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# PSYOPS IN FATHERHOOD

*The Unnamed Wound Still Running Your Life  
7 Signs and Counters*

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## BRIEFING // OVERVIEW

# Mission Brief

The most dangerous wound a man carries is the one his father gave him.

Not because fathers are villains. Because fathers are architects. They build the internal blueprint a boy will use for the rest of his life. The blueprint for risk, for conflict, for love, for leadership, for how a man walks into a room and whether he believes he belongs there.

When the architect is absent, critical, conditional, or performative, the blueprint comes out broken. And the man builds his life on it anyway. Because he does not know it is broken. He thinks it is just how he is.

I have spent 35,000 hours sitting across from men who are living inside a house their father designed. They are confused about why the roof keeps leaking. They keep repairing the same wall. They blame themselves. They blame their wife. They blame the market. They blame God.

They never look at the blueprint.

This field guide will show you the seven father wound patterns still operating in your decision making, your relationships, and your leadership. It will show you what each one costs you. And it will give you the first counter for each.

You did not choose the wound. You are choosing what happens next.

Let's go.

## SECTION 1 // WOUND PATTERNS

# The Seven Father Wounds

He thinks he has a strategy problem. He has a father problem wearing a strategy costume.

Every man you meet is running on one of seven blueprints his father installed. The blueprint does not announce itself. It operates in the background like code. It decides how he negotiates, how he parents, how he leads, and how he loves.

Learn these seven patterns. One of them is running your life right now.

## THREAT PROFILE // 01

## The Absent Father Wound

He was not there. Maybe physically gone. Maybe in the room but emotionally unreachable. The television was on. The beer was open. The body was present. The father was not.

*What you miss: The son of an absent father does not believe he is worth staying for. He builds a life designed to prove he does not need anyone. He is hyper-independent, emotionally sealed, and proud of it. He calls it strength. It is a scar.*

**COST:** He cannot receive help, love, or correction. He keeps every relationship at arm's length. His wife feels lonely in a full house. His kids know his schedule but not his heart. He leads from distance because closeness was never modeled.

**COUNTER:** Name it. "My father was not present. I learned that people leave. I have been building walls ever since." The counter to absence is chosen presence. Deliberate, uncomfortable, consistent presence with the people you are tempted to hold at distance.

## THREAT PROFILE // 02

## The Critical Father Wound

Nothing was good enough. The A was not an A+. The game winning hit should have been hit harder. The yard was mowed but not edged. Every accomplishment was met with the next standard.

*What you miss: The son of a critical father becomes a perfectionist or he quits entirely. Either way, the operating system is the same: "If I cannot do it perfectly, I cannot do it at all." He does not fear failure. He fears the voice that comes after it.*

**COST:** He procrastinates on decisions because a wrong move means the old voice returns. He cannot celebrate wins because there is always a flaw. His team walks on eggshells because his standard is driven by a wound, not a vision. He burns people out.

**COUNTER:** Separate the standard from the wound. "My standards are high. That is fine. But when the standard is fueled by my father's voice telling me I am never enough, the standard becomes a weapon." Celebrate progress. Out loud. Publicly. This rewires the blueprint.

## THREAT PROFILE // 03

## The Performative Father Wound

Dad showed up. But only when people were watching. He was father of the year at church. He coached the team. He shook hands and smiled. At home he was a different man. The performance was for the audience. The family got what was left.

*What you miss: The son of a performative father learned that image matters more than truth. He builds a public life that looks nothing like his private one. He can lead a team but cannot have a real conversation with his wife. The stage gets the best version. The people closest get the scraps.*

**COST:** His relationships are shallow because authenticity was never safe. His marriage has a highlight reel but no real intimacy. He performs confidence but lives in anxiety. The gap between the public version and the private version is where his identity fractures.

**COUNTER:** Kill the performance. "What people see is not what my family gets. That ends now." Start by being the same man at home that you are on the platform. If the private version is weaker, do not fix the stage. Fix the man.

## THREAT PROFILE // 04

## The Conditional Father Wound

Love showed up on a schedule. When he performed. When he obeyed. When he won. When he made dad look good. Love was a transaction with terms and conditions. Miss the target, miss the affection.

*What you miss: The son of a conditional father builds a performance equals love equation. He hustles for approval in every arena. He overworks. He over-delivers. He cannot rest because rest means the approval might stop. His worth is measured in output and he has never turned the machine off.*

**COST:** He attracts people who use him because he was trained to earn love. His marriage becomes transactional. His leadership becomes people-pleasing. He cannot say no because no means the love goes away. He is a hostage to the equation his father installed.

**COUNTER:** Break the equation. "My father made love conditional. I have been earning it ever since. I am done." The counter is receiving love you did not perform for. Start by sitting still and doing nothing. Let someone love you while you are unproductive. It will feel wrong. That is the wound talking.

## THREAT PROFILE // 05

## The Angry Father Wound

The house ran on eggshells. You learned to read the room before you learned to read a book. The volume of his voice set the temperature of the home. Safety was not a given. It was a calculation.

