



## **FORCES FOR CHANGE**

Read about the most recent findings from our  
Remembrance Day networking initiative.

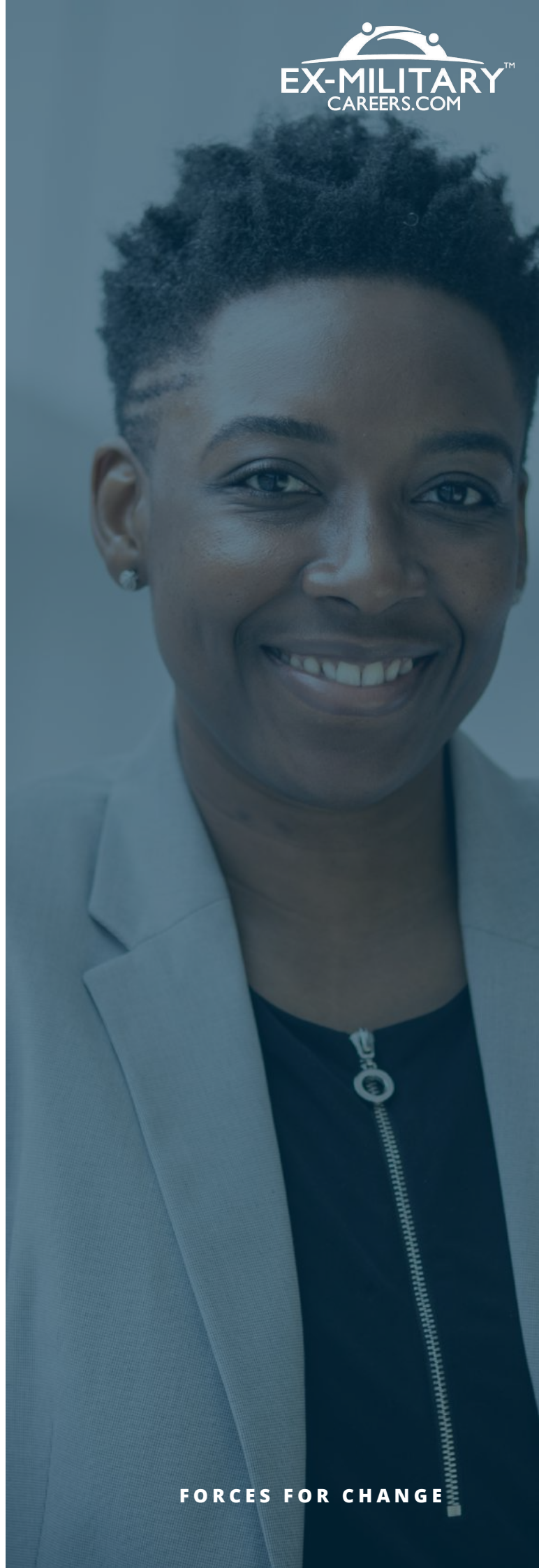
## Introduction

According to the Ministry of Defence statistics (2020), around 15,000 people leave the UK Armed Forces every year and there are over 2.4 million veterans in the community. The United States Department of Defence statistics (2020) state there are 18 million veterans living in society and over 200,000 veterans leaving the military every year.

To commemorate Remembrance Day, our Ex-Military Careers community united for an impactful and current webinar session, 'Forces for Change' led by Client Engagement Director Joel Forrester. The webinar discussed a plethora of talking points such as developing a positive mindset, combating identity crises and transferable skills. Joel was joined by military luminary Colin Maclachlan, as well as entrepreneurial powerhouse Katharina Dalka.

### Key insights included:

- Developing a positive mindset: focus on what you can control
- Tackling Identity Crises: converse with others, be open to any opportunity and most importantly – be yourself
- Stress Management: top tips for workload and emotional stress
- Ex-Military personnel possess a handful of sought-after transferable skills
- More must be done to help veterans leave the military smoothly



# THE PANEL

## JOEL FORRESTER

Host and chair



As Client Engagement Director, Joel will be spearheading Trinnovo Group's (which ex-military careers are part of) dynamic 5-year strategy to build out and expand its employment transition support for departing military personnel and veteran communities in the workplace – across both the UK and US markets.



