



CHAPTER ONE PREVIEW





I'M EXCITED TO SHARE CHAPTER ONE OF **TENACIOUS** WITH YOU.

In these pages, you'll meet the seventeen-year-old version of me — unsure, overwhelmed, and not exactly the picture of tenacity. At the time, things were not going so great. I was a wreck. But sometimes that's exactly where a real story begins.

Many decades later, I'm incredibly grateful for that kid — shortcomings and all. Life has some surprising turns ahead for him, but first I wanted you to meet him before tenacity reshaped his life.

Each chapter in *Tenacious* includes a guest. In this chapter, you'll hear from Olympic Gold Medalist and cancer survivor Scott Hamilton. His extraordinary story puts my young desperation into perspective.

I've always learned best through the experiences of others. This isn't a book that tells you what to do. It's a book that shows you what we did — the mistakes, the risks, the failures, and the resilience — and lets you take from it whatever speaks to you.

Thank you for taking a look.

I hope this chapter inspires you to see where that un-tenacious kid eventually ended up — and more importantly, to imagine where your own tenacity could take you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott".



CHAPTER 1

Trying

Defeat is not the worst of failures. Not to have tried
is the true failure.

—George E. Woodberry

Scott Scovill, please report to the guidance counselor’s office.” The sound of my name crackling through the classroom speaker startled me. My head had been resting on the desk. As usual, I was half-listening to the lesson, mostly daydreaming. I looked up, and my teacher gazed back with disappointment. She seemed unfazed that I was getting the call. That made one of us. I had spoken to the guidance counselor only once or twice before. What did she want? My teacher motioned toward the door. I stood up, wiping the sleep from my eyes. I could feel the stares as I walked from my seat at the back of the class to exit at the farthest corner.

As I made my way down the empty hall, I could conjure no reason for being summoned. I supposed it was due to the culmination of my years underperforming and skipping school. Perhaps the guidance

counselor was the latest to join the ranks of those trying to “reach” me and inspire me to be better. (Sigh.) Good luck with that.

Her cramped little office was overstuffed with books and files. There was barely enough room for a guest chair. I took a seat, ready for her to make her best attempt at fixing me. Sure, I knew I was a mess, mostly failing my senior year. But being a mess was working out fine so far. Her eyes were pinned on me. Sizing up the situation, she seemed sad, unsure of what she should say. There we sat in uncomfortable silence.

“I don’t think you are going to be able to graduate.”

I knew this was false. Teachers were always underestimating my ability to pass tests. Who could blame them? I often fell asleep in class, and I hardly ever did my homework.

“Well, I appreciate your concern, but I doubt I’ll have any trouble passing my exams.”

She shook her head. “I’m so sorry, you slipped through the cracks. Your situation is so unique, we never thought to look at the advanced placement students.” She paused. She was clearly troubled. I had no idea what she was talking about.

“Even though you tested well enough to take advanced classes, you have been promoted to the next grade level only because you passed the finals. But per New York State guidelines, passing your finals isn’t the only requirement to graduate. You need a passing *average* to get state credit. Your semester grades this year have been so low, you do not have that passing average, and thus, you will not get state credit for many of your classes. You now need every single credit this year or you will be held back and have to repeat your senior year.”

What? Could this be true? We were in the last half of the second semester. I realized that even with great scores on my finals, getting a passing average in most of my classes would be incredibly difficult. My chest tightened. An advanced placement student flunking the

twelfth grade? Repeat my senior year while my friends moved on to college? She had my attention now. I sat in shock, not knowing what to say.

The counselor continued, “I am so sorry we didn’t realize this sooner. We just didn’t think this was possible with an advanced placement student. The good news is that you have a chance, but you truly need to get a passing average in every class. I’ve spoken with all your teachers, and we have come up with a system so you can make up for past work and raise your semester grades. It will require a lot of effort, but you have an opportunity to turn this around.”

