



# FREEDOM CAMP 2021

---

---

IMPACT REPORT

MAY 2021



# CONTENTS

---

ABOUT METTLE GLOBAL	2
PARTNERING WITH THE MANNKAL FOUNDATION	3
ABOUT FREEDOM CAMP	4
TESTIMONIALS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	26





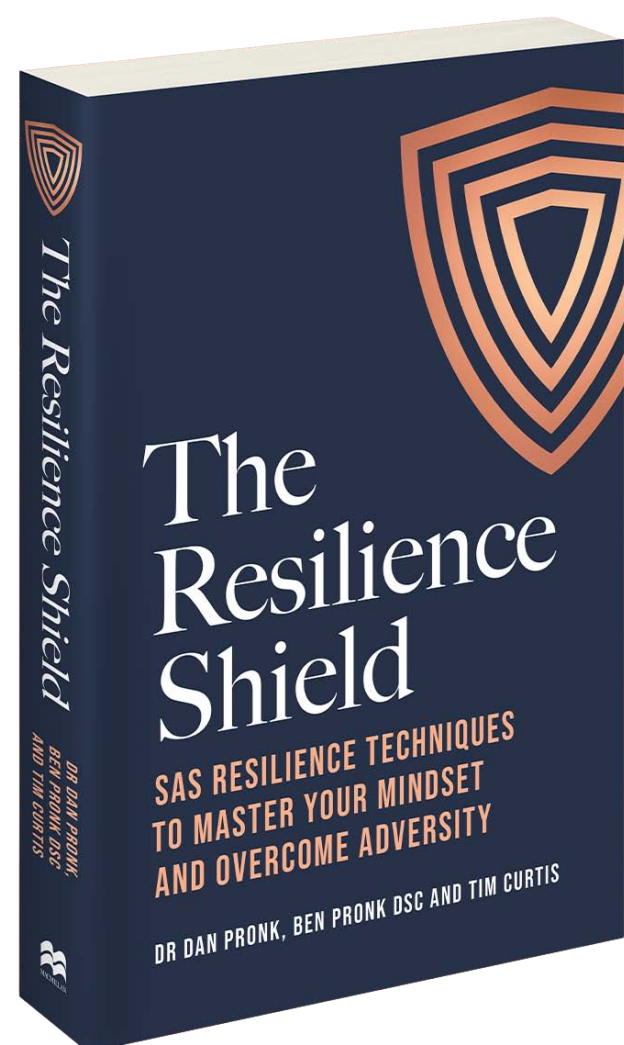
# ABOUT METTLE GLOBAL

Since 2001, the Mettle Global group has worked with over 30% of ASX200 companies, 15 of the ASX50 and numerous Fortune 500 companies. The Mettle team work across 30 countries annually, spanning the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Australasia.

Mettle's multi-disciplinary team has decades of experience. Experts offer independent, impartial, and dependable advice and support to clients.

Mettle partners and associates are highly respected, have exceptional pedigrees and are adept at identifying, reducing, and managing risk and improving organisational resilience. The Mettle team have successfully led diverse groups through missions in the world's most volatile, complex and austere operation environments.

Clients trust Mettle to deliver proven and practical solutions to uncommon problems.



## THE RESILIENCE SHIELD

There is no doubt that our current environment demands resilience. But what exactly is it, and how can we improve it - at both an individual and collective level?

Mettle's proprietary Resilience Shield was developed by Dr Dan Pronk, Ben Pronk and Tim Curtis, all of whom are SAS veterans with combat experience in theatres including Afghanistan, Iraq and Timor Leste.

The model was developed after the authors witnessed first-hand the markedly different reactions that ostensibly similar individuals had to stressful events. This includes the gruelling SAS selection course as well as the incredible demands of leading high-performance teams in military operations and life and death situations with national strategic implications. This experience drove a deep desire to understand exactly what resilience was and, crucially, how it could be developed and improved in individuals and organisations.

Through research conducted over a period in excess of ten years, the authors sought to identify the constituent elements of stress and resilience and develop a model that was dynamic, multi-factorial and modifiable. The result was the Resilience Shield, a highly applied model of resilience that identifies the key constituent characteristics of this mercurial quality and provides a framework for the development of a Resilience Action Plan.

Since its development, Mettle have delivered programs based on the Resilience Shield to organisations as diverse as elite policing units, academic organisations and tax professionals. While the concept might have originated within a military context, we are firmly of the belief that resilience requirements vary only by degree and our successful implementation of the Resilience Shield across a wide range of sectors has reinforced this.



# PARTNERING WITH THE MANNKAL ECONOMIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*The Mannkal Economic Education Foundation is a private, not-for-profit organisation established in 1997 by Ron Manners AO.*

Mannkal promote free enterprise, limited government and individual initiative for the benefit of all Australians.

