



A Different Spirit

I've known Tad now for about three years, and from the very beginning there was something unmistakably different about him.

Tad is one of those rare human beings that, when you meet him, you instantly know he carries something deeper than personality alone. You know he has a special spirit. You know there is integrity in him. You know there is humility in him. You know there is goodness in him. And honestly, the best way I know how to describe it is that he seems to have some kind of high-speed fiber optic cable to Jesus.

You know immediately that he is honest. You know he is sacrificial. You know he would step into the fire for his brother if needed. There is no posturing to him. No artificiality. No self-inflated performance. Just sincerity.

When I first met Tad, I was the Clinical Director at Holdfast, and Tad was actually one of our clients. Even then, there was instant like. Instant trust. Instant recognition that beneath the pain was an extraordinarily beautiful soul. You could see almost immediately that this was not a man lacking character. This was a man who had been wounded deeply and was trying to find his footing again.

The Quiet Nature of Trauma

Yes, Tad had experienced trauma, though not necessarily the kind most people think about when they hear that word.

People tend to think of explosions, assaults, severe abuse, combat, catastrophic accidents, or shocking events. What we call Big T trauma. Shock trauma. But trauma is more nuanced than that.

Sometimes the deepest wounds are quieter. Sometimes they are woven slowly into the architecture of a child's nervous system over years. Sometimes they settle invisibly into the very essence of identity itself. Sometimes the injury is not violence, but the gradual accumulation of negative core beliefs that slowly wire themselves into the default mode network of the brain.

And honestly, those wounds can run extraordinarily deep.

Such was Tad's struggle.

The Burden of Never Quite Measuring Up

Not to disrespect his parents whatsoever. In fact, quite the opposite. Tad deeply loves his parents, and from everything I know, they genuinely loved him too. Most parents really are doing the best they can with the tools they themselves inherited.

But we also have to be willing to name reality honestly and compassionately.

Tad's mother is Korean, and within many Asian cultures there exists an extraordinary emphasis on achievement, perseverance, discipline, advancement, and excelling. To be clear, there is much in that to admire. The work ethic, resilience, sacrifice, and perseverance found in many Asian families are genuinely beautiful qualities.

But every culture has both blessings and liabilities.

And one of the liabilities that can emerge in highly achievement-oriented environments is the subtle wiring of a child to believe that they are only valuable when they perform well, that love and approval become unconsciously linked to achievement.

For Tad, somewhere deep inside, despite all the love around him, that negative core belief slowly took root: that he was never quite enough. Never enough to fully make Mama happy. Over time, those beliefs become exhausting. They create a chronic unsettledness within the nervous system itself.

Pain Looking for Relief

His father, a genuinely peaceful and gentle man, tended more toward appeasement than confrontation. So, Tad inherited from his father a beautiful softness, a calm temperament, and a deeply non combative spirit. But he also inherited that lingering internal belief that somehow, he perpetually fell short.

And pain almost always looks for relief.

For Tad, substances became that relief. Alcohol. Marijuana. The temporary numbing of a nervous system that had spent years quietly believing it had to earn worthiness.

That is important for people to understand about addiction. So often addiction is not fundamentally about pleasure seeking. It is about pain management. It is about regulation. It is about trying to quiet something internally that never fully learned how to settle.

Healing Honestly

But here is the beautiful part.

Tad loved God. And perhaps even more importantly, he kept leaning toward God even while struggling.

He worked therapy honestly. He worked recovery honestly. He worked community honestly. He did the hard internal excavation that so many people spend their entire lives avoiding. He faced himself honestly. He faced his pain honestly. And slowly, beautifully, he healed.

Not perfectly, of course. None of us heal perfectly. In one sense, we are all always in recovery. We are all unfinished people leaning toward grace.

But Tad today is stable. Grounded. Regulated. Deeply trustworthy. I would trust this man with my wellbeing. I would trust him with my business. I would trust him with my life. And I do not say those things casually.

The Ministry of Presence

After completing treatment at Holdfast, Tad eventually became an employee there himself. He became a BHT, and not just any BHT. He became one of the most admired and respected BHTs in the entire organization because he embodied something you simply cannot fake: peace.

People felt safer around him. He carried calm into rooms. He brought regulation into chaos. He had this remarkable ability to sit with hurting people without needing to dominate them, fix them, preach at them, or perform for them.

And perhaps most beautifully, Tad quietly became a minister of encouragement. Every single day he reaches out to literally hundreds of people, often more than two hundred a day, sending encouragement, Scripture, hope, support, and reminders that people matter and are not forgotten.

He does it with me too.

And the remarkable thing is that it never feels performative. Never artificial. Never self-righteous. It simply flows naturally out of who he is. That is rare. Very rare.

In a culture increasingly addicted to noise, ego, outrage, image management, and self-promotion, genuinely peaceful human beings stand out almost immediately.

The Mission Beyond Profit

When I began envisioning the NeuroFaith® Certification Program, Tad immediately rose to the top of my list. Not because he was flashy. Not because he was loud. Not because he needed attention. But because he embodies the very thing NeuroFaith® is trying to cultivate: a regulated, grounded, compassionate nervous system connected deeply to God and capable of helping other human beings feel safe enough to heal.

And now, in a manner of speaking, I find myself partnering with Tad as we continue building out the NeuroFaith® vision.

But Tad's vision extends beyond certifications, teachings, or programs. He is in the process of helping launch a nonprofit specifically focused on people in that fragile, often neglected season after discharge from residential treatment or intensive outpatient care, that period where people leave the structure and safety of treatment and suddenly find themselves trying to survive in the real world again.

It is one of the greatest blind spots in addiction and trauma treatment today, and sadly, one of the deadliest.

The larger organizations often overlook this population because there simply is not much profit in it. Residential treatment gets reimbursed. Intensive programming gets reimbursed. But the long, slow, relational work of walking beside hurting people after discharge often does not.

And as a result, many fine men and women fall through the cracks.

We have both seen it happen. We have watched people die too early because of poor treatment planning, inadequate continuity of care, and systems more focused on throughput than sustained healing. Friends we personally knew. Friends we genuinely cared about. Gone too soon.

And Tad sees that gap. He sees that pain. And instead of walking away from it, he moves toward it.

A More Eternal Perspective

Not because he is going to make a fortune. He won't. And not because it will make him famous. It won't. He moves toward it because the reward, for him, is something far more meaningful.

Saving lives. Saving souls. Helping restore dignity. Helping bring people to Christ.

And I will support him in that endeavor wholeheartedly, even as he considers weaving the NeuroFaith® model into that mission. Not because I am trying to create profit for myself, but because Tad is exactly the kind of man I want to stand beside and support.

Truthfully, he has influenced me more than he probably realizes. He has helped remind me of the bigger picture. He reminds me that this life ultimately is not about building some giant name for ourselves. It is not about massive bank accounts. It is not about prestige. It is not about platforms.

It is about outcomes that are less perishable and more eternal. Redeemed lives. Redeemed souls. And hopefully, by the grace of God, moral residents in Heaven.

That is the kind of thing Tad quietly points people toward.

And brother, thank you.

Thank you for standing up. Thank you for inspiring me. Thank you for stepping courageously into this noble work.

You took your pain, faced it honestly, resolved it courageously, and then channeled it into service for other human beings. That is an extraordinary thing.

You are an amazing man. Twenty years younger than me, yet in some ways, twenty years ahead of me.

Love you, brother.