In that moment, my heart sank as low as it could. Passing tests was easy for me. Heck, I could ace them. But doing homework and actually applying myself? That was all but impossible for me. Discovering at this moment that I needed to make up work—that I had to actually *try*—felt like a death sentence. I knew what’d happened whenever I had to try in the past. Tears welled in my eyes, I felt flush and started sweating.

It was happening to me already. I was broken.

What was this? The Averill Park School system, my teachers, and classmates were great, so why couldn’t I do the work? The answer is a bit complicated. To get to the root of the issue, we’d have to dig deep.

Hitting Rock Bottom

Despite being broken in this way, I was otherwise happy and healthy. By all accounts, I had a pretty good life. I grew up in the farmlands, way back in the woods, in beautiful northern New York. Mine was a fairly normal childhood. I had divorced parents but lots of love, a good share of friends, and plenty of hobbies. As a typical country boy, my hair was too long, my high-water jeans were too short, and my face was usually dirty. I spent countless hours in the woods with my pals, fishing and sleeping under the stars. We made campfires to

keep warm and to reheat whatever we had absconded with from our mothers' pantries. It was magical.

At home, I loved the game *Dungeons and Dragons*, reading about science, model trains, playing Atari, and listening to music. Oh, I loved music. It was a pretty great childhood when I think back on it. So what do I mean when I say I was broken?

Well, I had one particularly troublesome dysfunction that would rear its ugly head whenever I tried to do my homework. I would, with good intentions, sit down to do the work, but an emotional reaction would always ensue. It's hard to describe this reaction, but my best attempt is to say that an intense frustration and hopelessness would build within me from the moment I faced the simple challenge of the work. There was a tightness in my chest, and my brain would become a swirling storm of emotion. I would get so wound up that I wouldn't be able to continue. It hurt to even think about it. As I failed to overcome these feelings, they would intensify. My state would quickly devolve into confusion, and tears of guilt would flow. I would end up a sobbing mess, completely overwhelmed. Why did I feel this way? I truly wanted to do well. I wanted to be a good student. Instead I failed.

Back in the eighties, people didn't look for complicated reasons to explain a lack of scholastic success. You were either a good student or a bad student; I was the latter. Nowadays, someone like me might be diagnosed with ADHD and put on medication that, for better or worse, would rewire their brain. Who knows, maybe that would have helped me in the short term. But would I be as happy as I am today? I doubt it, though we'll never know. And that's OK with me. I've pondered what my life would be like without this early struggle, so much so that I probably could've written another book exploring exactly what was wrong with me.

The good news is that we don't need to go there in these pages. I know where my trauma and dysfunction originated. In fact, we all

have our problems. *But the beautiful thing about this book is that it's about solutions.* No matter your struggles, burdens, or distractions, it aims to show you that time and time again, being tenacious can get you through.

So, back to my school dilemma, let's review: I wasn't doing my homework. When you don't do your homework, you typically get really bad grades; I did just that. But I'd get a good grade on the final. As such, the teachers would reason that I had learned enough, and they'd promote me to the next grade. Naturally, I didn't feel like I had failed the class. This, coupled with the fact that I was a reasonably well-behaved kid, allowed me to get by for years without doing my homework. Getting by kept my dysfunction from coming to a head—until that defining moment in the guidance counselor's office.

I was terrified by the realization that I absolutely had to do the work. How could I ever get past my inability to even try? I'm sure that everyone reading this can relate to the fear of inadequacy. To the feeling that you simply cannot overcome a challenge. That you will fail if you try. All too often, fear wins before we try. The sad thing is that this seemingly proves our fears were correct. I've heard that Henry Ford used to say, "Whether you think you can, or you think you can't—you're right." Think about that.

I suddenly realized I had painted myself into a corner. To graduate, I would have no other option but to try, even though trying was inexplicably painful for me.

Applying myself was brutal. I worked as hard as my dysfunction allowed. All the while, a voice in my head screamed, *You can't! Don't try! You will fail!* Yet I knew I couldn't quit this time. As awful as it felt to think about pushing myself past my perceived limits, the thought of not graduating was worse. Imagining that failure was so horrific, it literally made me sick to my stomach.