Mannkal's core activity is the Leadership Development Program (LDP), a world-renowned professional development and enrichment program for Western Australian university students.

Mannkal scholars come from various fields of study from Murdoch, Curtin, Notre Dame and the University of Western Australia. Each year, Mannkal supports high performing scholars to participate in leadership training, seminars in the Mannkal Subiaco office, domestic conferences as well as a study tour.

Through involvement in the LDP, students gain an understanding of libertarian philosophy and develop the entrepreneurial and leadership skills needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Since 1997, over 2,500 Western Australian students have benefited from their Mannkal experience. Members of Mannkals expanding Alumni network have built successful careers, both in the private and public sectors and are now entering decision-making leadership roles.





## OVERVIEW

When reflecting on liberal philosophy and free market ideas, it is easy to speculate on an abstract response to a hypothetical threat or crisis. Hindsight and distance allow individuals to be brave and not realise the full extent of the difficulty of the situation or the other forces at play. Prior to March 2020, very few people considered how they would react to a pandemic and even fewer would game out an extreme scenario that would deal with extreme trade-offs and difficult calculations.

Over the course of human history, the impulse to freedom has resulted in humanity achieving huge strides forward in developing and implementing systems and institutions designed to protect human rights and dignity including our parliamentary systems and the rule of law. However, these systems and institutions cannot prevent threats and upheavals. They merely provide a framework within which we can work to combat them.

As a scholar and then as professionals working in the 2020s, you will likely experience a crisis or emergency. During your lifetime it is quite possible that there will be a period of major upheaval, disturbance or international conflict. This could take the form of an event in the South China Sea, a boycott of Australian iron ore, the collapse of Papua New Guinea, an economic depression, or an unanticipated Black Swan event. Each would have a different impact on Western Australians, but they would all require a response involving difficult decisions and trade-offs.

The worst approach is to assume good times will continue and that the end of the Covid Pandemic will bring about a return to so-called “normal”. The period of 2000-2020 was remarkable in that it was relatively peaceful and prosperous. Those coming of age between 2020-2040 may look back with envy for those who grew up during this “golden age” of the early 2000s. Regardless of the expectations of a crisis, it is helpful to consider how you would respond.

Mannkal's Founder and Chairman Ron Manners has written about the importance of educating yourself and building a personal philosophy that you can apply it consistently to your personal life, your business life, your political life, and your family life. When dealing with a major crisis, your personal philosophy will stand you in good stead, and help to guide any difficult decisions you may face. Threats, crises, and emergencies test your adherence to your personal philosophy and reveal your underlying values.

At Freedom Camp Mannkal speakers ran a series of simulations and exercises relevant to Western Australia. This gave scholars the opportunity to apply insights from great liberal thinkers and facilitate the formation of your own personal philosophy. Through experiential learning you will gain a greater understanding of your own leadership styles, your realistic level of resilience and your ability to lead in high pressure environments.

### ANDREW PICKFORD

MAY 2021







# TESTIMONIALS

---

*"I avidly awaited the Freedom Camp for a couple of weeks in the lead-up. I knew Mettle Global's background and anticipated a form of military-style physical exercise drills, reduced sleeping cycles and slight discomfort. Today, leadership, resilience and admirable character traits are common topics in classroom settings, offices and sports grounds. However, discussing theoretical concepts, virtuous and selfless resolutions to hypothetical scenarios is only one aspect of leadership development. Putting the theory, one's character and resilience to practice is the far more integral component. Mannkal, in collaboration with Mettle Global, perfected this balance. With the removal of everyday comforts such as a bed and mobile phone, slight sleep deprivation and meticulously planned, safe, but stress-inducing situations, we were able to put the learned leadership concepts and our individual resilience to the test. The live, direct and constructive feedback from highly experienced ex-military special forces officers provided ample ground for ongoing reflection and individual improvement. The vastly different nature of the challenges throughout the three-day program taught me many lessons about the importance of planning, clear communication, having a plan B and teamwork. And ultimately, accepting that there seldom is a perfect solution to a complex problem, but rather, the outcome depends on the ability to adapt to evolving situations." Yannik Simkovics, 2020*

---



*"Going into this program I had no idea what to expect. Looking back, I feel like it has made me more resilient and a better leader. A big factor that contributed to this was how the Mettle staff took us out of our comfort zone. Taking the comforts of life away and putting us through physically and mentally difficult challenges was a proper test of my resilience. There was the temptation to throw in the towel at times. Not only did I learn that I can deal with a lot more stress than I'm used to, I also developed a stronger friendship with my colleagues."*

