





Patrick J. Kenny

*Retired Fire Fighter
Western Springs, IL*

Taking the Cape Off



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Patrick J. Kenny

*Retired Fire Chief
Western Springs, IL*

Alice Gallagher



Father Gavin Quinn





PATRICK J. KENNY



Putting The Cape On



By Paul Combs February 3, 2014

What Does Brave Look Like?



**The Mission Is the Why
You Are the Priority**



Some Questions To Ponder?

Is the concept of Mental Health in our academies at the entry level?

Are recognition of signs and symptoms part of our Company Officer Training?

Do we “Human Preplan”?

How do volunteer/combo departments deal with this issue with no EAP?

Who is your EAP and what training do they have about the fire service culture?

- **WW II Vets came home as an entire company by ship that took weeks.**
- **Vietnam Vets flown home alone. They were back in US next day.**
- **Who has higher PTSD?**



Mayday for Mental Health

**3 TOURS.
2 PURPLE HEARTS.
1 EVICTION NOTICE.**

When my landlord found out I had Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), I received an eviction notice. That's when I called HUD for help.

Visit hud.gov/fairhousing or call the HUD Hotline **1-800-669-9777** (English/Espanol)

FAIR HOUSING IS YOUR RIGHT. USE IT!



RESCUE... PEER SUPPORT?!
BUT I'M NOT
DROWNING YET!

COMBS DRAWN-TO-FIRE
©2015 JEMS



Mental Health in First Responders

- PTSD 11 – 37%
 - General population 3.5%
- Depression 22 – 40%
- Suicide
 - Ideations 46.8%
 - Plans 19.2%
 - Attempts 15.5%

Mental Health in First Responders

Starting July 16, 2022, dialing 988 will connect you to the National Suicide Prevention network.

The new 988 number is meant to replace the current National Suicide Prevention number.

“The 988 helpline registered 154,585 more calls, texts and chat messages during November 2022 compared to the old national lifeline in November 2021, according to the latest data available.” Over 2 million contacts since inception.

By AMANDA SEITZ Shreveport, LA 1/10/23

Shortening the hotline number from 10 digits to three makes it easier to remember in an emergency.

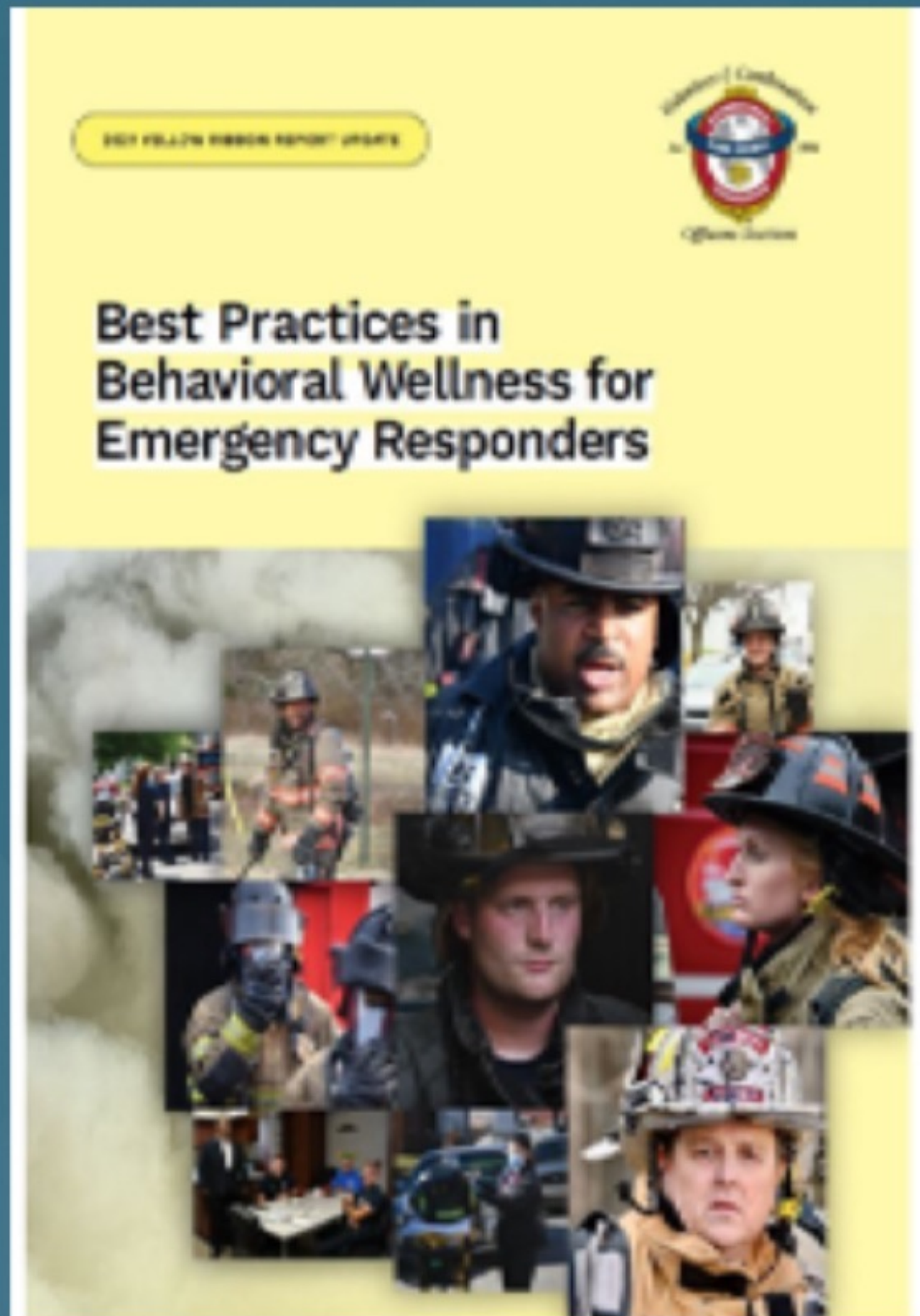
Old number still available.



Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022

- Expands benefits for PTSD or acute stress disorder
- Death/disability by suicide
 - January 1, 2019
- Exposed to traumatic event
 - Mass casualty
 - Mass fatality
 - Other traumatic event
- Counseling/Documentation

Mayday for Mental Health



Make sure to download the
VCOS Yellow Ribbon Report -
Under the Helmet:

Performing an Internal Size-
Up, A Proactive Approach to
Ensuring Mental Wellness

<https://bit.ly/3tFYDMd>

Behavioral Health Initiatives



THIS IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A RESOURCE GUIDE

**PTSD IS JUST ONE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE NOT UNLIKE THERE ARE MULTIPLE
CANCERS**

**AGREE THAT MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION AND CANCER PREVENTION ARE KEY
COMPONENTS OF OVERALL FIRST RESPONDER SAFETY AND BOTH ARE PHYSICAL
ILLNESSES**

**SOME MATERIAL SENSITIVE:
Challenge you to put away cell phones/iPad.
I can't hide from you!**

NOW LET ME BEGIN TO SHARE MY JOURNEY.

MICHAEL KENNY AND “PADDY JOE”



MICHAEL KENNY



Richard Harding Thompson - 1954

(Front Row L to R)
J. Ryan (TEFF.) J. B. Nelson (TEFF.) E. Ryan (Oak) E. Camp (Syl.) (TEFF.)

(Second Row L. to R.)
E. Nelson (TEFF.) W. Hensley (Hawthorn) W. Ryan (TEFF.) F. Halperin
(Hilltop) E. Thompson (Hawthorn) F. Thompson (Oak) E. Ryan
(Oaktop)

(Back Row)
W. Camp (Oaktop) E. Nelson (Oak) E. Camp (TEFF.) E. Nelson (Oaktop)
J. Thompson (TEFF.) F. Nelson (Hawthorn) E. Ryan (Oaktop)