I turned in a lot of papers with smeared ink from my crying. I gave up trying some days to escape the pain, only to find myself

drowning in guilt for giving up. I was overwhelmed with the dread of not passing and the daily reality of my failures. I know this doesn't make much sense to those of you who've never experienced such a mental block, but it was all so real to me.

Good Guidance

The school implemented several measures to help me. I ate my lunch in the working study hall so I could try and catch up on back assignments. I also stayed after hours every day and was often the only kid in the science lab, steaming up those plastic goggles with my tears. This was a lonely and particularly rough time. I fought hard to keep those tears from betraying the cool facade I had maintained for years. A senior crying over his classwork? We all remember how judgmental classmates could be back in high school. I was mortified and determined to never let them see my weakness. Yet I failed at that too, and at times they did see the outpourings of my frustrations. It was demoralizing.

I stayed after school every day to complete labs or English papers. With each droplet into a vial and each pen stroke, I felt like I was falling short, still unable to do enough. I was finishing the work, slowly, but the anxiety made it so hard to focus, I wanted to explode. This went on for months.

At times the struggle was too much. I'd go into cocoon mode and stop working, taking a day or two to resume the fight. Even then, I would try only because I could see no other path, not because I wanted to. These weren't intentional acts of tenacity; they were more like the desperate actions of a cornered animal.

As I was struggling through all of this, I learned that some of my classmates were placing bets as to whether or not I would graduate. The shame I felt upon hearing this walled me off from everyone. I felt trapped in a cage—and everyone was peering in. I feared that this ugly feeling of shame would stay with me for the rest of my life.

Though I did my best, in the end I doubted it was enough. I expected the worst. Beyond the shame of failing, I anticipated going through another year of high school. Another whole year of this torture. Frankly, I wasn't sure I was up for it. Would I drop out? The previously broken kid was now completely shattered.

The judgment finally came. My teachers sat me in a room, all looking at me. I felt so small and exposed. I took a deep breath, bracing for their final reproach. To my shock, they told me that they had decided to pass me. It didn't seem right to me. I wasn't even happy at first. They explained that my struggle was evident and that they were impressed I worked so hard to overcome whatever demons were holding me back. They admitted that, at times, I came up short, but based on my test grades, they knew I had learned the material. Finally, they felt that whatever I was facing would not be resolved by humiliating me and keeping me for a redundant senior year. As their words settled in, I felt the weight of a mountain lift off of my shoulders. I would graduate, dodging ultimate failure yet again.

What Trying Has to Do with It

In the introduction, I described being tenacious as trying and never giving up. Already in this chapter, I have admitted to giving up many times, even *cocooning* for days after failing. How is this an example worth sharing? After all, I was a quitter a thousand times over. Here's the thing: I may have stopped trying in the moment, but every time I fell I would lick my wounds and march back into battle. I gave up in the moment, but I never quit for long. Unbeknownst to me, I was discovering my own tenacity. It was still in its infancy, far more forced than intentional, but I was trying. I was trying, and, despite painfully failing, I was trying again.

I had fallen short despite my best efforts, and even the teachers admitted as much. The magical thing, in hindsight, is that I was

learning something far more important than those twelfth-grade lessons. The teachers saw it too. I was finally trying to apply myself.

This is what being tenacious looks like in real life. In the wild. It's probably not the story of the gifted athlete who works hard every day, getting incrementally better as they march unhindered to Olympic glory. If such a perfect athlete exists, they have exceptional resolve and dedication. Good for them! But that is not a story of tenacity. No, real-life stories of tenacity are uglier—full of flaws, shortcomings, and pain.

My journey was riddled with angst. I remember fellow students asking me if I was OK after seeing my red eyes and tear-stained cheeks. I also remember falling into my mother's arms after losing a battle with an assignment—a great shame for an eighteen-year-old man. No, there is no tenacity without struggle, hardship, and failure. This is why tenacious stories are the best. They are so hard-fought that not giving up is what makes them *special*. This is why being tenacious can make all the difference in your life—and it's achievable through one simple act. *Not giving up* can make your life amazing. Have I mentioned that before? Spoiler alert: Developing tenacity can be brutal at first, but stick with it. It truly gets easier with practice—way easier!