*The camp has given me a greater understanding of leadership theory while providing many opportunities to put this knowledge into practice. Over the course of the camp I received invaluable experience, knowledge and feedback from Mettle Global staff and this is something I will take with me on my future career path. I have nothing but praise for the program and the staff that organised it. I highly recommend it to anyone who is given the chance to take part in this program."* Luke Shipman, 2021









# 1 AUTHENTICITY

"Having experienced the Freedom Camp organised by Mettle Global, I was able to develop my resilience, which strengthened my ability to tackle challenges, especially in the workplace. I also had the opportunity to enhance my leadership abilities - a valuable aspect to any workplace. For me, the most powerful lesson I learned was that authenticity is the most important part of being a leader." Mark Ajero, 2021

# 3 MENTAL AND PHYSICAL RESILIENCE

"The program enabled me to understand that the human body and mind are capable of doing amazing things. The program allowed me to develop invaluable leadership skills and prove to myself the level of resilience I am capable of, both personally and professionally." Stephanie Tory, 2021

# 2 GROWTH AND OPTIMISATION

"The program gave me the skills to focus on my strengths, speak up and take charge in chaotic and uncomfortable situations. I have grown towards my optimum self." Wesley Dupreez, 2021

# 4 BALANCE AND A GROWTH MINDSET

"I learnt my resilience is a lot higher than I thought and despite sleep and food deprivation, I can still maintain a positive outlook. Two of my biggest takeaways were the importance of balance for resilience and to maintain a growth mindset, which means that every activity I do, I will attempt to learn something." Nathan Cuthbertson, 2021



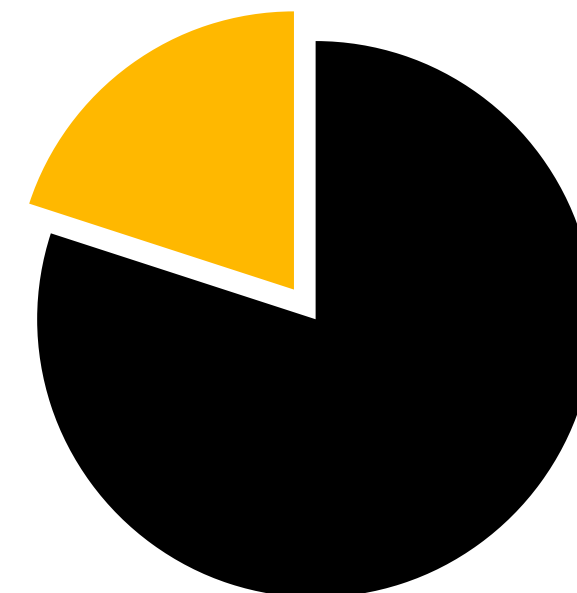




# THANK YOU MANNKAL ECONOMIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*"Sadly, experiences that are truly challenging and unexpected have become rare in most of our lives. Mannkal has proven, yet again, the ability to expose its scholars to some much needed testing situations and highlighted that leadership and growth come from these types of situations. Having being involved with Mannkal for over 2 years, I believe this weekend was the most valuable experience to date. Thank you to Mettle Global and Mannkal for an unforgettable weekend. I'm extremely grateful to have had this opportunity." Chris Gallen, 2021*

