

# 14. Stephanie Simon

**Michelle Harris:** [00:00:00] From Bosstrack, it's

Her HypeSquad, a show about amazing women who've made incredible strides as leaders in their industry. They're here to support you and your leadership growth to encourage you and hype you up as part of your hype squad.

Hello and welcome back to another episode of Her HypeSquad with Bosstrack. I'm your host, Michelle Harris. In this episode, I talk with Stephanie Simon, a Marine Corps officer, now serving as a reservist who is pursuing her Olympic goals of boxing. Stephanie and I talk about motivating teams, delegating to and involving others to improve results, finding healthy outlets for stress challenges she face as a female Marine Corps officer.

The benefits of being relatable to [00:01:00] others and inspiring others to change lives and so much more. But before we get into our conversation, let me give you a little background on Stephanie. Stephanie Simon is a Marine Corps officer who was inducted into the Marine Corps boxing Hall of Fame and is now pursuing her Olympic goals of boxing.

Stephanie is originally from Vancouver, Washington, but currently lives in Miami, Florida. She graduated from the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, where she learned how to box and eventually became a three time collegiate national champion. She was also the team captain of the track team and a member of the Glee Club.

In 2017, Stephanie commissioned as a US Marine Corps officer and became an amphibious assault officer, where she was in charge of 50 people. Towards the end of her time with the Marine Corps, she was selected to be the captain of the Marine Corps boxing team, and there she became a two time national champion and a Marine Corps boxing Hall of famer.

Stephanie now [00:02:00] serves as a reservist and is a recruiter in the corporate world while pursuing her Olympic goals of boxing. So without further delay, let's get into my conversation with Stephanie Simon.

Oh, hi Stephanie. I'm so excited to have you on here today. I know we've been wanting to talk for a while now, and I you have been so busy in the last few months and I'm glad we finally made the time to get together. So thank you so much for joining us.

**Stephanie Simon:** Thank you so much for having me. And, and I'm excited to, to speak with you today and.

Talk a little bit about my leadership experience and hopefully, you know, y'all can learn a little bit from my perspective, so.

**Michelle Harris:** Great. So we told the audience a little bit about you before we started, but I'd love for them to hear in your own words who is Stephanie Simon, what you're all about,

**Stephanie Simon:** alright

yeah, so, my name's Stephanie Simon. I just got outta the Active [00:03:00] Duty Marine Corps. I'm a boxer. I was a amphibious assault officer in the Marine Corps. That was kind of where the majority of my leadership experience took place. And then kind of towards the end of my military career, I was also the team captain of the Marine Corps boxing team as well.

I'm from Washington. A place called Vancouver, Washington. Grew up there, did a lot of sports, did a lot of activities lot of extracurriculars, band, you know, wrestling, all these different activities and everything. And that's kinda how the idea of the Naval Academy came about for college. As some of you may know, the Naval Academy is pretty much a leadership college, military college, where they, you know, they prepare you for active duty, either Navy or Marine Corps, depending on what you choose.

But that's where I went to school and that's where I also learned a lot about, you know, being a leader and being in, in front of people as a team captain there as well of the track and field team and the boxing team there as well. So, and then, like I said, I did my five years [00:04:00] active duty as an officer and then got out and now I'm living in Miami and pursuing future goals with, with boxing.

Hopefully gonna make the Olympic team for 2024. And then I'm also still in the reserves, so I'll be taken a position as an executive officer. At my new unit actually coming up here in a few weeks. So that's a little bit about me. Yeah.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I love, your background is so dynamic and so diverse and you know, especially like watching you and knowing, knowing you and watching you on social media, you know, you're so entertaining and you have so many different sides to you.

And I, I love that. I don't know how you keep up with it. I don't know. I don't know how you have the energy for it, but , it's, it's, it's so amazing. Fun, fun to watch. I appreciate that. You know, you're in, so you were in the Marine Corps and I know, so you're the first person that I, we've had on here from the military.

And I'd love for you to kinda explain you know, even [00:05:00] though it's leadership in the military, there are a lot of similarities. You know, could you explain what leadership looked like for you? Like how, how many people were you leading? And then maybe we can get into like some challenges that you faced or, you know, some particular things that stood out for you as a leader and when you were in the military.

**Stephanie Simon:** For sure. So in the military, at least in the Marine Corps the majority of the jobs that we do have, they pretty much allow you to be what's called a platoon, a platoon commander in the very beginning of your officer career. And with that, you can lead anywhere between and be in charge of anywhere between, you know, like five to 10 people all the way up to like 70.

And for me I was upwards towards around 50, 40 to 50 people, majority men. And like I said earlier, as an amphibious assault officer what all that is is basically a tank that goes in the water and with those tanks that go in the water, they have to be manned and they have to be ran and, and taken care of [00:06:00] by Marines.

And those Marines are the ones that basically I, I'm in charge of. And so there's probably, you know, about four Marines per vehicle and then you, know to commander can have responsibility of somewhere around 12 to 15 vehicles with the Marine. So it's a lot of responsibility, it's a lot of money in terms of equipment, in terms of like it's just a lot that you're responsible for at a very young age in the Marine Corps, cuz you know, you finish school, finish college, and then you get some training on leadership, a little bit more training on leadership as well as just like, kinda like a General Marine Corps training as well.

But then after that it's about six months to nine months. Where you're kind of thrown into the wolves. And now as a young 23 year old, 24 year old person, you're basically, basically expected to almost like, you're almost like a big sister, big brother slash mom, dad, for [00:07:00] a very rambunctious group of people.

And, and it's hard because these are people that joined the military, right? When you joined the military. A lot of people joined because they wanna see action.

They wanna go out and fight. They wanna be they wanna be the, the bad guy, the cool badass guys that they see on tv. But a lot of times you aren't doing those cool, badass things.

So, it's difficult because, you know, as a leader you have to show people their purpose. You have to show them that they are absolutely worthy of, you know, of being respected and loved and taken care of. You gotta show them that even though they might not be doing all the cool things they do in the movies, They are still serving a greater purpose that's much bigger than themselves.

And, and for our case, it's the purpose of being members of the Marine Corps, you know, and serving and, and being part of a team that protects this country. You know, even if we're doing something that might not be super fun or super cool or tactical, as I say doesn't mean that it's not contributing to the greater [00:08:00] purpose.

And so I think that with that, you know, and, and being a platoon commander, it's a lot of things you're juggling. A lot of responsibility, like I said, not just for the people and for the equipment, but also for upholding that like mentality that like, okay, no matter what, I still have to show them that I'm good.

I have to show them that I'm not phased. I have to show them that even though I'm tired or I'm hungry or I don't feel very great right now, that. I got my composure and I'm still gonna be the best version, my best version of myself no matter what. And, and that right there, I, I would say that's one of the hardest things about being, you know, a leader in the military is we kind of didn't, we don't get to like, oh man, well that sucked.

You know, like, we don't get to, as officers, we don't get to like chill back, lean back, kick our feet up and complain and, and talk smack the same way that, you [00:09:00] know, like, I guess you would with like your, your best friend. You can't really do that with the, the people you lead. It's almost like you almost have to be on this like high alert, very aware of everything you do.