## KATHARINA DALKA

CEO and Founder



Katharina currently lives in London where she has her advisory firm, StellarOne, that focuses on Strategy and Investment Advisory in Tech. Complex cross-border operations are her specialty. She is also co-founder and chairwoman of DYDON, an artificial intelligence Fintech firm based in Switzerland. Katharina began her career

in Paris as a project manager, managing major projects like the IT post-merger integration of Air France and KLM. Joining strategy consulting boutique Teknowlogy, she was then named Head of M&A/Fintech and built the European Teknowlogy Corporate Development Practice from the ground. After 7 years, she moved to London and worked for "Technology Fast500 EMEA ranking" company MotorK as Head of Corporate Development before starting her own business.





## COLIN MACLACHLAN

Ambassador and Public Speaker

Colin began his military career joining the Army in 1989, where he served in the Royal Scots for 9 years. The SAS soon became of interest to Colin, passing selection into 22 SAS for the first time aged just 23. From that point on, Colin was at the forefront of some of the most perilous SAS missions of recent times. He was faced with his most daring mission, nicknamed Operation Certain eath, back in 2000. Wading through the swamps of Sierra Leone, on the hunt for the West



Side Boys, Colin was aiming to rescue British soldiers who were being held hostage by the guerilla gang. Alongside his fellow SAS soldiers, Colin was able to rescue the hostages and neutralise the West Side Boys.

Proving himself to be a brave and committed soldier, Colin was trusted with more critical missions. Also in 2000, Colin was the first sniper on the scene when a hijacked plane landed at Stansted Airport. Prominently remembered as the longest hostage siege on UK soil, Colin found himself amongst a four-day long stand-off. Unfortunately, Colin has not always been on the successful side of missions. Deployed to Basra on a rescue mission, Colin soon found himself to be the one that needed rescuing after he was taken, hostage. Held alive for use in propaganda, he was fortunate to survive long enough to be rescued by British troops just after a mock execution was performed on him.

After this experience, Colin exchanged his role in the SAS to join Delta Force and Seal Team 6. He also worked to provide security for several high-profile clients such as A-level celebrities and the Saudi Royal Family. He is now best known for featuring in the Channel 4 programme SAS 'Who Dares Wins' and Channel 5's 'Secrets of the SAS'.

## **1. Developing a positive mindset: focus on what you can control**

The discussion commenced by uncovering how to maintain a positive working mindset. Katharina spoke how she recently endured an intense experience at work; to clear her head, she took a scenic walk around central London and began questioning 'why' she was putting herself through this considerable level of stress. She concluded that being able to obtain the rich level of freedom in her entrepreneurial role enabled her to have a strong purpose, with both intellectual and human input. Katharina advised our audience that it is wise to understand 'why' you are joining the military, but equally wise to know 'why' you are stepping out. Colin illustrated how developing a positive mindset means you must be the 'gatekeeper' of your emotions; managing how you feel will give you the best chance of success. Additionally, setting strategic and time-focused goals will prompt productivity and an enhanced feeling of accomplishment.

When exploring tangible ways in improving your mindset, Katharina often employs sport and fitness to tackle emotional drawbacks and attributes sport



to fostering her resilience and patience. Colin explained how one must simply focus on what they can control. From a young age, Colin has accepted that current obstacles he may face will one day be eradicated, and it is vital to remember this when developing a positive mindset; 'your worst day isn't going to be your every day,' he movingly stated.

## **2. Tackling Identity Crises: converse with others, be open to any opportunity and most importantly - be yourself**

It's highly probable that one may experience an identity crisis, particularly in the early stages of civilian life. Katharina candidly spoke about her initial experience transitioning into a highly-skilled, older and predominantly male environment. 'I felt lonely. I thought - how am I going to do this?' she said. To combat these heavy emotions, Katharina reached out to other female entrepreneurs who felt the same way too. By exchanging how you feel with others, and building a rapport with similar people to yourself, you realise you are not as lonely as you think.



Colin spoke about the struggle from leaving the military. Despite attempting to apply to both college and university, he had faced a series of rejections. To keep himself



preoccupied in the meantime, Colin applied for countless jobs over the following year and was unsuccessful each time. The last job he had applied for was from the back of the Big Issue magazine; it was a volunteering role, teaching conflict resolution at schools. Colin ironically attended the interview, and consequently got the job. By accepting this somewhat out-of-the-ordinary job opportunity, Colin achieved considerable success and eventually turned the role into a paid position, as well as introducing the Prince's Trust to the course which was then integrated into their own excel programme. Through this powerful experience, Colin learnt the value of considering unlikely opportunities, and believes this role saved him from the identity crisis he had experienced from the aforementioned rejections.