EILEEN AND PAT KENNY 6/6/82



MOM AND HER 3 BOYS



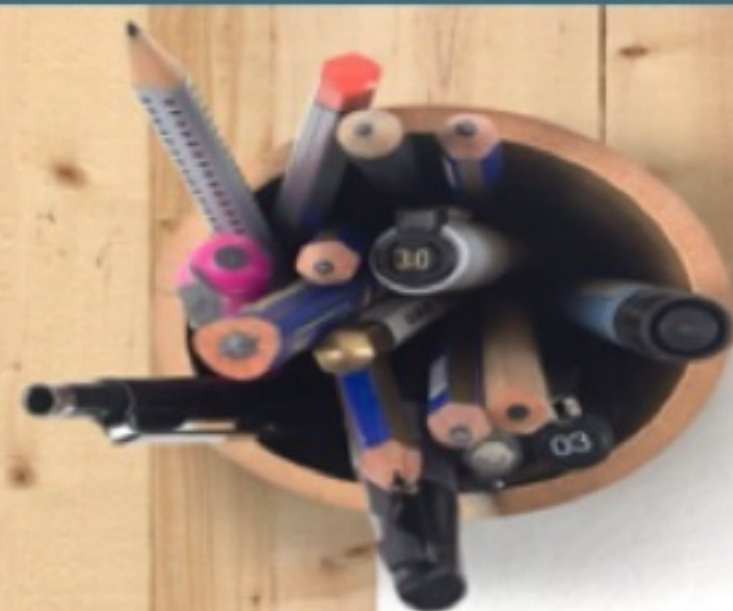


**SO WHO TAUGHT
ME WHAT I'M
GOING TO SHARE?**

Taking the Cape Off

A coincidence is just God's way of
remaining anonymous!

Taking the Cape Off



Name Sean Kenny

Age 10½

I'm an expert at fixing things and
running.

My favorite book is The Twits.

My best school subject is Spelling,
because I like it.

What I like to do most is Swim.

When I grow up I will be a fireman.

Real World Comparisons

Cancer

Exposure to dangerous by-products

Possible Pre-disposition

Denial of Condition

Diagnosis:

Possible Annual Physical

Medications-expedite death

Hope one day/Despair next

Terminal diagnosis:

Treat to buy “quality time”

*Firefighter/Family Embraced

Mental Health

Exposure to stressful situations

Possible Pre-disposition

Denial of Condition

Diagnosis:

No annual evaluation

Medications-expedite death

Hope one day/Despair next

Terminal diagnosis:

Treat to buy “quality time”

*Firefighter/Family Shunned

***If diagnosed, the key difference between the 2 illnesses!
Which funeral will you make an effort to attend?**

Real World Comparisons

- Would you accuse a cancer patient of faking their pain?
- Would you accuse someone with Alzheimer's or Dementia of lying when they can't remember their name?
- But we accuse people with mental illness of faking not being able to get out of bed!

Must Become “Our People!”

Mental Health Versus Cancer

“Its Not As Easy as Washing Your Gear.”

- Chief John Buckman

What Does Terminal Look Like?



Before Cancer



With Terminal Brain Cancer



What Does Terminal Look Like?



How did we really deal with it then?

Our Lady Of Angels Fire
Chicago, Illinois
December 1, 1958

- 95 Killed
- 93 Children

*FF Richard Scheidt
10-year-old John Jankowski*



Mental Health Deterioration Not As Visible!

Coping Mechanisms/Warning Signs Prevalent:

- **Illegal Drugs**
- **Prescribed Medication Abuse**
- **Alcohol**
- **Smoking**
- **Eating**

**A MESSAGE BURIED IN A MOVIE.
DELIVERED MY “WHY”, MY MISSION!**

Roy Hobbs asks: “Why did you stand up that day?”

Her “Why”? “Because I didn’t want to see you fail!”

**Sometimes you have to take your Cape off
and let others wear it.**

She wore the Cape that day!

**Offer to wear their Cape. It can become your “Why”.
It gives the person a chance to rest and heal.**

Lessons Learned

**Treat Mental Health care like any other
Physical injury.....expect it!
Prepare a Human Preplan as the response:**

Back Injury Analogy

- Can't always lift correctly –injured
- Can't always have things “Bounce off you”-injured.
- Both cases see trusted Doctor you vet ahead of time.
- Both cases maybe need meds to help.
- Both cases maybe need some therapy to heal.
- Both cases if caught early get a 100% return to full duty.
- Both cases if left untreated cripple you and can become terminal!!!



**Be “Okay” with Your
Human Side**

**There is a time to go
back into your personal
phone booth.**

Put the Cape Back On!!!!

Why Do You Put the Cape Back On?
FOR YOUR WHYS!





**I wear my Cape for
my “Whys”**

**My Granddaughters
Caroline Eileen and
Maeve Margaret!**

Caroline Kenny



July 5, 2023



July 5, 2023



Understand the power and limits

Use the Cape as it is designed!

Put it on:

- When you are called to help and serve others, your WHYS!