So it, yeah, I know. I, I went on there for a while. There's probably a lot of things we can deep dive into with, with that, but I would say that's, yeah, that's pretty much it. The, the biggest experience that I've had as a commander.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah, I, I actually would love to talk about. Like getting people motivated when they're not experiencing the action that they join to do.

Because I think that, you know, there is a lot of correlation from the military to business in that because there are a lot of people that support a business and they're not they're not on the front lines. They're not in on the floor and, you know, customer facing. They're not seeing like things go.

Be sold off the shelf [00:10:00] if they're in retail. Right. You know, depending on the business. So, you know, a lot of times people working for a business can kind of lose sight of what the overall goal of the company is and, and maybe even lose motivation or need to, to be motivated for the, the goals of the company.

Some, I'm curious, like what, what are, like, did you have some tactics that you used to to, to motivate everybody and kinda remind them what, what their purpose was?

**Stephanie Simon:** I did, and I think one of the biggest things is you have to know your people and you have to know someone to motivate them. Mm-hmm. . Because for some people, you know, getting in their face and hyping them up might motivate them.

For other people, maybe you had to like lower the tone of your voice and talk a little slower and make them feel like they're watching Bob Ross paint. You know, like, you never know. Some people They kind of need direction, they kind of almost need like assignments. And you give 'em a [00:11:00] task, even if it's a task, doesn't seem like it's very difficult or very like, I don't know, like almost like kind of an easy task.

If you give them tasks, you give them things, you give them responsibility, even if it's something super simple, that might be what motivates them. Right? So I think first off is, is learning and knowing and understanding your people, getting to know them. And in the military we do counselings every month.

Like they're basically an opportunity for, you know, the leader to sit down and speak with their people just about their goals long term, short term, you know, where they're from, you know, a little bit about their background, where they grew up you know, what they, where they see themselves in five years.

Do they see themselves in the military? Do they see themselves in business? Whatever the case may be. Basically, like I said, learning and understanding and seeing how. Each individual person is progressing those those counseling, so that daily, not daily, but more like monthly interaction that you get where you're actually just sitting down for [00:12:00] 10 to 15 minutes.

That's for us, that's like the best way that we get to really know our people. And then from there, once you kind of figure out and learn what makes each person tick as a leader, that's when you can start figuring out what motivates them, like I said earlier. So, and then with that too is also learning the strengths and weaknesses of, of each person that you lead.

Because, you know, if I have a big group of people and we have 30 things that we have to do in this amount of time, yeah, sure. Maybe three of us could probably get all of them done. But if we have 50 people involved and everyone gets a little chunk of the mission, everybody gets a little portion that, that they contribute to.

Based off of their strengths, then that's kind of almost how you have everybody involved and you delegate the, the mission or whatever it is, or the thing that you have to do in a way that empowers people. Cause I think a lot of times leaders, they think, [00:13:00] well, I know the best way to do it. Okay, if there's five ways to do something, 20 ways to do something and your way works.

But that person's way works too. And they have done absolutely nothing and have had zero responsibility this whole time. How about you give them the torch and allow them to, you know, to like, almost like lead the way a little bit and, and show that their idea or express that their idea is something of value.

And for us, you know, we, we have a lot of different things that go into our, our, our our missions and, and everything like that. For example, navigating or creating like what's called it's basically like a map, but it's on the ground. So it's made from dirt and you have to use sticks and you like basically draw out a map, but on the ground and it's called a terrain model.

So maybe there's a guy that that's in the platoon that's really good at doing those. So how about you have him do it? There's, you know, people that are really good at fitness, people that are very good at leading a group in like, [00:14:00] like a physical fitness type exercise thing where we do a group thing.

Even though I can do it, even though I've played a billion sports and I'm very athletic, how about I allow this marine to do it and give him or her the opportunity to lead the entire group? Because that right there, even though it sounds like, oh, it's only a 30 minute. Maybe one hour evolution. What's a big deal that might have made their entire month being able to lead the entire group of people in something like that.

You, you have no idea. Right? So learning your people, knowing their strengths and weaknesses, and then delegating and giving them, you know, opportunities to lead themselves and to lead the group as a whole. I feel like those are all ways, I think as a leader, that you can really make people feel like they're a part of the team and like they're contributing.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I love that. I, I do. And I, I really like that you pointed out the idea of Well, the fact that yeah, there, you know, a way to do something, but there can be 20 [00:15:00] other ways to do that same thing, right? And being open to how somebody else approaches it and giving people opportunity. That's a, that's very insightful.

Yeah, definitely something I'd love for the listeners to take away from this. That's so important and as is delegation. But I feel like I've, we've I've talked about delegation so much. It's Right, right, right. It's so critical and something that is hard for, for a lot of people to, to handle. Wondering with in the military or with, you know, having 50 people reporting into you, how do you make sure everybody is like doing what they're supposed to be doing on a daily or weekly basis?

**Stephanie Simon:** I mean, we just talked about delegation, but that's pretty much the biggest thing, right? So I, myself, I try to like, I guess, minimize my. Consistent, like communication and, and talking to, to maybe four or five different people. Mm-hmm. , [00:16:00] and I'm not saying I ignore everybody else, but those are my key leaders, right.

I have my platoon commander and then I have my three section leaders, which are all people that are a little bit more experienced and have been around the block. Right. And that I can trust will manage and lead their smaller portions, their smaller group of people. That's, you know, maybe, you know, like 10 to 15 people each.

So that's how, that's how most Plato commands do it. They have their right hand person, right. The, the person that's been in the Marine Corps a, a long time, their staff and CEOs, what they call it, the senior enlisted person, and then they have their their key leaders. And so for me, my main focus was. The key leaders and making sure that they got the training they needed, making sure that they understood the mission, understood the intent, and understood the, basically the goals and the things that I had in mind for the, for the group as a whole.

And [00:17:00] I then basically gave them their own mini torches. Here's the torch, you go lead the way. You know? And so that's kind of how I had to do it,



because I, there's no way as one person that you can manage or lead or control 50 different people. It's just not gonna happen. That's too big of a group. So, with that though, you know, you have to really, like I said, get to know your people and make sure that if you don't a hundred percent have a good feeling, or maybe you're not sure that the mission's being done the right way or things are being done correctly.

You have some kind of oversight and then you do checkups, right? And you, and even though someone says, yeah, I got it, sir. Yeah, I got it. Ma like, yes, I got it, Stephanie, whatever your name is inspect, right? It doesn't mean you have to walk around with your hands folded and go, huh, what are you guys doing over here?

Right? You can be like genuine, you could be a nice person about it and, and be down to earth. And you don't have to like be the, the person that [00:18:00] has to like stomp in and put your hands in your hips and act like your presence should be feared. You know? So, just inspecting and asking questions and making sure that things are being done the right way.

That can go a long way because the end of the day as a leader, you're the one that's responsible for things that do happen or don't happen. So, yeah, like basically delegation, .

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. Can't get away from it.

**Stephanie Simon:** Nope.

**Michelle Harris:** And, If I could circle back about something else you mentioned earlier, and that was about you know, having to be always on.

I know you have certain things that you do outside of marine type duties or you had when you were in the Marine Corps. I mean, how did you, or how did you, how did other people manage that and kind of alleviate the stress or you know, what are some tactics to that you used to kind of get to the next day and kind reenergize yourself?