Katharina finished by advising our audience to be their true authentic selves in times of identity crises and realise that while not every box of knowledge will be ticked, you still have a unique skill set and there are attributes which should be celebrated. These distinctive skills will elevate your professional profile and will also allow you to compete and differentiate yourself against others in the industry.

### **3. Stress Management: top tips for workload and emotional stress**

Outlined by Katharina, there are two prominent areas of stress which one may contend with. Firstly, workload, which Katharina navigates through sport, healthy eating and prioritising reasonable sleep. Secondly, emotional stress, which Katharina suggests can be more draining than workload. By handling emotional stress, Katharina explained how she pays attention to what is triggering her and will consider breathing and any physical reactions which directly correlate to her mindset.

Colin highlighted the importance of finding a 'buddy,' a confidante to bounce ideas off, and who has successfully endured similar conflicts. 'For veterans, people who have



walked a mile in our shoes can really help us,' he added. Colin also recounted a time where he was captured in Iraq, and interestingly expressed how the most stressful time was not being held captive but watching an 'every-man-for-themselves' mentality unfold before his eyes. When handling this situation, Colin trusted his process and assessed what he could control, forgetting about all the additional noise.

#### **4. Ex-Military personnel possess a handful of sought-after transferable skills**

We also discussed the plethora of transferable skills which every veteran should be mindful of when making that transition to civilian life. Katharina expressed how hard skills such as strategic analysis, technical thinking and managing projects are all apparent when serving in the military. Additionally, soft skills such as project management, discipline, reliability and strong communication also play a pivotal role. Colin acknowledged the strong risk-management head which is noticeable among military personnel. Sacrifice was also mentioned; being prepared to go the extra mile is critical, and this is already instinctively proven when serving your country.



#### **5. More must be done to help veterans leave the military smoothly**

Both Katharina and Colin agreed that more must be done to help veterans across the country after they leave the military. Being able to not rely on a public entity to take care of veterans is vital and providing a platform for military members to smoothly transition into civilian life is critical: a duty of care needs to be enforced. 'It's a drop in the ocean,' Colin fittingly concluded.



# LIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

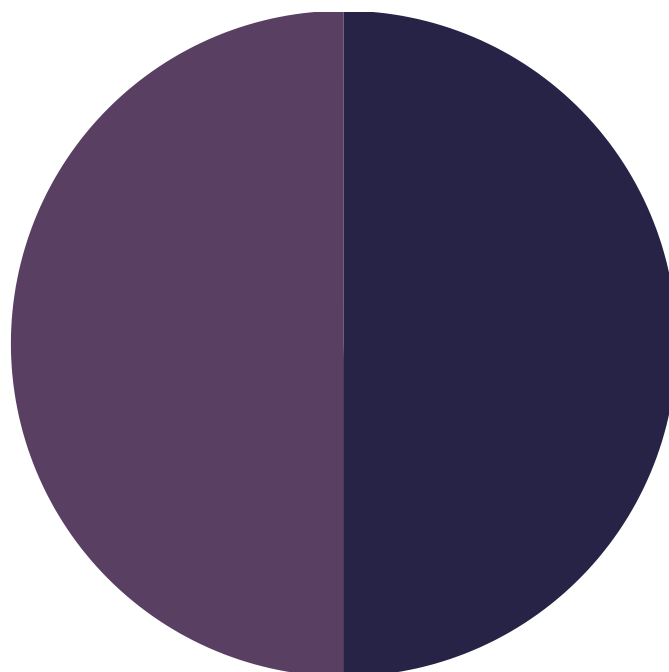
We conducted a live poll with our attendees, the results of which are below.

## Poll 1. What helped you most in transitioning from the military to civilian life?

We asked our audience about what helped them the most when taking that step into civilian life. There was an interesting 50:50 split between our respondents. With some claiming that friends and

family were a pivotal support function when transitioning, whereas others believed it to be focussing on their transferable skills when applying for potential opportunities.