44 PARTICIPANTS



37 NEW MANNKAL  
SCHOLARS

7 MANNKAL ALUMNI  
[2020 SCHOLARS]

17+ DISCIPLINES



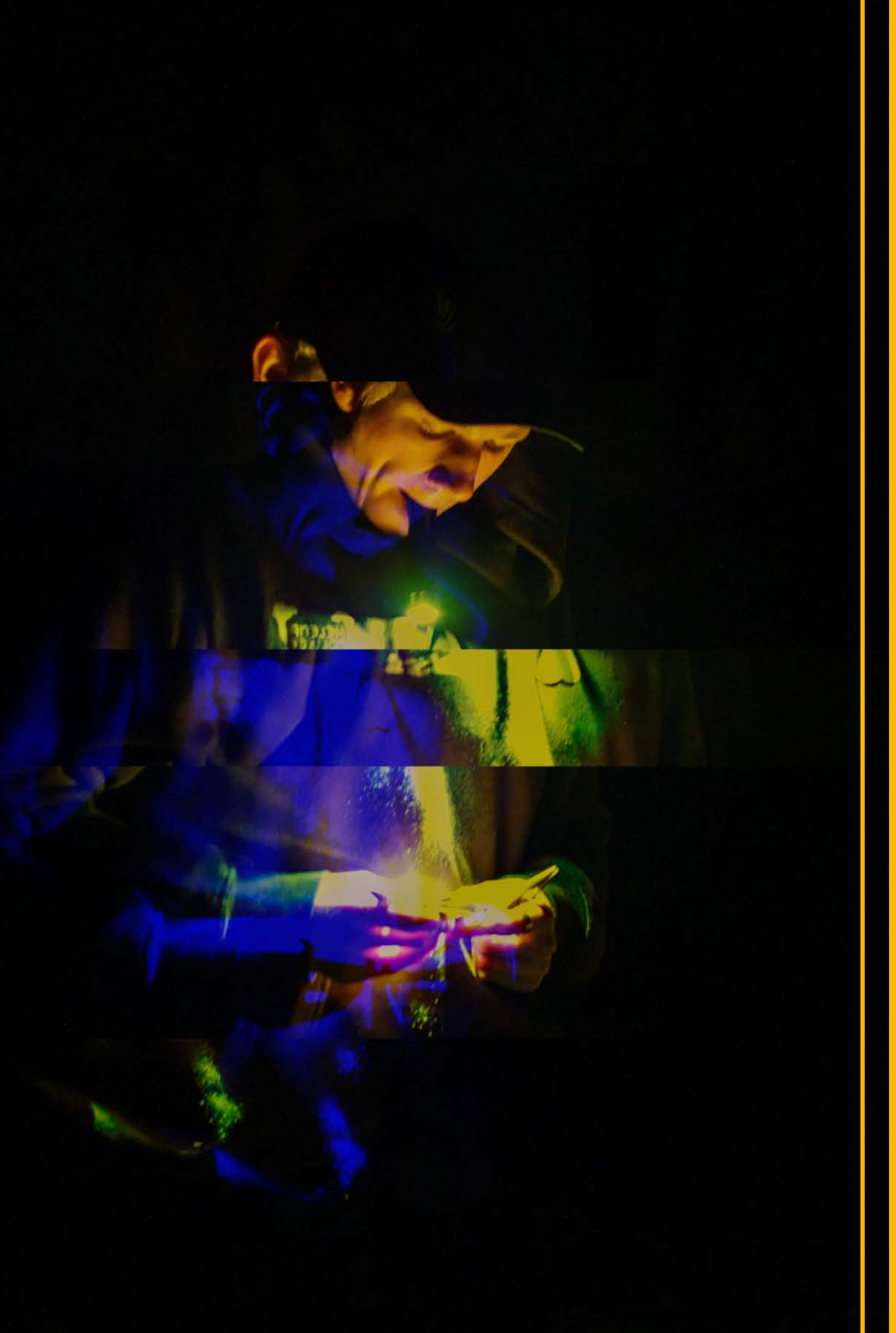
ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE  
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE  
COMMERCE  
DATA SCIENCE  
ECONOMICS  
ENGINEERING  
ENGLISH AND CULTURAL  
STUDIES  
GLOBAL SECURITY  
INDONESIAN

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS  
JOURNALISM  
LAW  
MARKETING  
MEDICINE  
PHILOSOPHY  
PSYCHOLOGY  
WRITING AND  
PUBLISHING

4 WA UNIVERSITIES







# 5

## EMPOWERING OTHERS

"The camp taught me how to lead a team in a group of people who do not need a manager, but rather a guide to provide structure to the team. Previously, leadership opportunities that I had participated in did not apply this ability. It was extremely useful to learn how to manage autonomous individuals." Colby Spatcher, 2021

# 6

## GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

"The Freedom Camp was an event that challenged me both physically and mentally. The ability to gain feedback from the experienced Mettle Global staff was integral in developing a greater understanding of key concepts such as resilience and leadership but most importantly, myself. I enjoyed how the camp balanced both mental and physical challenges in order to test our limits." Nick Basan, 2021



# 7

## THE CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP

"I'm fortunate to be a confident person who is not easily fazed by most things on a day-to-day basis, however **this experience was unlike any other** and was truly a shock to the system. It brought me outside my comfort zone to experience new challenges. The activities were well designed to be testing and the debriefs and post activity coaching was excellent. This was an invaluable weekend, unlike anything I've experienced before, and a good reminder to seek discomfort and challenge as that is where you will experience growth." Chris Gallen, 2021



# 8

## MANAGING STRESS

"The program pushed me to work to the best of my abilities and taught me how to think in stressful situations. The skills learnt from the program has undoubtedly added value to my personal and professional life. I truly feel that it was an experience of a lifetime." Hannah Fahmy, 2021