**Stephanie Simon:** I think healthy hobby hobbies [00:19:00] are super underrated for me. I, I, I'm a musician, as you probably could tell about my Instagram stories. And then also an athlete, so, Pretty much the majority of my career and the majority of the time that I've been the leader, I've always had a healthy and wanna say healthy.



And I say that because some people's idea of letting loose and, you know, relaxing is, is partying. Which for me, I don't think that's a healthy outlet. I don't think that that is necessarily the best way to go about like, decompressing. Because what can kind of happen, and I've seen it especially in the military, is it can kinda lead to an unhealthy like addiction.

You know? And, and, and I, I mentioned that because I don't think that's just a military problem. I think that's a problem in general, right? So when I say healthy, I mean things that don't like impair you, things that don't hurt you. Things that can only do good things in, you know, grabbing a guitar, learning a new [00:20:00] skill learning how to.

Do any, I don't know, program something on the computer or building a website or building something or creating something? I think creating or training or practicing using your body, using your mind whether that's in jujitsu, boxing even skateboarding or, or surfing. There's so many different things out there that you can do that are healthy, that are also freeing and, and super enjoyable.

You know, painting, drawing, reading that can kind of put you in like another world that is separate from work. Mm-hmm. . And when you can kind of channel into that other world where you're like, man, all I care about right now is breaking this person's grip so I can get out and grab their leg. And you're thinking about, you know, the next step in this jujitsu role or the, the match.

And you're not thinking about, man, I wonder if so and so saw my email, like, oh, I wonder if, if you can find something that allows you to almost get lost. in that other world. That's where I [00:21:00] feel like you can really, I don't know. As a person, I feel like you can really benefit from that. A lot of times with my music, I'll be teaching myself a song or learning something and I'll check my, my watch.

And 30 minutes to an hour has gone by and I didn't think once about work. I didn't think about, think about emails, and I think about, oh, I wonder, you know, if this happened, or, I hope that that happened because I was just so focused on the music or so focused on harmonies. Okay. Maybe I should add this one little, maybe I should add the flute.

Maybe I should add, right. Like, it's basically a way to get away and to kind of just go into another dimension of thought that just releases the, the stress of being at work. So for me it's, it's either with music or it's with, with boxing or, or jujitsu. And that's for me personally.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I love that. I love that you talk about that because, you know, I talked a lot about meditation [00:22:00] outside, outside of work and a lot of people will like be a little like, oh, I don't know.

I can't meditate. I can't, I can't just sit there in silence. But to me, I mean, I don't think of meditation as just sitting there and trying to like, not think, because one, even if you sit down and spend 20 minutes, you're still gonna think, I mean, that's not the point, is that you can't ever do, you know, blank out your brain and not, and not think, I mean, you know, maybe when you're way advanced, but most people can't.

But I always think of things like you said learning music, like focusing on different things. It's like a form of meditation. It's really good for your brain to for sure kind of be, have that clear. It kind of clears your mind, just like you said. And I appreciate, appreciate that you brought that up.

And that's a, I feel like it's like such a different way to look at meditation and, and the health of your brain and mental health . [00:23:00]

**Stephanie Simon:** Absolutely. And some people are competitive too, so I think sports, you don't necessarily need to strive to be the next Olympian or anything like that. I mean, there's a reason why jujitsu, for example, is blowing up right now, is because it's not gender based.

It's not age based, race based. It is literally anybody, even with disabilities. I've seen blind people do it. I've seen people that don't have legs do it. I've seen literally any type of person you can imagine on the face of the earth is able to do something like jujitsu and you're able to get competitive with somebody and able to use your mind critically and push yourself.

Not just physically, but mentally as well. And it's like solving puzzles all within like a five minute frame, you know? And I feel like that's probably why, like jujitsu, you know, as a, as a sport has grown so much is because it's one of the few things that is almost like a meditation, but in like a very aggressive, very competitive way.

It's, it's interesting, you know, cause like [00:24:00] you said I do have a hard time silencing, you know, being in a, in a quiet place where I'm just, you know, relaxing and trying to focus on my breathing. But when I do get done with, you know, jujitsu practice, I feel like a lot of the stress, a lot of the, you know, anxiety built up over the week or over the day is kind of just released.

So, everyone's different. Like I said, like earlier, everyone's a little different. And I challenge people to really explore what. Is best for them. Cause sometimes you have no idea. You think you're gonna hate something and you actually end up loving it, you know?

**Michelle Harris:** So it's very true. Yeah, very true.

absolutely. And this is maybe gonna be something that people were hoping that we get into, but with being a female in the military and being a female leader especially in the Marine Corps, what, what are some challenges you faced? And anybody listening? Cause I think like even challenges that you faced are probably [00:25:00] amplified, you know, a thousand times being in the military, but you know, even people in corp in corporate and business face somewhat of the same things, even at maybe at a smaller level.

Like what are some things that you were challenged with and how did you, I don't know, necessarily know, even if you didn't overcome them, like how did you kind of handle those?

**Stephanie Simon:** I would say the, one of the biggest challenges is, was being dismissed and being kind of just counted out before even showing up.

On like the first week that I showed up to my first unit or remind you guys that I was the first female platoon commander ever at this unit in the history of Camp North Carolina slash the entire East coast. There had never been a female amphibious assault officer in charge ever. So before I showed up, these people had no idea who I [00:26:00] was.

They just looked at my name. He looked me up on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and someone that was there, a guy that, you know, a peer of mine that I talked to within the first week, he kind of broke the bad news and there was a wake up call for me. He's like, I don't wanna hurt your feelings. I'm not trying to like make you mad or like piss you off.

I just want you to know that like a lot of people in your platoon, a lot of people, they were upset that you were gonna be their platoon committed because you're a woman and they looked you up and they found your information and they were like, dang it. Like, oh, I don't wanna have a female officer. Oh my gosh, it's gonna ruin everything.

So like that feeling of, wow, I haven't even had five minutes with you guys yet, I haven't even seen you and you're already dismissing me as a leader. It's like,

wow. Like that. I guarantee none of the guys went through [00:27:00] that. I'm, I guarantee that, that when, you know, the Marines found out that they were their leaders, that they weren't like, oh, we have a male that's in charge of us.

I die. Oh my gosh. You know, like that doesn't happen. Right. You know? . And so I would say that's, that was probably one of the hardest things cuz I had never really experienced that other than maybe, you know, wrestling middle school or high school. When this, the guys saw me walk in, they're like, what, what is this girl doing here?

Right? It was different when I had just spent five years preparing for this moment that I was told it was gonna be so glorious and amazing and awesome and put my body and my soul and everything through so much to prepare for this moment to realize that, wow, they already, they already don't want me here.

I haven't even done anything yet. I haven't even messed up yet. You know, so, mm-hmm. , I would say that was probably one of the hardest things. And then I think, and the other thing too is one of the other very difficult concepts is that I realize as a female [00:28:00] leader, especially in charge of predominantly men, that you don't get to be average.

You don't have the luxury of being able to be okay because you being average are okay on a scale to them is subpar. You're a subpar, you're below average, you're terrible. Because I don't believe that average men and average women are seen equally. Mm. I think to be seen as an average person, as an average leader, as a woman, you have to be above average.