Take it off:

- When it's time for self-care. Self care not selfishness!
 - When you can't fix it.

The key to successful leadership is:

Knowing your WHYS!

AND

Knowing the "When's" about your Cape.

Who does your "S" stand for? (Family, Friends or You)

Want a glimpse of Heaven?



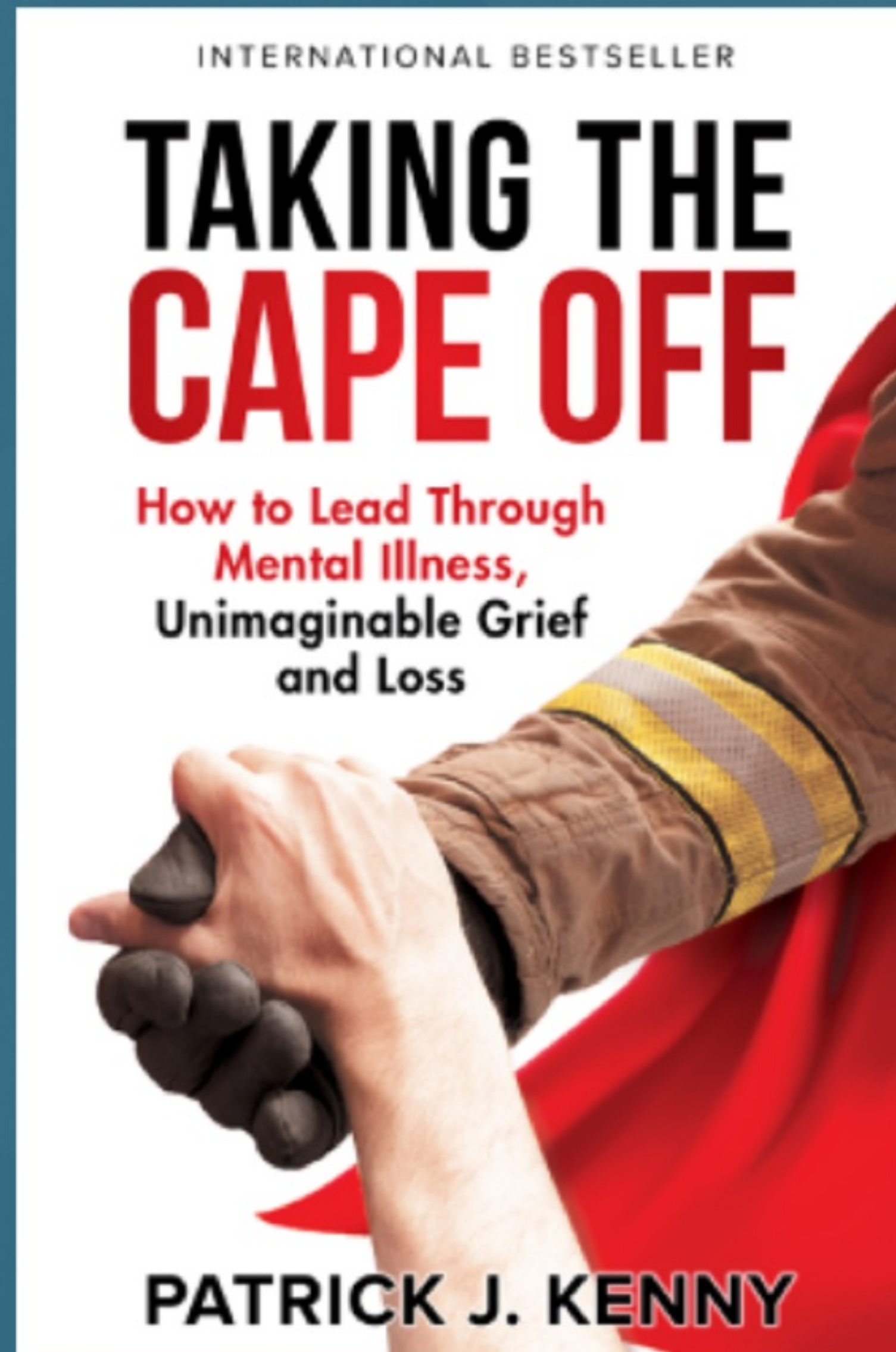
You are NOW part of Sean and Eileen's Team.

You report to them!