My heroes are the ones who survived doing it wrong,
who made mistakes but recovered from them.

—Bono

Throughout this whole senior-year saga, I wasn't chasing a dream. I was just trying to elude a catastrophe. This impending catastrophe literally forced me to take my first steps toward tenacity, changing my path forever. Did anything else keep me going besides the fear of flunking? Yes, there were countless moments of near defeat, but there were also moments of victory. When I finished a paper, a lab, or a report, the feeling of handing in that work was intoxicating. The relief

was so real. These little victories bolstered my spirits, helping me head right back into the fight.

Remember, stories of tenacity are messy, sometimes riddled with less-than-perfect outcomes. Brush off the mess and embrace the moments of triumph. Pride is fuel!

Feeling Tenacious

Does relentlessly trying sound like it could work for you? Or does it sound like too simple a solution? Remember the Henry Ford quote? “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t—you’re right.” Well, there is your answer. If you believe in being tenacious, it *will* work. Mind you, while the concept really is incredibly simple, the execution can be brutally hard.

Think back to a time when you didn’t give up on something important. A time when you were overwhelmed but persevered nevertheless and made it through. Did your career challenge you in ways that you were not prepared for? Was it your health or the health of a loved one that held you back? Perhaps an important relationship was on the rocks? Did you work through it? Was it hard? Was it messy? Did you fail and stop trying but then decide to step up and try again? That was being tenacious!

Let’s build from that success and put the same kind of continuous effort into making your dreams come true! Can you think of a tenacious story in your own life? No? Are you sure? If not, no worries. If you don’t feel as if you’ve been particularly tenacious, then this book is especially for you. I wasn’t back then either. We will grow tenacity together!

My good buddy, Olympic hero, and figure skating legend Scott Hamilton knows something about being tenacious. Ladies and gentlemen, I have asked Scott to tell you about his journey with tenacity in his own words, and he has graciously agreed. Take it away, Scott!

SCOTT HAMILTON**ON BEING TENACIOUS**

There is something truly wonderful about time. It affords you the opportunity to look back and see your life as it has been lived up to this point and to understand how resilient we can be.

But none of that can happen without truly participating in the contest called *life*. And the crazy thing is, the longer we live, the more we realize how life isn't designed to be fair.

Being adopted at six weeks of age wasn't a choice I had, but rather something that would remain a puzzle throughout all my days. Wrestling with identity and the feelings of abandonment versus being chosen would show up in many aspects of my journey. I think what got me through all of that was the undeniable understanding that I was loved completely and that my parents would sacrifice anything to allow me to thrive and survive.

At four years of age, my parents realized that I wasn't growing and didn't seem to be developing like other children. They came to the opinion that it must be medical, so for the next few years I was mostly in and out of hospitals. There were tests and more tests. Some invasive, some tedious, and some "icky." At the end of four years, we still had no answers, just advice: "Go home, live as normal a life as you can, and let's see what happens next." Not much of an answer, it was more like its own form of surrender.

It was in living a normal life that I was given a chance to participate in a local learn-to-skate program with over a hundred *well* kids. I was a lot more comfortable with sick kids since I spent so much more time with them, but here I stood, the sick kid among a throng of well ones.

Having a history of being the shortest and weakest in my class, my self-esteem was predictably low. I was always the last

one chosen for playground games and often bullied for being so little—and also for being adopted.

But skating was the great equalizer. Each week I would show up and get better. Pretty soon I realized that I could skate as well as the well kids, and after a few weeks more, I was skating as well as the best athletes in my grade. That first taste of identity and purpose ignited my confidence like nothing else I had ever experienced. I was actually good at something. Little did I know that the instinct of tenacity guided me through that first part of my life. Skating gave me so much and laid the groundwork for everything else I would later endure.

