



First Impressions Can Be Misleading

There are certain men you meet in life who immediately command a room, not because they are loud, arrogant, or desperate for attention, but because life itself has marked them. You can feel it almost immediately. There is a gravity to them, a weight behind the eyes, a presence that quietly communicates that this is not a man who merely studied pain from a distance, but a man who survived it.

That was my experience meeting Rage XXX.

At first glance, many people would likely notice strength, intensity, toughness, edge, perhaps even intimidation. They might see tattoos, physical presence, confidence, bravado, or the carefully constructed armor that many men wear after years of surviving difficult things. But one of the things I have learned over decades as a psychologist is that the strongest armor is often forged around the deepest wounds, and once you begin understanding that reality, it changes how you see people.

Armor serves a purpose. In fact, for many people, armor is what allowed them to survive childhood trauma, chaos, abandonment, violence, addiction, humiliation, or emotional neglect. The tragedy is not that people build armor. The tragedy is that many eventually become trapped inside of it. Over time, the very thing that once helped a person survive can slowly prevent them from truly living, connecting, trusting, grieving, or being known. Many people become so identified with their survival strategies that

they no longer know who they are underneath them, and armor, while protective, becomes incredibly heavy to carry over time.

That is part of what makes Rage XXX's story so compelling to me. This is not simply a story about addiction, nor is it merely a story about trauma. It is certainly not a polished redemption narrative crafted to impress people or create some marketable image of transformation. At its core, this is the story of a man becoming increasingly willing to remove the armor, and that is far more difficult than most people realize.

The Hidden Pain Beneath Strength

One of the great mistakes people make is assuming that wounded people are weak people. Often the opposite is true. Many wounded people become extraordinarily capable, highly adaptive, hypervigilant, productive, and fiercely independent. They learn very early in life that vulnerability is dangerous and that survival depends on strength, control, emotional suppression, intimidation, or relentless self-protection.

For some, the armor becomes aggression. For others, addiction. For others, perfectionism, emotional withdrawal, compulsive achievement, sexuality, anger, or relentless control. But underneath almost all armor is pain, and underneath pain is usually longing. The longing to finally be known, safe, accepted, and loved without needing to constantly perform or protect yourself.

That is the deeper human story beneath many addictions. Addiction is often not simply about pleasure seeking. More commonly, it is an attempt to regulate unbearable internal pain, shame, fear, loneliness, or emotional fragmentation. People are often trying to numb wounds they do not know how to carry.

As I came to know Rage XXX, I saw something that mattered deeply to me. Beneath all the toughness, survival instincts, intensity, and strength was a man who genuinely wanted truth. A man who wanted healing. A man who was becoming increasingly willing to confront himself honestly rather than endlessly hide behind old defenses. That takes enormous courage, far more courage than most people understand.

The Painful Work of Becoming Honest

It is easy to maintain an image. It is much harder to dismantle one.

Real healing requires honesty at levels that can feel terrifying, especially for men who learned early in life that weakness could cost them everything. And that is one of the things I respect most about Rage XXX. He did not merely talk about change. He entered the painful process of becoming different.

That process is not glamorous. Real healing is not motivational speaking. It is not social media inspiration. It is not polished spirituality or emotionally dramatic declarations that disappear the moment life becomes difficult again. Real healing is quieter than that, slower than that, and far more painful than people often realize.

The Man Behind the Armor
-Jeffrey E. Hansen, Ph.D.

Real healing requires grieving. It requires confession. It requires surrender. It requires allowing safe people to see parts of yourself you spent years trying to hide, and that is terrifying for many men, particularly strong men who built identities around appearing unshakable.

Yet slowly, over time, I watched Rage XXX begin lowering the armor. Not perfectly. Not all at once. But genuinely. And when that happens, something beautiful begins to emerge. Not weakness, not fragility, not passivity, but humanity. The real man beneath the survival strategies slowly comes into view, often for the very first time. The person hidden underneath years of adaptation, performance, fear, and self-protection begins to emerge, and that is where authentic healing actually begins.

The Power of Safe Presence

I also want to say something important about Teddy, because healing rarely happens in isolation. Human beings heal relationally. We are wounded relationally, and very often we are restored relationally as well.

