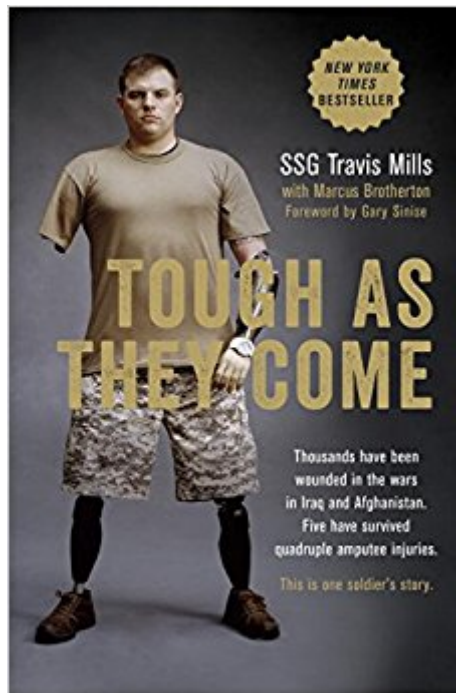




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# Tough As They Come



## Synopsis

Thousands have been wounded in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Five have survived quadruple amputee injuries. This is one soldier's story. Thousands of soldiers die every year to defend their country. United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills was sure that he would become another statistic when, during his third tour of duty in Afghanistan, he was caught in an IED blast four days before his twenty-fifth birthday. Against the odds, he lived, but at a severe cost. Travis became one of only five soldiers from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to survive a quadruple amputation. Suddenly forced to reconcile with the fact that he no longer had arms or legs, Travis was faced with a future drastically different from the one he had imagined for himself. He would never again be able to lead his squad, stroke his fingers against his wife's cheek, or pick up his infant daughter. Travis struggled through the painful and anxious days of rehabilitation so that he could regain the strength to live his life to the fullest. With enormous willpower and endurance, the unconditional love of his family, and a generous amount of faith, Travis shocked everyone with his remarkable recovery. Even without limbs, he still swims, dances with his wife, rides mountain bikes, and drives his daughter to school. Travis inspires thousands every day with his remarkable journey. He doesn't want to be thought of as wounded. "I'm just a man with scars," he says, "living life to the fullest and best I know how."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“[Mills is] thriving, not just surviving, and inspiring others to overcome their own seemingly insurmountable obstacles. A story of hope and resilience, and a reminder that no matter what life may throw at us, as Travis says, as long as we “Never Give Up, Never Quit”, we can achieve anything we set our hearts and minds to. He is quite simply a great American and an example for us all. Gary Sinise, Actor, Director, Veterans Advocate and founder of Gary Sinise Foundation “This book exemplifies the qualities that made Travis an outstanding soldier: it is gutsy and honest, filled with humor even in the darkest moments, and always driven by a love for both family and country.” Troy Aikman, NFL Hall Fame Quarterback “The problem with guys like Travis, is they make guys like me look like lazy whiners. What this man did for our country is heroic. What he sacrificed is unimaginable. And what he’s written is simply unforgettable. Read it. I promise you’ll feel better about whatever ails you.” Mike Rowe, TV host, writer, narrator, producer, and actor

Retired U.S. Army staff sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne is a recalibrated warrior, motivational speaker, and international advocate for veterans and amputees. He is one of only five servicemen from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ever to survive his injuries as a quadruple amputee. He started the Travis Mills Foundation, which benefits and assists wounded and injured veterans. [www.travismills.org](http://www.travismills.org)