Being a male figure skater in a small town came with its own challenges. “Hey, Twinkle Toes, show us something pretty.” “Hey, Ballerina, don’t forget to point your toes.” So once again, I had to rise above a challenge. I soon made the decision to start playing hockey. I had to shut down those kids’ taunts. I knew I could skate better than all of them, so playing hockey gave me the power to show them up. It also shut them up.

I played for three seasons, or, more appropriately, two neck braces. Ultimately, it was time to focus on figure skating again. I had earned everyone’s respect, so it felt right to get back to doing what I was more suited to do. I was always going to be much too small to be competitive in hockey.

Failing in skating was emotionally difficult and something I hadn’t anticipated. I hated the figure eights I needed to do to qualify for competitions, and they hated me back. Failure after failure changed my outlook and my hopes for skating at a high level, but it was my mother who always saw something more in me than I did. She would tell our neighbors, “We are going to the Olympics someday,” and my response was always, “Based on

what exactly?" But practice took care of some of that, and I was able to qualify for the 1973 US Figure Skating Championships in the "novice" level.

I choked, fell five times in my three-minute program, and finished dead last. So I decided to be even more tenacious the next season. I fell only twice that time but finished ninth out of ten.

Fast-forward two years. My mother was diagnosed with cancer. Our family was broke, and I was given one more year to skate.

Something happened in that time. My regular coach retired and a new coach took his place. He was much more of a disciplinarian, and, since I had nothing to lose, I submitted to his authority.

My mom arrived at nationals with her arm in a sling due to the surgery she'd undergone to remove her left breast and lymph nodes in her left arm. She said it was mainly to keep people from bumping into her, but I knew she was in a great deal of pain. She was also wearing a wig because she had lost her hair to chemotherapy. But the most noticeable thing about her at that competition was the joy she displayed at the events.

As I went out to do my long program, I saw the huge smile on her face and the obvious pride she felt watching me take to the ice for what I thought was my last competition ever. Somehow, I won the Junior National Title, and the reason my mother was so joyful that whole week was because she knew my skating life wasn't over. On her way to Colorado Springs for the competition, she was asked to stop in Chicago to meet with a wealthy couple who loved skating and wanted to sponsor me.

So now I was turning eighteen, was going to be sponsored, and would have my own apartment to live in. I affectionately call that the "trifecta for disaster."

I was so bad that year that once again I returned to my losing ways, finishing very close to the bottom in the final results. It was

humiliating, but what made this failure the worst embarrassment ever was that it would be the last time my mother would ever see me skate in competition. She lost her battle to cancer three months later, and the devastation was beyond anything I had ever experienced. My brother and I were in her hospital room until around three in the morning on her last night. I was awakened at 8:30 a.m. by my brother-in-law. All he could say was, “Your mother is gone.” And all I could think to reply was, “I know.” She was the center of my universe. I simply couldn’t imagine how I was going to go on without her in my life.

Then something happened. I went out behind our house and started walking. I am not sure how long I walked, but it would be the most impactful time I had ever spent alone. I realized on that walk that the best way to mourn my mom was to take her with me wherever I went. I needed to honor her and every single one of her sacrifices to keep me in skating. With that one decision, everything changed. I wasn’t late for practice anymore. I worked harder than I ever thought I could, and the results of that decision changed the course of my life. I wasn’t going to be the “loser” anymore.

The very next competitive season, I ended up winning third place at the US National Championships and placed eleventh in the World Championships. Two years later, I won a berth on the 1980 US Olympic Team. Placing fifth in Lake Placid set up a winning streak I never saw coming. From October 1980 to March 1984, I was able to go undefeated, winning four US Championships, four World Championships, and an Olympic gold medal.

All powered by the strength, commitment, and love of my mother.

I heard something during a press conference in Lake Placid during the 1980 Olympics that made a huge impression on me.

Eric Heiden won every single race and all five Olympic gold medals—a feat that may never be achieved again. After his last race, he announced that he would do only one product endorsement. People were dumbfounded. Most Olympic athletes would leverage their success into incredible wealth. Eric shared that he accepted that endorsement deal only to pay for his medical education. (He is now a very successful orthopedic surgeon in Utah.) He added, “It’s not the events in your life that determine your character, it’s how you respond to them.” Flash-Boom-Bang! Those perfect words came at the perfect time.