One of the things that deeply moved me while observing Rage XXX's journey was witnessing the importance of safe presence in his life. The kind of presence that does not merely tolerate honesty but invites it. The kind of presence that creates enough emotional safety for another human being to slowly unclench. That matters far more than most people realize.

Many men live profoundly alone emotionally, even while surrounded by people. They carry unbearable stories silently because they fear shame, rejection, humiliation, or abandonment if they are ever fully known. So they perform strength while quietly bleeding internally.

But healing accelerates when another human being can sit beside you without condemnation while still calling you toward truth. Relationships like that become sacred ground, and I believe every truly transformed life has people like that somewhere in the story.

Books, Podcast, and Service Beyond Himself

One of the things that makes Rage XXX so compelling to me is that his life did not stop at survival. Many people emerge from pain merely trying to protect themselves from being hurt again. They spend the rest of their lives building thicker walls, becoming more guarded, more emotionally armored, and more disconnected from vulnerability and from other people. But over time, Rage began turning outward instead of inward. He began using his story, his voice, and his platform in service to other people who were still struggling in the dark places he knew so well himself.

That is where his books and podcast matter.

What I appreciate is that his work does not come across as polished performance or manufactured inspiration. There is a raw honesty to it that people can feel almost immediately. The words do not sound rehearsed or market tested. They sound earned. They came through suffering, reflection, mistakes, rebuilding, and the long painful process of becoming increasingly honest with himself. That gives his voice credibility. People today are starving for authenticity in a world full of branding, posing,

The Man Behind the Armor
-Jeffrey E. Hansen, Ph.D.

image management, and carefully curated personas. When someone speaks from scars rather than slogans, people recognize the difference immediately.

His podcast reflects that same spirit. Beneath the toughness and intensity is a man genuinely trying to reach people, challenge people, encourage people, and call men upward into something better. Not perfection. Not fake masculinity. Not performative swagger. Real growth. Real accountability. Real healing. Real courage.

And I think that is why people respond to him.

Because beneath the tattoos, strength, and armor is someone who has actually walked through fire and survived it. Someone who understands suffering firsthand. Someone who knows what it means to battle inner darkness and still choose not to surrender to it completely. That kind of voice carries weight.

What also stands out to me is his desire to serve others. Service changes a man. Truly wounded people often become profoundly compassionate when they allow their suffering to soften them rather than harden them. Over time, I have watched Rage XXX increasingly channel his experiences into helping others feel less alone. Whether through conversation, mentoring, his platform, his books, or simply showing up honestly, there is a growing desire in him to use his life redemptively.

And honestly, I believe that may become one of the most important chapters of his story.

Not merely surviving pain, but transforming pain into purpose.

That, to me, is where redemption becomes real.

Rethinking What Strength Really Means

I think that is one of the reasons Rage XXX's story resonates with people. It challenges our culture's distorted understanding of strength. Our culture often defines strength as dominance, emotional suppression, intimidation, status, aggression, or invulnerability. But I have increasingly come to believe that real strength looks very different.

Real strength is honesty. Real strength is accountability. Real strength is the willingness to face your own darkness without surrendering to it. Real strength is remaining openhearted after life gave you every reason to close down emotionally. And perhaps most of all, real strength is becoming the kind of man who no longer needs armor in order to feel valuable.

That is extraordinarily rare.

Becoming the Change

What moves me most about Rage XXX's journey is that this story is not ultimately about who he once was. It is about who he is becoming, and becoming is sacred work.

The Man Behind the Armor
-Jeffrey E. Hansen, Ph.D.

None of us arrive fully healed. None of us suddenly transcend our wounds overnight. Growth is usually uneven, painful, humbling, and nonlinear. There are setbacks, moments of exhaustion, failures, fears, and seasons where old patterns try to reclaim territory. But there is also redemption. There is transformation. There is the possibility that a wounded man can become a healing man.

And when that happens, his pain no longer remains meaningless. It becomes integrated, redeemed, and repurposed into wisdom, empathy, honesty, compassion, and service toward others still trapped in darkness.

That is what I see in Rage XXX. Not perfection. Not performance. Not manufactured spirituality. But authenticity, growth, humility, and courage.

The courage to become the change.