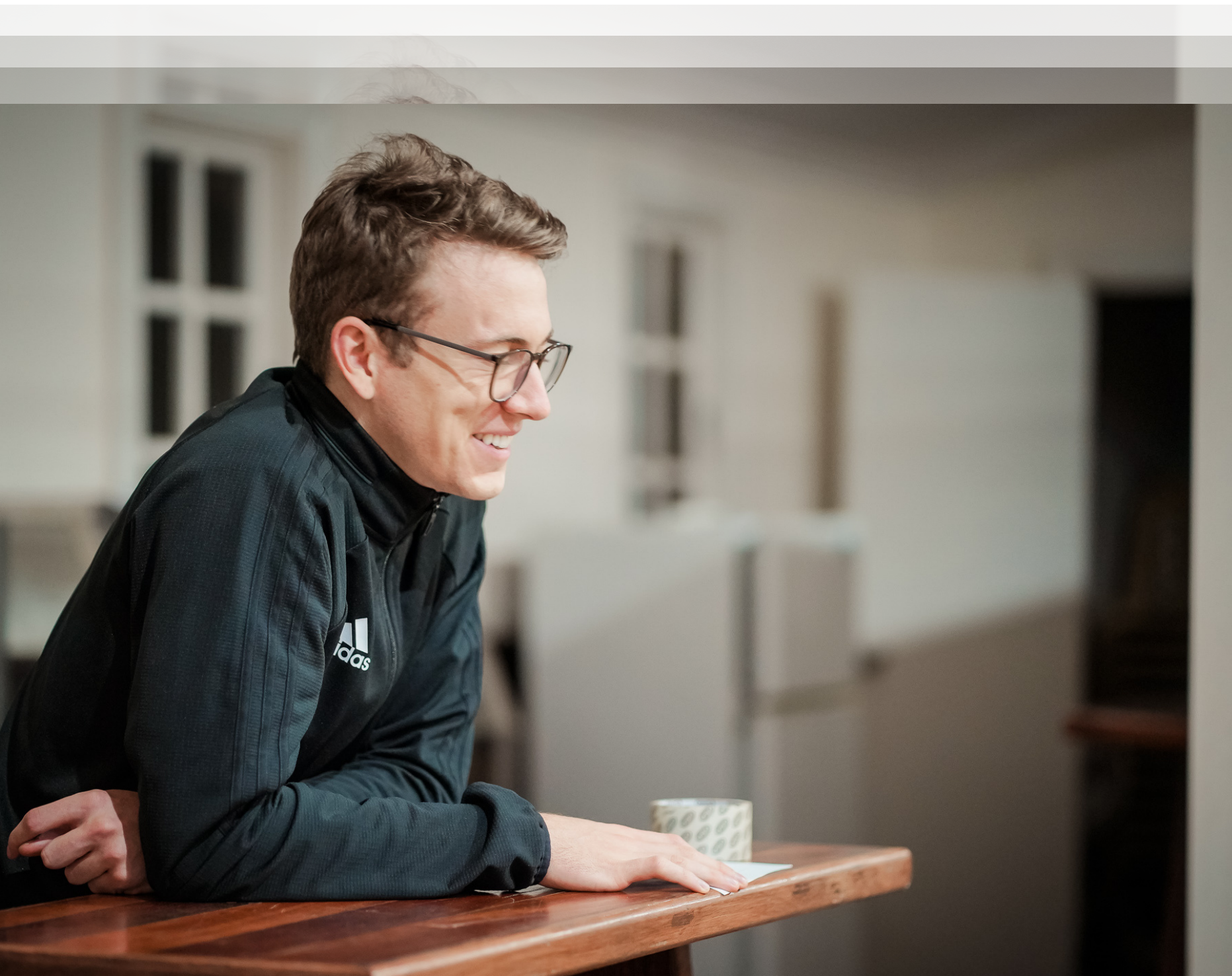




## 9 PERSPECTIVE

"This program taught me a lot about perspective and how I operate under pressure. The experience allowed me to practice my leadership abilities in stressful environments and will undoubtedly be invaluable to my personal and professional development." James Sier, 2021

---



## 10 RESILIENCE AND LEADERSHIP

"The program developed my understanding of resilience and leadership and I can now implement practical steps to becoming an overall more resilient leader in my community. I enjoyed the challenges of the camp and received great feedback to continue developing my leadership skills." Pia Piggott, 2021



A black and white photograph of a person with a headlamp, climbing a rope. The person is wearing a dark shirt and shorts, and is looking upwards. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the image.

## THANK YOU METTLE GLOBAL

"I am grateful for the opportunity to go on the Freedom Camp. Over the last 2 years, I have been focused on self-development and improvement, and this camp was the perfect opportunity to do this further. The camp opened me up to new opportunities that I would likely not have otherwise experienced and put me in scenarios to lead a team in circumstances that are ambiguous. I was able to lead a team whilst being observed by effective leaders, and to find ways to improve on my current leadership style. I learned about the importance of flexibility of leadership styles and where it is appropriate to adopt a supportive or a direct approach. My resilience and dedication was tested, enabling me to show to myself and others how resilient I am. I had an interview the day after the camp finished and was able to draw on experiences from this camp in the interview. I hope to have more experiences like this to develop my skills and achieve things better than I expected." Ryan Edwards, 2021

---

"The weekend was fantastic. I was extremely impressed how Mettle Global and Mannkal managed to accommodate and cater for such a wide range of abilities and resilience levels. Regardless of each individual's respective development stage, everyone had the chance to learn, fail and improve something over the three days. It also allowed us as a group to get to know each other better and trust one another. The calibre of instructors and the organisation of the entire weekend was outstanding! The weekend was an exceptional 'leadership in application' exercise." Yannik Simkovics, 2021











# 11 GROWTH

"The program helped to push participants to their limits in high-stress environments and ultimately grow leadership capabilities."