The scale is completely off. I showed up motivated. I showed up being able to do 20 pull ups. I showed up being able to out pt out, physically run, and, and all my marines. I knew my stuff. I finished the top of my class. In my school for previous assault school. I was like number two and I aced on my test and everything did really well.

No drama, no baggage. You know, like I, I don't. I didn't have any crazy skeletons or anything I [00:29:00] was hiding or any cra cause there's a lot of crazy scandals things that happen in the military. To be honest. I didn't have any of that. I came there with a clean slate, with a good record. And it was like that.

All of that being said, the accomplishments and being able to do all those things, I was still seen as eh, you know, and that's a hard pill to swallow, you know? It is a hard pill to swallow. And I think to overcome that you kind of,

first of all, you have to accept it, especially if you're in a room with all men and an atmosphere where you're with predominantly men.

You have to accept the fact that you have to be above average. And once you take that in, you digest it, and you're like, okay, you know, this is how it's gonna be, then I feel like there's no surprise of. You know, that's not a surprise anymore. Like what will he get the same score as me? But why is he getting all the opportunities?

Well, because average for you as a [00:30:00] female is not the same as average for him as a male. It's not the same. And so I'm not a hundred percent sure how that works in the corporate world, but I'm sure there's probably similarities. Right? A little bit in, in terms of male versus female standard.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I, I think there's some similarities, but like I said, it's definitely magnified you know, and much, you know, at a greater level in, in the military from, from what I understand and from Yeah.

People that I've spoken with. But, so other than kind of getting yourself mentally prepared for the way it was going to be, are there certain things that you did with your team when you came on board to I don't know. I don't wanna say prove yourself because that's not, you know, that's not the point.

You shouldn't have to prove yourself, but to get them to follow you as a leader.

**Stephanie Simon:** Well, like I said, I showed up in the best possible shape I could be in. Mm-hmm. . So I pretty much took, I [00:31:00] think that one of the biggest things is take away any ammunition, come in shape, come in knowing your stuff. Mm-hmm.

come in with a good attitude. Right. Be that positive person. Also be relatable. That was one of the things that I think separated me a lot from a lot of other people, is that I was relatable. I didn't like to see myself as above or higher than the Marines that I was in charge of. As a matter of fact, when we were on ship and we, you know, we had like a short deployment to Iceland, there were times where I would bring out my guitar and like my little microphone and go down to where, you know, the enlisted people are at.

And perform for them and sing with them and like, Literally show them like, Hey, I'm here down here, I'm down here in the trenches with you guys. I'm not just gonna sit up in my room with all the other officers and drink tea and coffee and full my, you know, cross my arms. That's one of the things that I took pride

in, was the ability to be relatable and to show them that, you know, like I see them, I see you guys.

Mm-hmm. , you know, and [00:32:00] so yeah, if you're, if you are prepared and you take away the ammunition or give people zero, I don't know, like zero reasons. It's not a hundred percent possible to give 'em zero reasons, but if you take away any type of ammunition or reason for them to say, yeah, but what about that I think that that can mitigate a lot of things.

And that for me as an officer, you know, when I first showed up like that, that's one thing I made sure I was in. I made sure I was well read. I made sure that I was asking questions and making sure that, you know, I was learning and inspecting and being around a lot and, and, and making sure that I was, you know, watching and taking notes.

I always had a notepad with me. I would write down people's names and write down good things. They did bad things they did. And I tried my best to record things, not record them like this, but record and take notes so that I can reflect back later and you know, like learn from mistakes and, and so, and then, you know, we talked about earlier about using our strengths and [00:33:00] weaknesses, you know, as a way to capitalize your leadership will.

For me, I knew, okay, I love to box, I love pt. How about I do a boxing physical training session with them where we spar, we fight each other because in their minds, right, obviously they see a female, they see someone that is five foot six. and 150, 160 pounds. But if they see someone like that, a female, someone that's in a, now doing a male dominated thing like boxing, right?

Showing them that, that she's not afraid. Showing them that she's willing to get dirty and willing to get in there and throw hands. Like it, it shows them, it shows them, okay, wow. Like she's, she's willing to put herself out there and she's actually, she's mentally tough and physically tough, but she has that, that toughness about her.

Now we see in her what we didn't necessarily think that she had in the beginning because she was a [00:34:00] female. So for me, boxing was the way that I could show them, like, you know, I am capable of you guys. I know that I might not look tough cuz I'm a woman, but at the end of the day, if we were to go to combat, if we were to be in a, in a dangerous area and we'd had to, we had to fight people.

Now you guys see, like I, I am a fighter and I got your back and I will make sure, I'll show you right here in this setting like that I understand what it means to be a fighter, even though I might not look like it. You know what I mean? And so I'm not saying go out there everybody and learn how to box and fight people, but what I am saying is for that environment in the Marine Corps and the military where physical toughness and grit and physicality in general is very much so something that is like elevated and something that is admired.

I knew that that would be one of the really important ways that I could show my Marines and kind of gain that respect from them was through [00:35:00] boxing, through groundfighting, through wrestling. And so that's kind of what I did very early on in my, in my time as a particular,

**Michelle Harris:** yeah, and I think like, to, to your point, if I, if you wanna kind of apply this to regular business, it's really all about being relatable and showing , showing you know, what, what you're capable of in any kind of setting.

And you just really have to find what that is for where you're at. Yeah, for sure. Doesn't need to be boxy, . No, no grappling. No, no, no. But with that said, I mean, you, you are like, your physical fitness is incredible and you know, like you said, I, I've definitely seen your Instagram stories and you on Instagram, and not only your.

Physical capabilities, but also your musical capabilities and your entertainment capabilities. Thank you. know we can't talk about all that in the time that we have, but I hope everybody will will go, go check you out. But [00:36:00] I know with boxing, oh, and, and to, to be, I also wanted to say, you know, you didn't pick up boxing because of the military.

You were boxing and wrestling before the military, correct. It's not like you picked this up.

**Stephanie Simon:** Wrestling was before the military, but boxing was, cuz actually, I, I did have to do boxing at the Naval Academy. Boxing was kind of my complete accident, but Okay.

**Michelle Harris:** But it not like you didn't start to be able to prove a point, I mean, you started because you wanted to start.

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah, I wanted to, I wanted to box. Yeah. , that was by choice. Yeah, the, the competition and everything.



**Michelle Harris:** So can you tell, tell everybody about your boxing career, because it's pretty amazing and I, I just love how dynamic you are as a person and you have a competition coming up. I'd love to for you to talk about that.

**Stephanie Simon:** Sure, sure. So like I said earlier I started boxing in college at the Naval Academy. Everybody pretty much has a freshman, has to box and wrestle one semester of each, and that's kind of where I found [00:37:00] boxing. And throughout the Naval Academy I competed at the collegiate level. And then once I went into active duty, I kind of took a little bit of a break to get through all the schooling and all the initial parts of being a Marine.

And then I got back into it in 20 18, 20 19. And, you know, since then I've been to the Olympic Training Center a few times. I won a, a couple national titles and have been pursuing now a Pretty much a run for the Olympics. That's kind of my goal. My next steps is going to this national tournament coming up in December, and then hopefully qualifying for the Olympic trials.

And from there, you know, the rest is pretty much history. After that, you have to win a lot of different tournaments, win a lot of different things. But I would say that kind of tying it into leadership that I don't think my best and most exciting and most favorite, my favorite moments in boxing really have anything to do with winning titles or winning championships.