**Friends & Family**  
**50%**

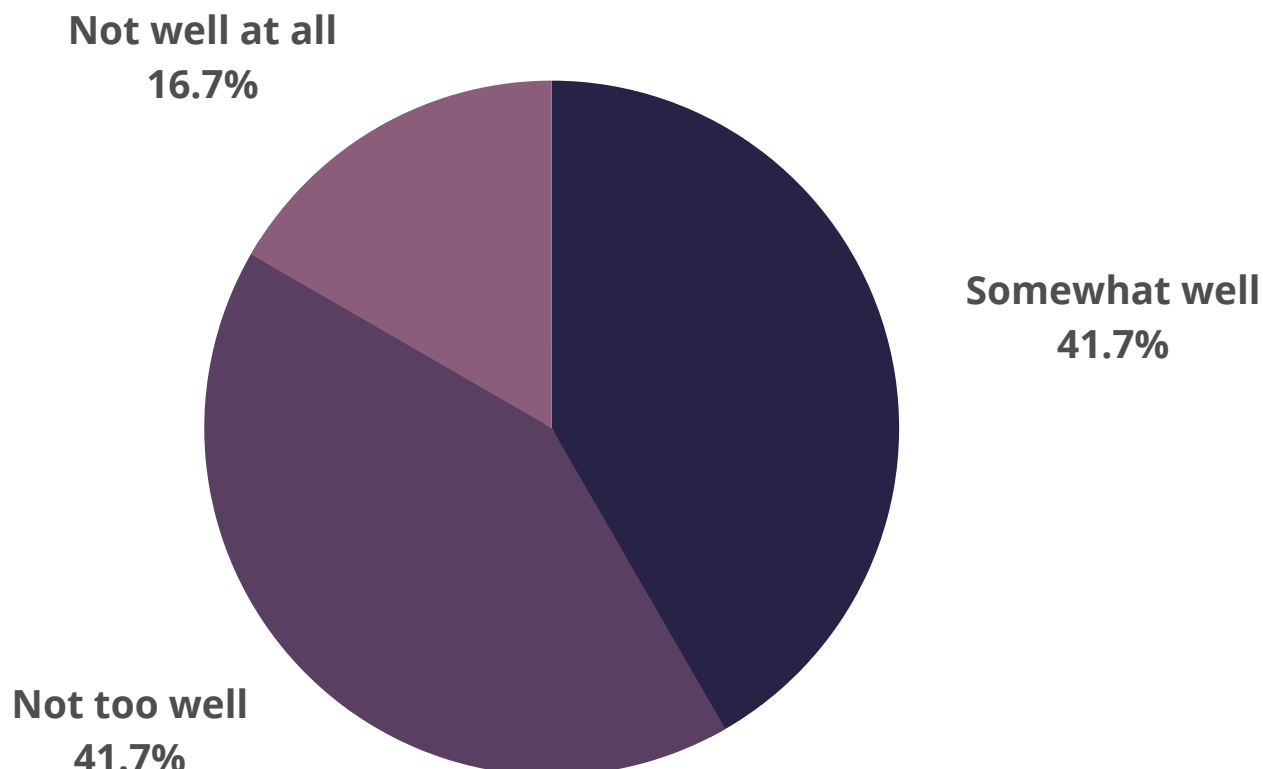


**Look at transferable skills**  
**50%**

# LIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

## Poll 2: Did the military prepare you for civilian life?

We were keen to uncover how prepared our community felt from leaving the military and entering civilian life. The results were jointly split (41.7%) between two opposing views; somewhat well and not too well. Additionally, another 16.7% of our audience felt as though the military did not prepare them well 'at all' when entering civilian life.





We can help you to achieve a culture of belonging where diversity is the default. At Ex-Military Careers, inclusion is the norm, not the exception. Reach out to us at [info@ex-militarycareers.com](mailto:info@ex-militarycareers.com) or visit our website for more information on [www.ex-militarycareers.com](http://www.ex-militarycareers.com)

### **LONDON**

Ex-Military Careers Ltd,  
52 Bedford Row  
4th Floor  
Holborn  
London  
WC1R 4LR  
Tel: +44 (0) 203 817 9757  
[info@ex-militarycareers.com](mailto:info@ex-militarycareers.com)

### **LOS ANGELES**

1240 Rosecrans Ave  
Suite 120  
Manhattan Beach,  
CA 90266  
Tel: +1213-292-5886  
[info@ex-militarycareers.com](mailto:info@ex-militarycareers.com)

### **BOSTON**

1 Beacon St,  
Boston,  
MA 02108  
Tel: +1 857 990 4670  
[info@ex-militarycareers.com](mailto:info@ex-militarycareers.com)



[www.ex-militarycareers.com](http://www.ex-militarycareers.com)