Lest there be any confusion as to my own personal perspective, I was a young adult during the Vietnam War. I was never an active anti-war protester, nor did I have any close friends or near relatives involved either in the conflict itself, or in the resistance to it. However, my own conviction that war is essentially never “just”, and rejection of the patriotic hoopla about “defending Freedom”, stems from that time. Nonetheless, I was utterly appalled at the way that anti-war sentiment at that time turned into neglect and abuse of returning veterans, and am profoundly grateful that such attitudes have changed radically with respect to the veterans of current conflicts in the Middle East. It is against this background that I read Travis Mills’ powerful memoir, “Tough as They Come”. As is emphasized at the beginning, Mills is one of “five surviving quadruple amputees among the wounded veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. His injuries occurred on April 10, 2012, when his unit was attempting to clear IEDs, and missed one. Simple math tells us that in the three years since that event, Mills

has made an incredible journey to recovery and a full and productive life. Not only is he completely functional and self-reliant, driving his own car, participating in sports such as running, cycling and skiing; he is also an active promoter of programs to rehabilitate others. He started the Travis Mills Foundation which benefits and assists wounded and injured veterans, and is a much sought-after motivational speaker. The story itself is told with a great deal of honesty and simplicity. Although profoundly patriotic and completely convinced that he was fighting to uphold the ideals of "the American Way", Mills does not sugarcoat the difficulties of the particular conflict with which he was involved. His descriptions of the conditions in the FOB where he spent most of his second deployment are stark indeed. He makes it clear that for him and most of the men with whom he served, it is not high-minded altruism but simply commitment to one another and to doing their best in the tough situations in which they were placed that kept them going. He states that attitude is everything, and explains that for him, the choice to respond to frustrations and pain with humor rather than anger and bitterness made a huge difference, both during the time of his active service and afterwards during his recovery and rehabilitation from his injuries. Thus, despite my profound skepticism about our "war culture" in general, I have to validate Travis Mills and the depth and humanity of his story with the highest rating.

"Never give up. Never quit." These are words that Travis Mills lives by. They are not new words, devised after tragedy struck to help get through the day. Travis learned these words at an early age and used them to propel himself to success in sports, in combat and in daily life. Travis was a positive, can-do guy before his 'bad day' on the job, and is still is today. His joking manner and positive attitude are loud and clear in his new book "Tough As They Come". The book is a great read. It is very well-written. The reader is in for an emotional ride as Travis tells stories of high school, young love and the bonds forged between men in battle. Travis describes in vivid detail his time in combat, including both moments of intense action and hilarious incidents back on base. His description of his early days as a multiple amputee provide unique insight into the mental and physical pain he endured, and make his journey back to normal life all the more compelling. Travis lets us into his private circle, sharing his story from the perspective of his wife, parents, friends and fellow soldiers. This story is not told to invoke pity or sadness or hero worship. Instead, Travis tells us that it is possible to move beyond our setbacks. He is grateful to be alive and have the chance to advocate on behalf of veterans. He is proud of his small-town upbringing and his patriotism. He loves his wife and family, and is grateful to have a normal life with them. His foundation aims to help

other veterans and their families overcome physical and emotional obstacles. In this mission, he will never quit.

My own words would be inadequate to describe how incredibly inspirational this book is. Instead, I've decided to include the words from "You'll Never Walk Alone," from Rodgers & Hammerstein's musical "Carousel," as they reflect the incredibly uplifting story of Travis Mills. The song's message of hope and resilience personifies the spirit of this amazing young man. When you walk through a storm hold your head up high And don't be afraid of the dark At the end of a storm is a golden sky And the sweet silver song of a lark Walk on through the wind Walk on through the rain Though your dreams be tossed and blown Walk on, walk on with a hope in your heart And you'll never walk alone You'll never, ever walk alone Walk on, walk on with a hope in your heart And you'll never walk alone You'll never, ever walk alone Travis ~ Thank you for sharing your story with us, and for the sacrifice you made for our country. You are a shining light and true inspiration to all mankind.

Seldom have I read a book that brought me to tears on more than one occasion. Travis Mills account of his life, service to our country, astounding family and inspirational life after being wounded is a must read. Bless our troops and people who serve our country by putting themselves in harms way to keep us safe. Also bless the people who do so much to support our injured warriors, medically, financially and emotionally.

Extremely honest and heart wrenching read. Made me take an honest look at my circumstances in comparison and be more thankful in my perspective of what I/others go through. Everything about this book strips bare the struggles of the inner self and the psychological warfare that ensues when we are dealt an "unfair" major event to our body or other. Excellent book, very open and worth every penny to read...

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