[00:38:00] It, it would, the hand, hands down, it has to go down. It comes to like hearing or seeing or feeling that I'm inspiring people or that, you know, maybe something I said or something I. Around my team with it, it changed someone's life or it, it sparked something that, that they didn't really consider before and, and it was able to inspire them to do something maybe that they never really thought about.

And I think when I think about the times where I was most proud, it's, it goes back to when, you know, I hear stories like Stephanie, when you came to my room back at the Naval Academy, right before I quit boxing, and you told me that I could be anything and that I could be a champion in this sport, and that if I just kept pushing myself and that I just, if I just stayed resilient and that if I, you know, took a one day at a time and believes in myself that I could be a champion.

You know, I'm, you know, Stephanie, thank you for telling me that because if you hadn't had that discussion with me, I was about five minutes from, you know, quitting the [00:39:00] team right there. And so that discussion, that

conversation that we had, Is why I'm now, you know, a two time, three time national champion and all this stuff.

And to see that, like, those are the moments that make the hairs in the arm or the neck, back of the neck stand up. It's really the, the moments of leadership, the moments of inspiring people in being the reason why people's lives are changed. I have teammates that I talked to on the naval, from the Naval Academy team, as well as the Marine team that I led that like literally being on the team potentially saved their lives because they were going down a bad path.

Yeah. At, at the time. And so, just being a part of that and then also, you know, just having moments where you have heart to hearts with your, with your people and they, and open up and they tell you things that you didn't really even know about them, but because of your leadership or because of the atmosphere that you created, that they're willing to open up about that.

that kind of gives you a feeling of, wow, like, I'm doing something right. You know, [00:40:00] I'm, I'm fostering an environment and I'm, I'm creating an environment where these marines or these people feel like they can actually open up about their experiences in their life. And so I think that's, I think over the past few months, you know, me being a civilian, those are the things that I do miss about being on those teams.

Is, is the leadership and the camaraderie in being that big sister that, that mentor that like the mama bear or whatever you wanna call it, that is more important, that's more valuable than any medal or any belt that I've ever gotten. You know, and that's, and that's, that's just, honestly, that's the truth.

I, I could care less about the physical, you know, the titles, that, that doesn't matter at the end of the day. It's about the relationships and the bonds that you create. And, you know, I post on Instagram, you know, man, I really miss my team. Mm-hmm. , and then five of them comment on that. They're [00:41:00] like, I miss it too, man.

I miss it too, man. That was the best, that was the best part of my Marine Corps career was being on that team with you. Like, I'm telling you, it's, it's special. And, and I don't think that that's just necessarily something that you only see in the boxing world or the sports world. Like I said, you could see that and you could feel that in any environment where you have a group of people or have a team.

You know, it's, it's something that I think is underrated. It's like that, yeah. That feeling of being on a team and, and, and, and leading people and taking care of each other, you know? And so, kind of went in a tangent there, but yeah, boxing's great. Fighting's great. But the thing that I have in mind for this national tournament is I wanna inspire people.

Yeah. And I really want to perform and do well. Not just for me and to get my hand raised and for the glory of me, but to really uplift and excite, especially the young women that are gonna be at this tournament that need a role model [00:42:00] and someone to look up to.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I love that. I, I love that about you.

You are so inspiring. And when you go for, I think you leave in a week, is that, will you go back to a an environment like that where you are working with other people that you'll, you know, be able to inspire?

**Stephanie Simon:** I mean, in the tournament I'll have people that I know, I definitely see friends that I've created or that I've met over time.

But I don't, I don't have a team anymore. I don't have the Marine Corps boxing team. The team was cut due to budget issues. And, and that's the thing man is, is I'm finding out ways and I'm having to relearn how to create. An environment where I do have a team where I could still be a leader and still do all these things that I really do love about, you know, almost like the marine part of things, but kind of translate it into the civilian world.

Cuz like I said, I don't have, I'm looking at a picture right now of, of the team. That's why I keep looking up cuz I see it. But trying to find ways to create that that not just [00:43:00] that, like that vibe and that that environment, even though I don't necessarily have it. So I'll go out there, I'll compete and there, there will be people I know, absolutely.

But it's not like what it used to be or I had, you know, yeah. 12 of us all wearing our, our little jackets and going on the plane together and traveling together. It's a little bit more isolated now and a little bit more lonely, but Yeah. It's okay cause I, I still have friends that are gonna be out there and people that are gonna.

Supporting me and rooting for me. I'll be rooting for them too.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah, well, I know, I know you're gonna find that. I know. For sure you have been kind of thinking about different things and yeah, you

have to give yourself some, some time. So, so this upcoming is, is a tournament where you, you're just gonna have different fights and then is it like a weekend tournament?

**Stephanie Simon:** Is that, oh, it's a whole week. It's a national tournament. Yeah. And my weight class is an Olympic weight class, which means, I mean, you had to, for my weight, you have to qualify for it. [00:44:00] So all the girls that are in my weight class, they all qualify and that means they had to win certain tournaments or place at certain tournaments in the past year to be able to be in this bracket.

And this is important because I'm not a hundred percent sure, but I believe being in the finals or winning this tournament does create different opportunities for next year going into the Olympic trials and everything like that. So this tournament is, it's, it's a pretty important tournament leading into the Olympic trial year, which is next year.

So, but yeah, this thing's a whole week long and it's gonna be a good time. Yeah. I've been, I've been to a few of these, so it's not my first time doing this, which is good. So I'm, I'm pretty accustomed to how this thing goes. It's just all here. Yeah. And it goes for anybody. It's a lot of times we're our, our biggest enemies and we're able to really channel our thought and really like, make it so that no matter what is going on [00:45:00] around us, we're able to focus, go out there and perform and do our absolute best regardless of anything that's, That conquering that and figuring that out and like learning how to do that, I think is one of the most powerful things.

People will fail you, life's gonna fail you sometimes things are not gonna go your way. Things are gonna be disastrous sometimes, right? But if you're able to come back and like, bring yourself back, you know, and, and, and go, okay, why am I here? What am I doing this for? And what's my goal? You know, what, what do I wanna do?

Right? And if you're able to remember the why and the what and, and consider that regardless of everything going on around you, I think that that alone can kind of just like almost wash, not a wash away, but it kinda eliminates some of those distractions and things around you that aren't gonna help you do your absolute best.

It's just that focus, you know? Yeah. And so that's kind of what I've been having to work on the past couple weeks is, [00:46:00] is focusing on my thought.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. Good, good. And well, we'll definitely be supporting you from here and thank you. Thank you. I know this will release before that, so hopefully you'll have some more supporters cheering you on from, from afar.

So with mentoring did you have somebody that you can look back to or even that you look at today as a mentor for you that you kind of, like you said, where you feel like you give advice and you help people through life experiences, that they help you through your life experiences?

**Stephanie Simon:** For sure. For me in the Marine Corps, my biggest mentor, his name was Captain Miller.

Captain Miller was my boss for about five, six months. And I think the most unique thing about him was that he listened and he had an open heart, open mind, and allowed me to have the floor and just ramble and go off and just like vent. and then he would give, you know, his perspective, but not from [00:47:00] a orderly Marine Corps perspective.

