcha. Well, so what are you working on right now? I mean, I know you're trying to get up to 50 clients in full capacity, but I mean, is that it? Or what? What are you going to do? Are you going to keep building?

Daniel Kopp: Well, I have so many other interests. So I am also a professor. I teach at Regent University. I'm exploring a few other professor jobs, so doesn't pay well, but the work is very rewarding. I also do fintech consulting. So more on that financial therapy piece. So I've done that for the last year or so. I've also written a curriculum for people who are interested in this military space, who are looking at designations and certifications to get trained to work with military.

So that's been a lot of fun. And then the last piece is this mentorship. I love doing that. That really lights me up. So I've been hosting the Military to Financial Planner Podcast that you were a guest on. This is our fourth year now coming up on that. So we've got 56, 57 episodes out now and plan to keep doing that.

And I have a lot of one-on-one conversations. So I encourage guests, if you would like to do that, please reach out to me. I want to do more of that, as piece of that. In MFAA, I'm one of the board members there as well, helping to grow the next generation of the professionals so that, as our friend, mutual friend, Daniel Yerger talked about the pine tree problem, right?

It's such a narrow entry point for this initial point. So one of the things that MFAA has got approved for is SkillBridge. Well, that is that program where for up to the potentially last six months, if the active duty service member gets released by their command, they have the opportunity to go work for a

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company, in their case, one of the RAAs that's part of MFAA in a financial planning role where the DoD still pays the salary.

So I'm looking at that. I'm also helping out Hannah more with her externship and one of the other programs that she's running. I'm considering doing something like a residency model down the road. Don't hold me to that, audience. This is all exploratory talking out loud right now. So how do I devote more of my time and energy once the firm is full and I'm at capacity, right?

How can I pour some of my energy into helping make this journey that much easier for the next generation of people who want to follow my path?

Caleb Brown: That's awesome. I mean, you laid out quite a bit there. I mean, I love those ambitious, all those ideas. I mean, and really, I mean, that's my follow-up, and maybe the SkillBridge and some of these other things are the answer, but what do we need to do as a profession to make it easier for these military folks, but really just anybody to transition into the business and make to even start their own firm or also to get a job somewhere else. I mean, any thoughts on that?

Daniel Kopp: I don't have the answer yet. I think that all of us who are RIA owners who are listening, like we probably have a piece to play in this.

I think Kitsis and Carl talked about that on a fairly recent podcast. Like do we have an obligation to the profession to make opportunities for the next generation? And I feel that personally, I don't know what that's going to look like in my firm that is still being explored.

Caleb Brown: Residency model.

Daniel Kopp: That may very well be right. 'Cause I don't anticipate making this into a boutique or enterprise level. I don't want to manage a whole bunch of people. I want to stay doing client-facing work, but yeah, could I bring people in one or two [...] at a time, train them for one or two or three years, something like that, and then get them on to the next profession.

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So that may be a piece of it, but as far as the career transition, right? The good news is our [...] is growing, but we just have to have more firms who are at different stages of growth who are ready to hire. I'm encouraged in what I've seen in the last couple of years, relative to what it was like when I got out of there for six years ago.

Caleb Brown: Maybe we can talk more about this. I mean, I get a lot of calls from people like, "Hey, I'm getting out in one year. What can I do?" And I don't have a good answer for them. What do you tell them?

Daniel Kopp: Well, you can control the things that you can control, right? And you can't control the other side. So the beauty of military transition for most people is, right, well enough ahead of time, sometimes several years out, not just one. So demonstrate your initiative by doing your CFP coursework ahead of time on your own time, prepping for the exam. Networking with 100 virtual cups of coffee, right, reaching out to people, asking good questions. The whole, you know, people who ask for jobs, get advice.

People who ask for advice sometimes get jobs. I have had guests on my podcast who have shared about that, right? They were just building a network and something kind of happened along that way. And when you've done all those things, the things that you can control, the rest is timing and a little bit of luck, which my commander, a mentor or my luck is actually just the intersection of preparation and opportunity.

So that's what I would say. There's no perfect answer, but you can control potentially a lot more than you might think.

Caleb Brown: And what are some of the pitfalls that these people are in? I mean, we've talked about a few of them, but if you could go back and talk to yourself and just say, "Hey, this is what you're going to face. You got to watch out for this. Here's how you handle it. I'm coming back in my time machine." What would you say?

Daniel Kopp: Well, the beauty is a lot of the skills from the military and military life that certainly applies the military spouse side to is humility,

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flexibility, adaptability to change, right? Those really transfer well over in this space, right?

Not getting too big for your britches, the ability to take and receive clear, direct feedback. But I mean, the biggest piece is the confidence. I did not have enough of it early on. So I undercharged and probably let some opportunities slip through, but I don't look at that as a mistake. It was more just learning along the way, right? There is the idea too, of, you have to go back to the bottom. You, I was an officer, a leader. At one point I was in charge of 90 people in my section and now it's back to me, right? So there's always going to be those cultural changes that shift along with this that took me a little bit to figure out.

Caleb Brown: Now it makes sense. I mean, you, I think you're selling yourself a little short. I mean, you're managing like, it's not like a dozen or two dozen contractors to help you with do all this stuff or subcontractors. So this military, this is a good point. This military sort of you leading 90 men and women or whoever it was, well, that's you coming in and managing all the, yeah, they're not your employees, but you still have to delegate and you still have to make sure they get stuff done in the product. I mean, that's the leadership. That's the management. That's the confidence, and military people have that.

Daniel Kopp: That's true. I didn't think of it that way. The buck stops here, right? Either I do it or it doesn't get done. So, but the other interesting piece is a lot of people on the RA side say, "Oh, the compliance must be so hard, blah, blah, blah. I want to go down the other way, maybe the wirehouse world." I [...] them. You must not have worked for the government before. I was an evaluator. I would carry a small suitcase, a real small suitcase, out to the jet with me with all my pubs that I had to bring when I was giving a check ride to a student. So it's a little different, but there's a lot of parallels that carry over very well.

Caleb Brown: Last question then I'll want you to do final tips. What was the highlight of your career in the military?

Daniel Kopp: Flying back from Afghanistan the night that Osama bin Laden was killed. And I'll leave it at that.

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Caleb Brown: Any final tips for the New Planner audience?

Daniel Kopp: The thing that stands out from the hundreds of people that I've talked to in this career transition is the ones that demonstrate initiative, the ones that are self-starters, the ones that are proactively building their network and talking to as many people and asking good questions and being engaged nine times out of 10 go way further than the people who sit there and wait for life to happen and things to come to them.

There's no command vector in this field. There's no career field manager saying, "Here's what you're going to do. This is what..." It falls on you, right? And that's the beauty is you can control that, right? So get out there, hustle, grind, and I'm confident that those skills will set you up for success. And I know Caleb, you've talked about that on this podcast so many times before.

Caleb Brown: Thanks so much, Daniel. Really enjoyed it. Appreciate you coming on the show.

Daniel Kopp: Thanks so much.

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