



Airmen,

This edition of the WHY Series is about physical fitness, a standard that really begins with a question: **Are you a liability or an asset?** Too often Airmen think about fitness in terms of the test they must pass to be eligible to serve, but that answer mistakes the measurement for the mission. The test isn't the point- the point is the trust the test confirms.

I can't know what the Air Force will need you to do in the future, but I do know that we need you to be ready. When the nation calls, when the mission is on the line, when the Airman next to you is counting on you, what do you bring to the fight? Your body is the most valuable weapon system you have and your mind is the operator.



Physical fitness is about so much more than meeting a standard. In the Air Force, we talk a lot about improving resilience, yet many of these discussions fail to include, at least with appropriate emphasis, the vital role of regular exercise. The research, however, is clear; physical fitness has a direct impact on mental health. That's the "WHY." You matter. **ALL of you matters.** Not just your mind, not just your body- your whole entire Airman-self MATTERS! Mental health determines mission success and physical exercise provides the important release and reset that enables Airmen to stay in the fight.

Here is the reality: in modern day warfare, there is no clear front line. You might be called upon to carry a wounded teammate to safety, move under fire, or endure days of grueling operations with little rest. In those moments, your physical readiness becomes the ultimate team sport. **Your strength is your teammate's shield. Their endurance is your lifeline.** This reality is why we are shifting focus from a culture of testing to a culture of readiness. We must move beyond simply meeting a requirement and instead build a culture where the annual test validates your lifestyle; it isn't the goal.

I hope you've had the opportunity to review the new PT charts and hopefully even chosen to help us out by taking the test. Remember, it doesn't count unless you want it to and we need the data to know if adjustments are needed. Without participation, we have no way of knowing if the charts are hitting the mark.

Your individual fitness is a promise to yourself and your team. **It's the unspoken trust that instills confidence in your competence and says you're not just ready- you're lethal.** It's not always easy, fun, or convenient, but the dividends it pays, for you and your teammates, are immense.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David R. Wolfe".

DAVID R. WOLFE
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

The WHY Series