You know, this is how you have to do it. It was more from like a have you considered this? You know, kind of like he was the kind of guy that was able to challenge my thought. But like I said, not from a military robotic standpoint, but more from like just a life standpoint in general. Challenged my thought and, and helped me grow as a leader and as a person.

And I don't know, it was just unique because he was not, and is not like most people in the military, you know, he's like, very down to earth, very personable. And he listens. And I think as a leader, a lot of times people, they forget to listen to their people. They wanna just tell them everything.

They wanna be the one talking. And I think as a mentor, what I loved most about him was that he. Just allowed me to kind of just like, let it all out. And, and the other thing too is he was one of the only people that really told me like, pursue your dreams. Get outta the military. Go become a fighter.

Go become whatever it is that you wanna become. [00:48:00] Be the person you wanna be. Yeah. He's like, you know, the, the Marine court right now, I think the military is, is preventing you from being your fullest self. So go out there and do it. And he was one of the first people, like I said, that actually said that, because, you know, and those environments, usually people are like, stay, you know, push it out, you know, keep going, keep going just a little bit longer, things might change.

But he, again, he kind of gave me a perspective of like, life short, you have these things and these dreams and these aspirations that, that you have deep inside of you go for them. And so I think as a mentor, that's why. I really admired him and I, you know, we still talk today, but that's what I love most about him was he actually listened.

He, you know, he challenged my thought and he inspired me to chase my dreams and to like go out there and actually pursue the things that I've always wanted to do my whole life.

**Michelle Harris:** That's so great that you had somebody like [00:49:00] that in your life. I wish everybody had somebody like that.

For sure. So many people can get, get stuck and not, not know where to go and they just stay. And you know, especially people that have certain dreams that they wanna live and, you know, you have a certain amount of time I'm on. On the earth, and Right, right. You know, not to look at it in a bad way, but lead it in a negative way.

But you know, you have to make the most of it and find, find that that thing that is, is your thing. And absolutely. I, yeah. So, so great that you found, found him. I'd like, I'd like to kind of switch up a little bit and talk about wellness, wellbeing different things that, like, is there a daily routine that you have, and I can imagine that you probably have a few daily routines that you, that kind of, you attribute your wellbeing to, whether it's physical or mental that you could share with everybody For sure.

**Stephanie Simon:** I think my biggest thing is we have a little patio [00:50:00] where I'm at in the mornings. I, I make my coffee, I move very slowly and then I'll just kind of sit out there. and nobody's really awake, the sun's out, but people are kind of just like waking up. So it's like very quiet, it's very relaxed. And I try not to have my phone.

I try, it's hard cuz I love my phone, but I try to either read or just kind of just think about, okay, what do I wanna get done today? But also, am I thinking positively right now? Or where are my thoughts taking me? Cause a lot of times we wake up, it's just like, okay, I do this. Oh, I, all the thoughts are running and you're like, your mind, you're not actually taking in the moment and like, thinking positively.

Okay, today it's gonna be a good day, you know, breathe. I'm awesome, I'm great. I'm, I'm [00:51:00] working towards a goal. I'm being the best version of

myself. You know, I'm, I'm capable, I'm strong. I'm, I'm all these things and I'm good enough. I, I am good enough. I am, you know, I am who I'm working to be. I'm working towards it.

And, and that's me. And we don't realize it, but a lot of times during the day, we think of ourselves in a very negative light. Oh, I look with this. I look like that. Why am I so this? Why am I so that more, more so for me, I get a lot of negative thoughts about myself throughout the day that I have to almost like block as soon as I wake up, I have to block those negative thoughts and just basically counteract them with like, with positive thoughts.

And the thing is, is you have to force yourself to think that way. Sometimes if you think that you're just naturally gonna think positively all the time, it's not gonna happen. I think people are complex. [00:52:00] We're, we're complex beings. I think human beings you know, they say we have what, 40,000 thoughts a day.

Well, of those 40,000 thoughts a day a lot of them are negative thoughts. And so I think when you wake up in the morning, one of the most important things you can do is have that time where you're basically setting the standard for the rest of your day in the morning, early when you're just waking up.

Set the tone. And, and for me, I try to do that when I go out in that little patio and it's nice and quiet and I got my little coffee and I'm like, dang, this coffee's so good. And, and it's gonna be a good day just like this coffee. So, one of the things that I, I I really loved about going to the Olympic Training Center is that they had sports psychologists there, and they taught us that.

They taught us that, that you know, of the 40,000 thoughts that we have a day, a lot of them. Are negative thoughts and that it's normal. It's actually normal to have those negative thoughts and those negative emotions and that people are very critical of [00:53:00] themselves. And that people naturally, they, they just wanna, they get frustrated with themselves, you know?

And, and I think when they said that psychologists, sports psychologists, it made me feel like, wow, I'm not crazy. You know, I thought I was crazy for being kind of negative and kind of just like anxiety, like anxious and all over the place. But it's actually something that is normal for people, especially when they have a lot of things going on and people that are very busy people that are very, you know, go, go, go and they have a lot of things that they're working towards.



You can kind of tend to have those negative thoughts and they can get carried away if you let them. So, after learning that, and after learning a little bit more about that that's something that I try to do in the mornings. Focus.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah. I was gonna ask you how you learned that so early in life, because it is something that a lot of people don't figure out until later on, but that makes a lot of sense that especially, you know, what you're trying to do with your boxing career and, and being in sports.

I think even I can imagine [00:54:00] that if you're competitive and you really wanna achieve high levels, that you would be really hard on yourself because kind of from the outside looking in, you know, it's easy for me to look in and be like, oh my God. Like why is, why is she thinking that about herself? But like, it can, it's kind of like, Choosing to exercise empathy and put yourself in, in your shoes.

And I can completely understand how that, how that could be. And it's, it's great that you not only got that advice, but you actually took it to heart and have routines that you've taken on to, to really mitigate that. Thank you.

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah. It's, it's a constant battle and it's it's like this it's not every day, every day is not perfect, but still working on, it's a work in progress, that's for sure.

But I'm definitely grateful I I learned that from them, for sure.

**Michelle Harris:** Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And, and especially since, I mean, you do have a very like, entertaining [00:55:00] side of yourself and from. You know, singing, playing music, but also like some comedy, you know, I, oh yeah. I haven't, I haven't noticed as much lately, but it's so, you know, you see a certain personality and you're like, oh my gosh, what, how could she, you know, how could you be feeling that way?

But I understand,

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah, that's, yeah. No, no, I . I think, I think people that do, I think people that achieve a lot and that, that do that do well in life, that a lot of them are very critical. Yeah. And sometimes it can be self-destructive. And my advice to anyone listening, like, you gotta love yourself and you gotta give yourself grace.

You have to, because. If you don't, it doesn't matter how many other people say, Hey, it's okay. Hey, you're great. At the end of the day, they're not the ones that rest their head at night. Like, you're the one that has to go to sleep. Wake up. You're in your own body, you're in your own lives. If you don't believe that, if you don't love yourself and [00:56:00] give yourself grace, there's no amount of external love and grace and comfort that will make you feel that peace.

Mm-hmm. , you know, it really does have to come from within. And yeah, it's a challenge, especially as a leader, somebody that's always being washed and always being judged. You have to remind yourself, you know, remind yourself like, Hey, somebody. Okay, .