Luca Proietti Formaggio, 2021

# 12 TEAMWORK

"The program has taught me valuable lessons about effective leadership, as well as strategies on how to improve my resilience. It has shown me just how much I am capable of in stressful and pressured environments. The experience has built upon my leadership, teamwork and confidence by placing me in situations where teamwork is crucial for a successful outcome, whilst creating a supportive environment where all discussion and opinions are welcomed." Lana Pavlovic, 2021











---

*"For me, the seminars on the Resilience Shield and leadership were the most valuable educational aspects of the camp: they taught me not only how to think about resilience in terms of mind, body, social, and professional layers, but also how to improve it through meditation, sleep, friends, etc. The physical activities of the camp, on the other hand, helped me relearn three important lessons:*

- (1) things are (almost) never as bad as we imagine them to be;*
- (2) the rewards of going outside your comfort zone are (likely) well worth the risks; and*
- (3) you are (probably) more capable of enduring hardship than you realise.*

*These ideas have helped me in both my personal and professional life by reorienting how I understand and overcome challenges in the world."*  
*Lloyd Hotinski, 2021*

---





## VOLATILITY - UNCERTAINTY - COMPLEXITY - AMBIGUITY [VUCA]

"Freedom Camp, run by Mettle Global, was a truly unique opportunity. With a focus on resilience and leadership, the weekend proved to be a concentrated opportunity for development and reflection.

Not only did the staff from Mettle Global share tools and practical examples of how to pursue self-development in areas such as communication, planning, leadership, teamwork, and execution of a task, they put each scholar to the test.

With designated Mettle Global leaders and meticulously planned tasks, each team of scholars was challenged to work through uncertainty, discomfort, and mental and physical stress. Sleep and food deprivation, limited resources and ambiguous activities were components of the challenges which created an environment where the group's teamwork and resilience was tested. My observation is that this weekend led to strengthening of bonds within the cohort and opportunity to learn and support each other as a team in unique circumstances. I enjoyed the process of learning from and working through complex problems, utilising a plan and exercising flexibility and foresight to ensure successful outcomes. Alongside this, I will never forget the utility of always being prepared!" Genevieve Glenister, 2021



# 13

## SELF-AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION

"The program has been nothing but beneficial for me and I can't thank Mettle Global and Mannkal enough for providing us with this opportunity. Within days of attending the camp, I've seen notable improvements in how I am communicating my ideas, strengths and weaknesses to colleagues, peers, family and friends, which will only lead to more meaningful and productive relationships. I can't wait to see how I take the skills I learned and put them into practice in my personal, professional and educational life." Abbey Campbell, 2021



# 14

## NOT JUST THEORY

"I've been to a number of leadership events in the last few years, however this one was different. It's one thing to learn about leadership styles and teamwork in a class setting and another to be forced to apply these principles to challenging circumstances in real-time. The camp provided a great opportunity to mix theory with experience and I feel extremely lucky to have been given the chance to be a part of it." Keelan Thompson, 2021








ON FRIDAY MAY 14, WE ENJOYED A FORMAL DINNER HOSTED BY TIM CURTIS, WITH SPEECHES FROM METTLE STAFF RYAN, GARETH AND BEN. THE EXTRACTS FROM THEIR SPEECHES ARE INCLUDED BELOW - EACH A POWERFUL MESSAGE ON LEADERSHIP AND FREEDOM.







Thank you to the Mannkal Economic Education Foundation, for trusting us to deliver something that Mettle Global is passionate about. Thank you for working with us to organise an awesome weekend full of theory and practical applications that will hopefully serve you all for years to come.

Let's talk about Trust.

*"A serious problem in planning against American doctrine is that Americans do not read their manuals, nor do they feel any obligation to follow their doctrine." - Soviet observation during the Cold War*

Let's analyse this statement: Why are Americans so successful in combat operations if we don't read our doctrine? Are we lazy? Are we ignorant? That's a rhetorical question. Please don't answer. We do read our manuals. We do follow our doctrine. But, Commanders emphasise something more important. They emphasise Commander's Intent. In other words, the "why" rather than the "how".