My "S" stands for Sean and my Someone is Eileen.

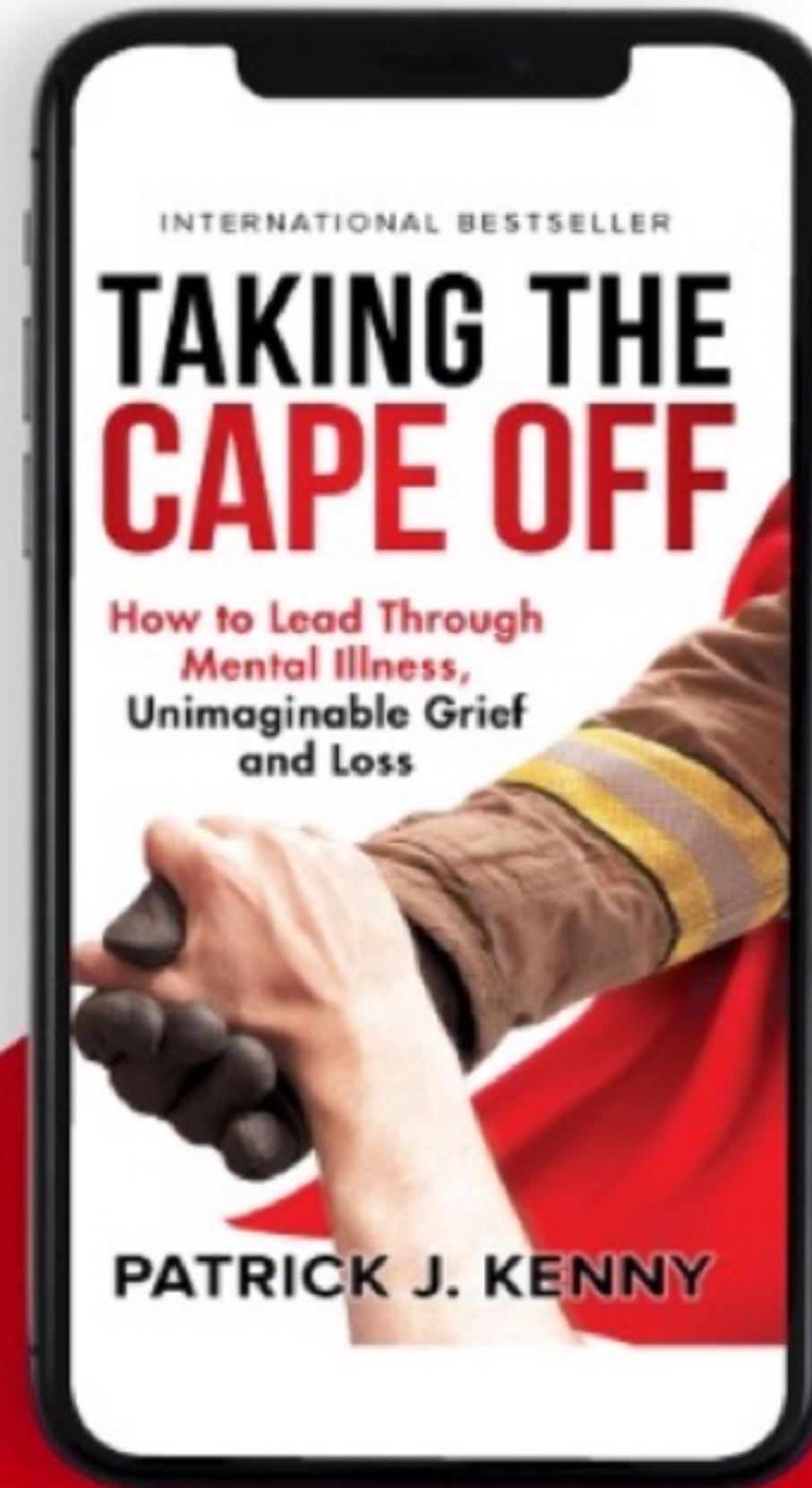
Identify your "S" and proudly put the Cape back on!

I MADE A PROMISE



I DIDN'T MAKE THIS PROMISE

Now available on
audible



TORN YET STILL PROUD TO WEAR MY CAPE!



Email:

Pat@patrickjkenny.com

Website:

patrickjkenny.com

Connects to all social media

THANK YOU!