**Michelle Harris:** Well, that's such valuable, valuable advice. Where do you get your creativity?

Like your, do you have to. Kind of wait until you feel it. Do you have certain things that you do to spark a creative moment in your day? Like how, how does that happen for you?

**Stephanie Simon:** To be honest I always, I have constant ideas flowing through 24 7. I tend to see my life in like a movie type perspective where I'm thinking of the idea that I wanna create or the, the wig I wanna wear [00:57:00] for this impersonation.

Like, you know what I mean? Like, my, my mind, I have like the serious training mode. Serious. Like, okay, I'm getting ready for this. I gotta run hard. And then I also have like the entertainment mode. It's almost like a duality where I'm like, thinking of my life from a, from like a show or a movie perspective, or from a, like, I want to recreate this scene that I just saw in my head.

And, and make it into like an Instagram reel or make it into a, a video, make it into something funny. You know, I have a video on YouTube, like somewhere on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, something where I'm dressed up as Michael Jackson and I'm dancing around in Walmart. I had that idea. I had that, like, I was envisioning it and seeing like, reactions of people.

I had it in my mind before it ever happened. And I had like, basically like kept thinking like, okay, how, what would I wear? How would I be dancing? What part of the aisles would I be going to, what would I be saying how would it be filmed? How would I zoom in? And a lot of the [00:58:00] ideas, they, they start off with just ideas.

But I think the most enjoyable part of the whole process is like making the ideas become actual, like content. And I think that more people can do that. More people can get into that. More people should, because. . We all have funny ideas and we all have things that we think about and we all have similar experiences where if you were to take that thought and even just verbalize it or speak about it or like make a little video, you, you have no idea who might watch it and go, oh my gosh, that's hilarious.

I totally know what she's talking about, or I totally know what he's talking about. And so you don't have to be like the most hysterical, funny, talented person in the world. That's why you see a lot of times on online, you see people go viral that aren't crazy influencers or crazy famous people is because they're able to like capture a very relatable experience [00:59:00] into a video.

It's maybe 15 seconds, but so many of us have experienced that same thing that we're like, this, this is brilliant. Like I totally know what they're saying. So, but yeah. I have, I always have ideas and sometimes I write 'em down. Sometimes I forget to, but I have constant throughout the day, constant like little, okay, I should do this.

Oh, I should do that. So just kind of my, my creative mind has been like that since I was a kid.

**Michelle Harris:** So, I think that probably is the key, is to make sure when you have the ideas is writing them them down because Yeah. You know, going back to your what you said, you have 40,000 thoughts in a day. , if you don't something down, it's gonna, another thought's gonna come along and it's not gonna come back to you.

Yeah, absolutely. Do you have a song that you that is a go-to song where you need a little confidence boost or just need some energy for the day that you'll go to?

**Stephanie Simon:** Yes. There's a song called Golden by Jill Scott. And it just goes living my life like [01:00:00] it's gold and live my life. Like, it's so, she's basically just talking about living your life.

Like it's golden. And you know, we, we associate gold with like this royalty and like, you know, you win gold, your first place, you win gold, right? Gold is like special gold at the to valuable. And I think that when I hear that song, song, it reminds me like, usually I listen to it when I'm getting ready for a tournament or I'm getting ready to go box.

And I remind myself that in what I'm doing at that moment, getting ready to go in there and get in the ring and do face my fears and do what I came to do, you know, that I'm living my life. Like it's golden. You know, I'm living my life the way that I've been wanting to and that I've been dreaming of myself, you know, doing since I was a kid.

And I think that Sometimes we gotta take a step back and ask ourselves like, am I living my life like golden? Am I living my [01:01:00] life like the, you know, 12 year old me, saw myself living my life? Like, am I? Cause when you're a kid, you know, you're innocent, you're young. You think like, I'm gonna go out there and I'm gonna be the like the best me I could possibly be, and I'm gonna be happy and I'm gonna go out there and kick butt.

But then as we get older, we kind of stray away. Like, we get away from that. We think, okay, I gotta pay the bills, I gotta do this, I gotta do that. And we stop living our life like we're going and we stop living a life of like, happiness almost. And so, that song really does help me. It reminds me like, man, what I'm about to go do, about to get in the ring, it's gonna be hard.

It's gonna be difficult, it's gonna be challenging, it's gonna be tiring. I'm gonna be exhausted. , but this is exactly where I'm supposed to be. And this is exactly what, you know, God, higher power, whatever you believe in, whatever this is what he put me here to do is this. And I know I'm in the right spot.

I'm in the right [01:02:00] place. And it just brings a smile to my face every time I listen that song.

**Michelle Harris:** So . Yeah. Oh, I love that. Has that so much meaning for you. That's amazing. For sure. Do you have, are you at that point in your career yet where you have a song that you come out to come to the ring to? Or is it just they introduce you and you're in the ring at the tournaments?

**Stephanie Simon:** The national tournaments, we don't have walkout songs, but we did have walkout songs at the Naval Academy for, we had like, what we call boxing smokers where we, we box like our teammates more for like an exhibition. But I had lost this girl twice from my team two years in a row. And then we actually fought for the third time her senior year, and I was like a year younger.

And it's kind of petty, but the song starts off with the words looking for revenge , and the beat drops really like, it, like drops hard. And like, it's one of those songs that like, it's by Drake summer 16. Just that part though I'm not saying I'm

like vengeful and like, I wanna like seek [01:03:00] revenge, but that was probably the last walkout song that I've had.

And that, that got me pumped. That song got me pumped cause I was looking for revenge and I ended up beating her actually. But I don't know. I, I think walkout songs, sometimes you pick them for you and sometimes you pick them to like entertain other people. It really just depends. But yeah, for me that was like a, that was a song at that moment, at that time.

I needed that. I needed that song cause that's kind of how I felt. But yeah. Yeah, A little silly.

**Michelle Harris:** I, I imagine that you're always on the lookout for a song when you get to the point in your career and you actually need that walkout song. Do you have any thoughts on what that might be? Are you still kind of thinking about that?

**Stephanie Simon:** Sounds cheesy, but Everybody by Backstreet Boys. Oh wow. Yeah. Rock Your Body. Because I think that with a walkout song and a moment like that, I feel like you gotta bring people together and you want people to associate you walking out with like, the feeling [01:04:00] of like, like joy. Mm-hmm. . And so that song, I feel like a lot of people know it generationally, like older people know it, younger people know it.

It's exciting. It's one of those songs that like pumps you up. It's kind of like corny too, , kinda like nineties pop, which definitely gets me in like the dancing mood. And I think too, with the walkout song, like that, you wanna feel like you're having fun. Mm-hmm. , you wanna feel like you're enjoying yourself.

And, and for me, that's a song that I associate with being like, literally like a six year old kid just dancing in front of the mirror, enjoying myself. And so I think when we're having fun is when we perform our best. And so it sounds weird, but I've actually literally picture myself walking out to that song.

Everybody By Back Street Boys, .

**Michelle Harris:** I'm so glad I asked that question. I didn't expect that answer. Amazing.

**Stephanie Simon:** probably thought like some, like super dramatic like warrior chant or something,[01:05:00]

**Michelle Harris:** but yeah. And I can't imagine that you are in the mode where you're kind of in consumer mode, but is there something that you've bought for yourself or spent money on in the last year that you feel has changed your life that might provide value to somebody listening?

