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Tenacious

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Standard Operating Procedure

Before beginning, take time to talk freely with one another, then come together in prayer asking for the Lord's guidance, wisdom, and protection over this time and over each other.

Note: The stories shared in this book may be harsh or difficult at times. They are not meant to be duplicated or compared. They simply reflect what shaped my life. Your responsibility is to honestly reflect on your own experiences and share those with each other. Through this process, you will begin to understand one another more deeply and develop your own "operator's manual" for each other.

Partner Exercise

You may choose to sit opposite each other or gather in a small circle as a group, and not everyone has to share—only those who feel comfortable. Think back to your childhood, between the ages of 5 and 10, and consider a time when you had to push through something difficult. It does not have to match this story exactly, and it does not have to be extreme. It can be something simple, like finishing a chore when you were tired, being expected to complete something no matter what, or doing something that felt bigger than you at the time. What matters is that you remember how it felt to keep going.

Some people may not have a story where they had to push through something difficult, and that is fine. Do not try to create one. Instead, think of a moment that stands out to you—something rooted in love, emotion, or a meaningful experience that helped shape who you are. It could be something as simple as opening a Christmas present or a moment when someone said something that stayed with you. The story itself is not what matters most—the feeling behind it is. We are looking for the emotions that helped form your personality.

If you choose to share in the group, tell your story while others listen without interrupting. The group can learn from each other, but do not forsake the importance of sharing this one-on-one. Afterward,

come together with your partner. Sit opposite each other, hold hands, close your eyes, and take a moment to focus. One person shares while the other listens, not for the details, but for the feelings behind the story. Listen for pressure, determination, fear, or resolve. Then switch roles and repeat. The goal is to begin learning how each other responds when life is hard and something must be pushed through.

Questions

When you were in that moment, what drove you to keep going—was it fear, responsibility, pride, expectation, or something else? How did your body and mind respond—did you shut down, push harder, get emotional, or become focused? How did that experience make you feel at the time, and how does it show up in your life today when things get difficult? Do you tend to push through no matter what, or do you step back when something becomes too much? Can you see how those early experiences shaped your level of determination, endurance, or resistance?

Mission

Tonight, as you drive home or walk home, take time to think about the gift God has placed beside you. Whatever emotion tonight's story brought out, do your best to seek your heart and process what the other person shared. Try to edify them. Hold hands if you can. If their story was one of hardship, you might say something like, "I wish I was there to help you," "I'm proud of how you made it through that," or "I'm thankful the Lord protected you in that process." If their story was one of joy, love, or tenderness, do the same. Let them know you see it, you value it, and you are glad they shared it with you.

Think about the scene in Forrester Gump when Forrester tells Jenny about the beauty of the lake, and she says, "I wish I was there with you." He answers, "You were." That is the spirit of this mission. Take a few minutes on the way home to truly feel the other person's emotions, share that with them, embrace it, and edify them.

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Ready to go.