*What you miss: The son of an angry father becomes one of two things. He becomes the same man, running his house on volume and control. Or he swings the other direction and becomes passive, terrified of his own anger because he believes anger equals destruction.*

**COST:** If he went aggressive, his family fears him. If he went passive, he cannot lead. Either version is a reaction to the same wound. Neither version is him. He is either his father's copy or his father's opposite. He has never been himself.

**COUNTER:** Separate anger from destruction. "My father taught me that anger destroys. It does not. Unprocessed anger destroys. Anger itself is information." Learn to feel it without acting on it or running from it. A man who can hold his anger without exploding or disappearing is the most dangerous and safe man in the room.

## THREAT PROFILE // 06

## The Scapegoat Wound

He was the problem child. The one who got blamed. The family needed someone to carry the dysfunction and he was elected. Everything that went wrong pointed back to him. He was not the problem. He was the one assigned to be the problem.

*What you miss: The son who carries the scapegoat wound believes he is inherently defective. Not that he made mistakes. That he IS the mistake. He volunteers for blame in his adult relationships. He apologizes reflexively. He takes ownership of things that are not his because he was trained to carry other people's failures.*

**COST:** He attracts manipulators because he is pre-programmed to accept blame. His leadership is gutless because he does not believe his perspective has value. He lets people cross lines because he was told the line was his fault to begin with.

**COUNTER:** Stop carrying it. "I was assigned a role I did not choose. The family needed a container for their pain and they chose me. I am putting it down." The counter is refusing to apologize for things you did not do. Not once. Starting now.

## THREAT PROFILE // 07

## The Ghost Father Wound

He existed. Somewhere. You have a name but not a face. Or a face but not a memory. He was not absent by circumstance. He chose to leave. He looked at you and decided he had somewhere else to be.

*What you miss: The son of a ghost father carries the deepest question a man can carry: "Am I worth staying for?" Every relationship, every business deal, every moment of vulnerability runs through that question. He tests people. He sabotages good things. He creates the abandonment he expects because at least then he controls the timing.*

**COST:** He cannot commit fully because full commitment means full exposure to being left again. His career is marked by explosive changes. His relationships have expiration dates he sets in advance. He does not fear failure. He fears being known and then discarded.

**COUNTER:** Answer the question. "He left. That is about him. It was never about me." Then stop testing the people around you. Stop building exit ramps in your relationships. When you feel the urge to blow something up before it can fail, that is the wound talking. Sit in it. Let it pass. Stay.

**SECTION 2 // SELF MAPPING**

# Tracing the Blueprint

Now that you can identify the seven wound patterns, you need to trace where yours shows up. The wound does not live in your childhood. It lives in your Tuesday. It lives in how you responded to your wife last night. How you handled the meeting this morning. What you avoided today.

Answer these questions honestly. Not for anyone else. For you.

**FIELD ASSESSMENT**

- Which wound pattern did you recognize first? That is usually the one running the show.
- How did your father handle conflict? Do you handle it the same way or the exact opposite?
- When was the last time you performed for approval instead of leading from conviction?
- Who in your life is getting the scraps while the public gets the performance?
- What are you carrying that was never yours to carry?
- When someone gets close, what is your first instinct? Pursue or protect?
- If your father could hear you right now, what would you tell him?

**SECTION 3 // FIRST COUNTERS**

# What to Do With What You Just Saw

Seeing the wound is the first step. It is not the last. Most men see it and try to think their way out. You cannot outthink a father wound. You have to walk through it.

**RULE 01 // NAME IT OUT LOUD**

The wound has power because it has never been spoken. Write down one sentence: "My father was \_\_\_\_\_ and it installed \_\_\_\_\_ in me." Say it. To yourself. To a trusted man. To God. The wound hates language.

**RULE 02 // SEPARATE THE MAN FROM THE WOUND**

You are not your father's blueprint. You are the man rebuilding on top of it. Grief is allowed. Anger is allowed. What is not allowed is letting his failure define your ceiling.

**RULE 03 // STOP COMPENSATING**

If your father was absent, you became self-sufficient. If he was critical, you became a perfectionist. The compensation feels like your identity. It is not. It is your survival strategy. You do not need it anymore.

**RULE 04 // GRIEVE WHAT YOU DID NOT GET**

You deserved a present, engaged, unconditional father. You did not get one. That loss is real. Grieving it is not weakness. It is the doorway to freedom. The men who skip the grief stay stuck in the wound.

**RULE 05 // BREAK THE CYCLE NOW**

You have kids or you will have kids. The blueprint transfers unless you interrupt it. Every moment of chosen presence, every word of unconditional affirmation, every time you stay when the wound tells you to leave, you are rewriting the code for the next generation.

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# WHAT THIS BRIEFING CANNOT GIVE YOU

Every man has a father wound running the show in his decisions.

He cannot see it because he is inside it.

You cannot see yours alone. That is not weakness. That is how wounds  
work.

A briefing shows you the map. Coaching walks the terrain.

**Dr. Johnathan Hines, DCC**

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