**Stephanie Simon:** It sounds really cheap and cheesy, but a planner.

Because for me I am kind of scatterbrained naturally and in the Marine Corps I had a notebook. I always had a notebook, always writing things down, but like, I got like a legit planner. Okay, it's got every day, it's got every month, it's got hours. Like this thing, especially now that I'm a civilian having to balance the reserves, having to balance my civilian job as well as boxing, having my day like pretty much planned out by the hour.

The other thing too is that a planner in, in organizing your day, I think people don't realize this, but it actually [01:06:00] shows you how much time you do have. Cause we think, I don't have any time. I don't have any time. But when you really think about how long things take and how much time we waste on useless stuff, The planner kind of tells you the ugly truth and it's like, wow, I really do have time to stretch.

I really do have time to meditate. I really do have time to call this person. Have like, you know, conversation with, I have a lot, I have a lot more time than I realize and when my little notification pops up on my phone that I just had seven hours of screen time, which means I've been on my phone seven hours today.

That's probably why I feel like I don't have a lot of time in my days because I'm so, you know, fixated on my phone and not sticking to my schedule, not sticking to the planner, not sticking to the things I gotta do that, you know, by the end of the day I'm like, wow, I feel like I didn't get a lot done. So, honestly, the planner I know sounds cheap, but for me that's probably one of the things that I bought that was not very expensive.

That has helped me tremendously throughout the [01:07:00] past six months of being a civilian, especially. And surprisingly enough, surprisingly enough. A lot of people actually don't use planners. A lot of people don't plan out their day. A lot of people don't schedule anything. They just go with the flow, which is cool and all.

But I feel like if you wanna get things done and you wanna have an organized week, organize productive day, you kind of have to have, okay, eight, eight

o'clock I'm gonna do this. Okay, six 30, this is when I do this at 12, this is when I do this. And it's like, it just, you feel a lot more organized and just at peace, you know?

**Michelle Harris:** So, yeah. I I it's so interesting that you brought that up as, as your item because this just before our call, every now and then, I have to kind of regroup on what my calendar looks like. And cuz I'll, I'll develop like what I'm supposed to be doing every day during the week, even hour by hour, even though, you know Right.

It's, it's a goal. And, and never on that Exactly. But then I [01:08:00] kind of get away from it. So it's like I have to go back and revisit it and for sure, and revisit it in multiple ways. One is how am I fitting in or what, what am I, what, what does my calendar look like? But also if there are some new goals that I have, like how do I fit those daily things in?

But it is a, it's, it's a, it's embarrassing to actually take a look at it and realize like how much time you actually have in the day. And then you think about why wasn't I, you know, getting that done. I think that I have so much going on that if I. Focused on what I wanna focus on and not other, the things that don't matter.

You do have a lot of time to get a hundred.

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah. . Hundred percent.

**Michelle Harris:** I was getting, I was having that self realization before, right before we talked .

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah, absolutely. And so the planner doesn't lie. It doesn't lie. Mm-hmm. .

**Michelle Harris:** Yes, exactly. Do you ever, do you take time to read? Are there any books that [01:09:00] you've read recently that you'd recommend to anybody in the audience?

**Stephanie Simon:** Yeah. I, I, I go kind of back and forth with reading. But I would say that, I don't know if you ever heard of The Daily Stoic? No, I haven't. The Daily Stoic, so it's by Ryan Holiday. I have it right here. Oh, Ryan Holiday. Yeah. But the cool thing about the Daily Stoic is if you're someone like me that doesn't have like the best attention span all the time it, it doesn't actually follow a story.



It's, it's each day they basically give you like a quote. So it's like literally dated, you know, January 1st, January 2nd, throughout the entire year. And it's like a, a like a quote about stoicism that each, literally every single day, you, you read one. Like for example, today today's the 27th. You know, how satisfying is it to dismiss and block out any upsetting or foreign impression and immediately to have peace in all things?

And because none of the quotes or the, the book as a whole doesn't actually tie in to anything specific. You [01:10:00] don't have to follow a storyline, you don't have to follow anything. You kind of can just literally pick it up and learn something. For me it's, it's great because I feel like sometimes with books, I, I, I don't know if I have to follow a story, I'm like, da, da, da.

You know what happened again, let me go back and read this. This is one of those things you can pick up at any time, any day. Pick up something valuable. And just kind of learn from a very small segment, just like that and take it with you for the rest of the day. So, I'm also reading another book about love called The Four Loves by CS Lewis.

Struggling a little bit with that one cause I'm like, cause CS Lewis, I feel like sometimes he uses very big words. He has a very, you know, intense vocabulary sometimes and it gets a little bit confusing. But I think that I chose to read about love because I think that love is one of the things that we all need and one of the things that we forget about during the day, and that I feel like in our life, the, you know, the, just the feeling of love and having that and [01:11:00] reminding yourself like, am I being loving today?

You know, I feel like that's something that we kind of forget. And when we are loving, you know, we receive love too. I think love is one of those things like karma. Karma is a thing too, right. But the more loving, the more we give, the more, you know, just like graceful we are, the more we receive it.

And I think a lot of times when we're stressed and we're working, we're, you know, like I said, anxious, we forget to just be loving. And I think it's important. And I'm trying to work on that myself. I'm trying to work on being more loving and enjoying the people around me and enjoying the moment more so.

Wow. Yeah. The Four Loves and the Daily Stoic. Those are the two right now.

**Michelle Harris:** So thank you. Two new ones that I had never heard of and , I'm gonna check them both out. Awesome. And that is like such an amazing place to end the conversation talking and talking about love. So I, I appreciate

that you that you brought that book up and I really, really appreciate you being [01:12:00] on and I hope that we will have another conversation in the future.

I would love to have you on and talk more about the entertainment side of you as well. Cause we didn't, we talked about that little, but not enough . But if somebody wanted to, somebody listening, wanted to reach out to you, check out who you are what, what you're all about. If I have a question for you, where's the best place to find you?

**Stephanie Simon:** Probably Instagram and my handle is StephSimon94. So Instagram is like my, my go-to. I have a TikTok to, I believe it's StephSimon94 as well, but I'm not on there as much. But for, for me Instagram or my email, you can email me as well. stephaniesimon123@gmail.com. Just my first last name, 1, 2, 3, super creative.

And I do have a YouTube page if you're ever interested in that. You know, Stephanie Simon123, if you ever wanna see some random things, random [01:13:00] instruments being played and things of that nature. Yeah, so, and then of course you have my phone number. I don't wanna give that out, but you don't have to give that out.

Yes, be careful with that one, but text also and, and phone calls. So, but thank you so much for having me, and it's been great. These definitely, definitely different questions that I've had. From the past. Most of them have been boxing related. So it was cool to actually be able to speak about my leadership experience and to be able to share some of my life lessons with you guys.

So yeah.

**Michelle Harris:** Well, thank you again. Appreciate you being on such valuable, thank you so much. Valuable advice for everybody and I hope you enjoy the rest of your weekend. You too. All right, we'll talk to you soon.

**Stephanie Simon:** Yes, ma'am. Thank you. Bye-bye.

**Michelle Harris:** Hi everyone, this is Michelle again. Just one more thing before you take off.

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