I was given a perspective that allowed me to rise above anything the next few years would throw at me.

Following the success of those Games, it soon became apparent that it was time for me to go to work.

My first job was the Ice Capades. My goal was to be the best employee they had ever hired. After two years of skating at the highest level and never missing a show or press opportunity, I was told that the new owner wanted to present only women. Any starring male was now expendable. I was devastated but knew that the work I had done with them gave me a mountain of experience and the momentum to step into whatever was next.

After my dismissal from the Ice Capades, I had a meeting with my manager, Bob Kain of IMG. He had an idea to start a new tour and asked if I would be interested. I told him to check my empty calendar, and we both laughed.

Eleven tours later, when I was fifty cities into a seventy-two-city commitment, the pain I had endured in my abdomen throughout every performance that year finally proved too much to bear. I went to the emergency room, and it was there that I was diagnosed with cancer—the same disease that had taken my mother. The fear was extraordinary. I saw myself suffering,

diminishing, and dying. And the worst part was the thought that I would never skate again. Then something happened that I didn't see coming. That fear was instantly replaced by feelings of bravery, a clarity of mission, and a true sense that I could determine the outcome of this frightening challenge.

After four months of intense chemotherapy, followed by surgery, I was declared cancer-free. Back to life. Back to skating. But something was different now. I knew I needed to see this as a second chance at life. A life I hadn't foreseen.

On the third-year anniversary of my cancer diagnosis, I met a woman backstage at the Stars on Ice performance in Memphis. There was something about Tracie that seemed different, and honestly amazing. It was then that I decided I was ready to fully get back into life. Little did I know that a few months later we would go on our first date. We have been together ever since.

A little more than a year after the birth of our first child, I noticed that I wasn't feeling normal. I went back to the Cleveland Clinic to get checked, and it was there that I was diagnosed with some sort of a brain tumor. Telling my wife was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do. Tracie didn't respond to the news the way I anticipated. She took both of my hands and started to pray. It was the most powerful moment in my life, and I knew from that point forward where I would take every challenge.

After a solid week of praying, we realized there was no way to treat a brain tumor unless we knew what kind it was. A biopsy needed to be performed. In meeting with the surgeon, he was required to tell me all the horrible things that could happen during this brain surgery. He told me I could lose memory, motor ability, or speech, and that if they hit an artery, I could have a stroke that could cause paralysis.

I woke up from the surgery and looked at the clock in the recovery room. It read 10:20 a.m. I knew who I was, where I was, and why I was there. I wiggled my toes and whispered “test.” I could speak! Hallelujah!

The doctor came into the room with a huge smile on her face, followed by my wife. They now knew what kind of tumor it was and that there were a few ways to treat it. What came next was mind-blowing. As Tracie was reading information about my brain tumor, she looked up and shared that people are *born* with craniopharyngioma brain tumors. They usually reveal themselves through a noticeable lack of growth and development in young children. It was the reason I went through everything I did during those four years in and out of hospitals as a kid. The realization that I hadn’t been doomed to live in the shadow of a life-threatening illness, but that I was blessed by this tumor, was one of the most liberating moments of my life. And it totally ignited my faith—a resource of strength in the storm.

Having a relationship with Jesus has been the best way for me to rise above challenges. To learn His teachings, and to step forward into a new life based in God’s wisdom, has helped me in countless ways—ways I never anticipated. I can now step into each struggle with power and with a true understanding that this life is meant for these periods of suffering. Romans 5 speaks of suffering producing perseverance, perseverance producing character, and character bringing hope. I believe that because I’ve lived it. Isn’t it marvelous to see tenacity being honored in the Bible?!