The doctrine and manuals only provide a general guide for the recommended method under certain circumstances. They don't account for every circumstance you may face. They don't account for all of the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity you could face. There is no way they ever could.

When employees know the 'why' they will surprise you with their ingenuity and their version of the 'how'. But, in order for leaders to give that much responsibility to someone it takes an enormous amount of trust. Trust is much more than: Can Ryan keep a secret? Trust is: Will Ryan do the right thing when no one is looking? Trust is: Will Ryan represent our organisation in a positive way? Trust is: Will Ryan contribute to the benefit of our employees and clients? Trust is: Will Ryan fail forward? Will he have noble intent, even if he makes the wrong decision? Trust is: Ryan's got my back and provides security when I fail forward. Trust is one of the most powerful tools you can use as leaders. Trust gives you flexibility.

**Trust empowers your employees or teammates. Trust builds depth and confidence. Trust is easy to give but nearly impossible to regain once lost.** As leaders, it's important that you establish a culture which promotes dignity and respect for everyone. As leaders, there is no time to be a spectator. You move out always using your organisational vision and moral compass guiding your way. As leaders, the culture belongs to you. It's yours to build and yours to destroy. Culture starts with trust. A culture that truly trusts each other is called a team. Teams who feel trusted outperform those that don't.

Mannkal has taught you to appreciate:

- the role of property rights
- common law
- free markets and limited government in fostering economic growth and human dignity

This weekend Mettle Global and Mannkal will teach you about yourself. What are your strengths? What are your weakness? We will test the theory you've learned. We will test your leadership abilities in VUCA environments. By design, we will apply stress at different times and locations, making you uncomfortable. We will force you to trust each other to accomplish specific goals. Take what you learn this weekend and apply it as future leaders.

# ON TRUST

RYAN BURKE, MS, MA



I'd like to talk about a distinctly British trait when it comes to leadership, and that is the importance of character. It features as a founding motto of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst: develop character first, and leadership will follow.

Character does not imply an over-indulgence on individuality or individualism which may appear to be selfish; rather the opposite, that **character is the essence of service. If one is of good character, one can serve to lead.**

The notion of character and leadership in British society has its roots in its imperial past where a highly centralised style of leadership would not have adequately captured how the Imperial and Colonial office would exercise control or influence over a decentralised Empire. For good or bad, the UK's premier institutions were designed in order to produce the 'Empires' leaders. They did this by focussing on developing character, rather than leadership 101 skills.

To be considered 'of good character' required certain qualities. Here are four by way of example:

Judgement - the acme of critical thinking within complex situations; to be widely read; and having an ability to develop insight.

Personal courage - this is the quality needed to succeed. One must be resilient, brave and determined. Without these, one cannot lead to victory, whatever the context of leadership.

Incrementalism - possibly the most important quality. The ability to take care when handling the family jewels, no rush to revolutionary ideas, evolution over revolution. Mankal scholars will recognise this theme in the writings of John Stuart Mill and Edmund Burke.

