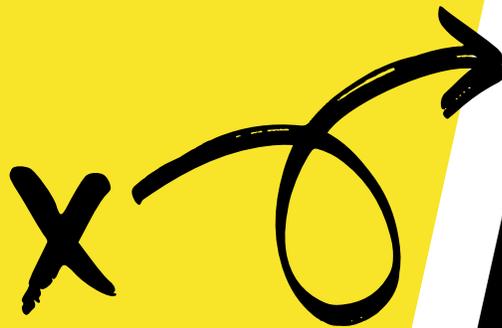




PARENT-CHILD-CONNECT (P2C)
BOOK SERIES



**THREE DAY
MENTAL HEALTH GUIDE
MAJOR PAYNE EDITION**



**A LEADER'S
JOURNEY TO
BUILDING
MENTALLY
STRONG
CHILDREN**



WELCOME

To the **Three Day Mental Health Guide: Major Payne Edition!** In this guide, you will learn strategies to raise **mentally tough** children. I initially created this guide with the "father-son" relationship in mind; however, I quickly realized that readers can apply the strategies discussed within to any relationship!

This guide is broken into three different sections: **Day 1**- "A Tough Topic;" **Day 2**- "Time to Break the Mold!;" and **Day 3**- "The 'Major Payne' Leadership Model." On Day 1, we focus on the importance of discussing mental health—a topic that is considered taboo in numerous homes. On Day 2, we dispel the myths associated with society's view of masculinity and mental toughness. Finally, on Day 3, we discuss the "Major Payne" leadership model that we can apply to be effective leaders. Each section ends with a prompt to get your wheels turning.

Parents, teachers, and mentors, this is an excellent resource for all ages so feel free to use this guide to lead your children on their own personal journey towards excellent mental health. Together, we can build mentally tough children who excel at whatever they put their minds to!

I believe in you!



Olaolu Ogunyemi

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Day 1: A Tough Topic

Guest Author- Dr. Clement Ogunyemi aka "The Finance Doctor"

Mental health is a tough topic of discussion in most homes and oftentimes met with negative comments. Those who deal with mental health challenges are often shunned and ostracized. I thought "finance" was a sensitive topic, but discussing mental health is like **walking on thin ice!** It is often seen as an untouchable, unspoken topic. I have personally learned from my own mental health journey, which started at an early age. I felt as though I would be viewed as crazy or looney, require a lifetime medication prescription, and/or be locked in an asylum for the rest of my life. I was always afraid to face my mental health challenges head on and be open with my parents about how I was feeling. I believed my negative thoughts were an evil I could pray away, and once I finished praying, I could hope for the best. As I got older, I often felt my mind drift to darker places than the last time. I finally learned that prayer and hope alone were not enough.

What I have learned along this journey is to be open and honest with my family and—most importantly—my children. Who knows what could be going through those little minds as our world crumbles right before their eyes? I dealt with my mental health in adolescence alone because I was too afraid to open up to my parents and older siblings, thinking they would assume something was "wrong" with me. I do not want that for my children. I want them to understand that **it is ok** and **perfectly normal** to deal with mental health challenges. I want them to understand that their biggest hero and cheerleader, Daddy, has gone through and continues to go through those feelings while on his own mental health journey. I want them to know I am here to guide them through their journey and ensure they are able to grow along the way.

I have learned to replace words like *"struggling"* and *"coping"* with words like **"learning," "growing,"** and **"progressing"** when discussing my mental health journey. We all have our own journey, but it is imperative that we teach our children to navigate through this tough topic. How do we teach them? Let's walk through this guide together!



Day 2: Time to Break the Mold!

“Shut up crybaby!” “Suck it up!” “Stop acting like a girl!” “You must be a wimp!” “Stop crying... real men don’t cry or show emotion!” “Toughen up!” “If you want sympathy, look in the dictionary between...” You know the rest. These sound familiar? These are some of the things we say as we attempt to teach our young people how to overcome adversity. We should be building their mental toughness; however, by constantly barraging our children with anything like the aforementioned clichés, we are inadvertently teaching our children to suppress pain/feelings while emotionally disconnecting from themselves and others. Simply put, society’s perception of masculinity and toughness can cause our children’s mental health to deteriorate!