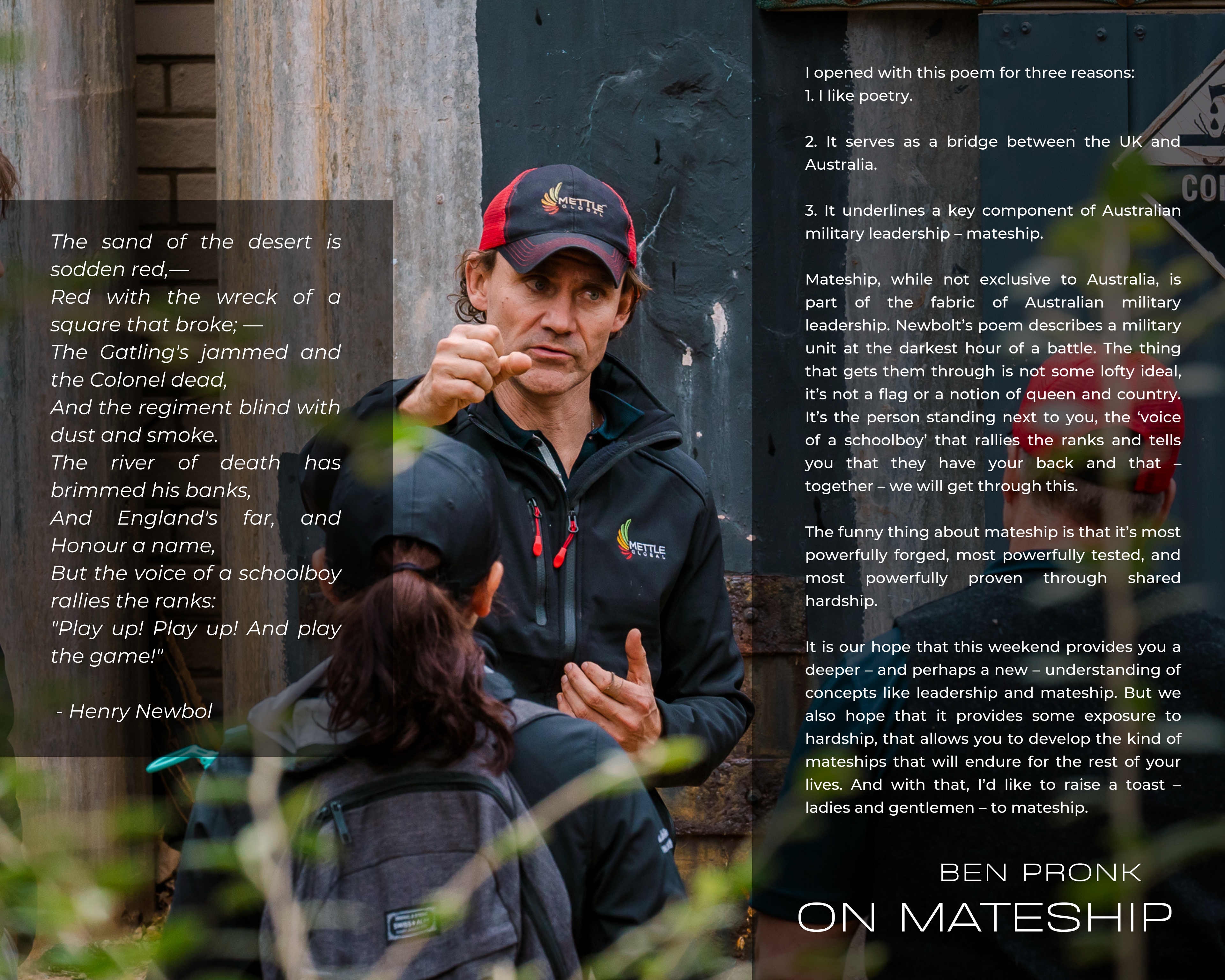
And finally, humility. **Emotional intelligence is a critical skill. It is the opposite of arrogance. Arrogance is a leader's death warrant.**

The link between character and leadership within a UK context is evident across all of its institutions. Colloquialisms such as 'being house trained' does not mean being good around the house. It means being trusted with the well-being of an organisation or institution. It places extraordinary levels of trust in individuals and relies on their character to 'do the right thing'.

In closing, I salute you for your commitment to excellence and ask that you prioritise 'being of good character' as you progress on this journey called life.







*The sand of the desert is  
sodden red,—  
Red with the wreck of a  
square that broke; —  
The Gatling's jammed and  
the Colonel dead,  
And the regiment blind with  
dust and smoke.  
The river of death has  
brimmed his banks,  
And England's far, and  
Honour a name,  
But the voice of a schoolboy  
rallies the ranks:  
"Play up! Play up! And play  
the game!"*

- Henry Newbol

I opened with this poem for three reasons:

1. I like poetry.
2. It serves as a bridge between the UK and Australia.
3. It underlines a key component of Australian military leadership – mateship.

Mateship, while not exclusive to Australia, is part of the fabric of Australian military leadership. Newbolt's poem describes a military unit at the darkest hour of a battle. The thing that gets them through is not some lofty ideal, it's not a flag or a notion of queen and country. It's the person standing next to you, the 'voice of a schoolboy' that rallies the ranks and tells you that they have your back and that – together – we will get through this.

The funny thing about mateship is that it's most powerfully forged, most powerfully tested, and most powerfully proven through shared hardship.

It is our hope that this weekend provides you a deeper – and perhaps a new – understanding of concepts like leadership and mateship. But we also hope that it provides some exposure to hardship, that allows you to develop the kind of mateships that will endure for the rest of your lives. And with that, I'd like to raise a toast – ladies and gentlemen – to mateship.

BEN PRONK  
ON MATESHIP











Thank you to the team at Mettle Global and Mannkal Foundation for working tirelessly on the project mentioned within.

Mettle Global

Tim Curtis, Ben Pronk, Ryan Burke, Andy Ennis, Josh Cook, Bob Hunter, Monika Georgieva and Gareth Hicks

Mannkal Economic Education Foundation

Jenn Hammond, Ryan Wilson, Eva Christensen, Emily Lee and Shane Herbst

Ron Manners for his generous philanthropic support to WA University students

Emily Lee and Jenn Hammond for designing and producing this report

Guest speakers Andrew Pickford, Joe Doleschal-Ridnell and Andrew Broertjes



THANK YOU TO THE MANNKAL FOUNDATION FOR  
SUPPORTING METTLE GLOBAL'S 2021 FREEDOM CAMP





**METTLE**  
GLOBAL