Watch this : The Mask You Live In is a film worth watching that, “follows boys and young men as they struggle to stay true to themselves while negotiating America’s narrow definition of masculinity... [This film] ultimately illustrates how we, as a society, can raise a healthier generation of boys and young men.” – therepresentationproject.org

Did you catch the *Major Payne* quote above? That is definitely one of my favorite movies! For those that have not seen it (*spoilers loading...*), *Major Payne* is a comedy film from the ninety’s that stars Daymon Wayans acting as Major Benson Winifred Payne—a nail eating, combat tested, United States Marine (**Oorah!**) who was honorably discharged after being passed [twice] for promotion. He later finds a job as a JROTC instructor and faces the tall task of turning a “...gaggle of maggots into a well-disciplined cadet unit” (his words, not mine). Fast forward to the end... the newly-cohesive unit wins the Virginia Military Games!

Before you go purchase hand grenades to “train” your children, please understand that I am not endorsing Major Payne’s [hilarious] antics. He had **a lot** to learn about raising/mentoring young people. The good news is after reading “The ABC’s Of Being A Positive Male Role Model,” Major Payne began to comprehend the importance of teaching young people to reconnect with their emotions. He understood that he had to “be sensitive to [their] needs” to reach their hearts.

Tomorrow, we will discuss how we can make the same tweaks in our leadership abilities as the infamous Major Payne! Stay tuned.



Day 3: The "Major Payne" Leadership Model

Fall in!

Boot camp 101: "Fall in" is a command that means, "take your place in a military formation." In the Marine Corps, we "fall in" at the position of "attention." Meaning you are attentive and ready to hear what's next.

Since I have not located the book that triggered Major Payne's transition from trained killer to effective mentor, I created the below "ABCs Of Being a Positive Role Model!"

Don't worry... I'll stop at "D."

- **A**lways seek to inspire: this tip is a science and an art.
 - The science (the what) is to be firm, be fair, teach your children how to be responsible, set the example with your own actions, and hold your children accountable.
 - The art (the how) is to encourage, use positive reinforcement when they do well, and fill their minds with positive thoughts when they make a mistake or disappoint you. Lather your children in positive affirmations!
- **B**e patient: this is a tough one, because, like Mrs. Trunchbull from the movie *Matilda* said, "They're all mistakes, children. Filthy, nasty things. Glad I never was one." Right? **WRONG!** Ok so let's start there; have a little grace. Although we were all angels growing up 😊, children are going to be children. They **will** make mistakes. They **will** sometimes disappoint you. They **will** get it wrong again, and again, and again. But it is ok! Take a deep breath, and **extend a little grace**.
 - Note: the definition of "patient" is, "able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious." That will definitely take some practice, but you can do it!

****Check this out: My youngest daughter literally jumped (fully clothed) into a kiddie pool as I was typing this section! So, I had an immediate opportunity to practice being patient. 😊 I grabbed her hand, calmly told her, "you're all wet; let's go dry off," and walked her inside. That was definitely a perfectly timed test of my patience!****



Day 3: The "Major Payne" Leadership Model

- **Care and Compassion**
 - Care is probably the simplest of the two C's. To care is to provide the basic necessities of life (i.e. food, shelter, water, and electricity). This is where we typically thrive, and sometimes, we are too quick to let everyone know (don't brag; it's your job 😊). Be physically present and provide for your children.
 - Compassion requires you to **validate** and **value** your children's thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Do not fall into the trap of saying, "it's really not that big a deal." Instead, allow your children to share their feelings with you so you become empathetic enough to have a strong desire to help. Don't try to be "Mr./Mrs. Fix It," but at least express the desire to help! For example, someone once stole a very rare unicorn from my oldest daughter in an online game she enjoyed playing. It seemed silly at first, but I realized this really hurt her feelings. So first, I had to verbally validate her feelings and emotions. Then, I shared the moment with her until she felt better. Simple but effective!

****BONUS "C": Celebrate!! My youngest was potty training when I wrote this. So I took a quick break to celebrate with a silly jingle and dance I made up, "Eni went poopy in the pooottty!" *Clap *Clap (repeat). Positive reinforcement goes a long way!****

- **Do not be afraid to cry openly!** I heard my wife tell my son, "don't be afraid to cry if something really hurts." My initial cringe at that statement shows that I am **NOT** perfect by any stretch of the imagination. Now, I am not saying lie on the floor and project a deep wail next time you stub your toe (*although I think that would be hilarious*) or Hulk Smash through a wall to show that "Daddy angry!" I am simply encouraging you to show emotion. Look your children in the eyes and say, "I love you." Rejoice with them, and allow them to see your happiness. Let them see you be angry, yet tempered and respectful. And when the opportunity presents itself, embrace them and cry with them.

That's it! Just like that, you now have all the tools you need to be successful. Now throw on your best Major Payne voice and go lead your child(ren) to a stronger mental health.

Fall out!