Six years later, the brain tumor would grow back. This time it was treated with surgery. The surgery didn’t go as planned, so I had eight more surgeries. After the last surgery, I woke up in my hotel room expecting to go home that day, but I was totally blind in my right eye. Straight to the emergency room I went. I

was given clot-busting drugs and blood thinners, and the doctors were able to save about 60 percent of my sight in that eye.

I learned a lot from that period. Before the procedure where the doctor obliterated the brain aneurysm that was putting me at risk, I was praying in my room at around three in the morning. A nurse walked in and asked who I was talking to. I told her that I was praying. She asked who I prayed to, and I said, "God." Then she asked how I prayed. I shared with her how fortunate I felt in my life and that when I prayed it was out of complete gratitude. She then asked who God was to me. I told her, "I guess He is my Father." What happened next was totally unexpected. She asked if I had any kids, and I proudly said, "Yes, I have two sons." She then said, "If one of your sons was sick, or scared, or at risk, wouldn't you want them to come to you?" I could only say, "Absolutely." I completely understood where she was going with this, and she taught me how to pray differently. I now boldly ask for whatever I desperately need from the only one who can solve my greatest problems.

Six years later (do you see a pattern forming?), I was diagnosed with another recurrence of the brain tumor. This time surgery would be more complicated and, most likely, not the best solution. There was now a medical option that could target the tumor cells, but that option came with a laundry list of side effects. The strange thing about those options was that while the doctors were telling me the best way to treat this tumor, the only thought I had in my mind was, *Get strong*. That voice in my head wouldn't stop repeating this, so when they asked what I wanted to do, I just told them I wanted to go home and "get strong." The next few appointments would be miraculous. The first couple of scans showed no growth, and after that, to my amazement (and theirs), the tumor actually shrank. Then, in the subsequent scans

it shrank more. It was a true miracle, and I still haven't treated it to this day, almost five years later.

I've learned that the most important thing to know about tenacity is that it's a muscle. The more you endure, the stronger that muscle gets. What would knock me down in the past barely bothers me now. Brain tumor number one ignited my faith. Brain tumor number two felt like a kick in the gut. Brain tumor number three was completely different than the other two. I 100 percent feel that I am in *His* hands, and He will do what is best for me regardless of what I would choose.

Being tenacious is truly about "getting strong," and I totally believe we are hardwired to thrive in our suffering. We were built for it!

The key is to lean into our affliction and let it do its work.

So be tenacious. Get strong. Learn. Grow. And allow the tough times to help you build the muscles you need to be more resilient than you ever thought possible.

And pray. It helps more than anything else.

Wow! How lucky are we that Scott Hamilton shared his tenacious story? Scott, you are the best! Thank you.

Scott's path has been riddled with setbacks and potential excuses for why he could have settled for less. Sure, there were times when he quit, barely tried, had doubts, and even failed. Scott is a legend, a household name now, because no matter what, he never quit for long. Scott Hamilton is the epitome of tenacity!

What about you? What reasons might keep you from trying? What if you just tried anyway and never stopped trying? That's what Scott Hamilton did, and it made all the difference in the world.

I'd like to note that to me, Scott is successful in every way. Beyond the career you know about, Scott is a happy, wonderful, giving soul.

He is a great father and husband. He coaches and does a ton of charity work. He is a light to all around him, and I count myself so lucky to be his friend. Another way that Scott gives back is by sharing his story. He has released three wonderfully inspiring books: *Landing It* (1999), *The Great Eight* (2008), and, most recently, *Finish First* (2018). I highly suggest that you read all three!

Meanwhile, back in my story, I had just barely graduated, narrowly dodging ultimate failure.

Once again I heard my name called. This time I stood and marched forward, tall and proud. Wearing a bright blue gown and a funny, tassel-topped square hat, my outfit lacked only one accessory, and here it was: My principal smiled as he handed me my diploma. Was he happy for me? Or perhaps relieved to be rid of me? A bit of both, I suspect. And that's OK.

I felt exactly the same way.

If this preview sparked something in you, there's much more ahead.

On the next page I'll share more about what else you can expect from *TENACIOUS*."

INSIDE TENACIOUS,

you'll follow the moments that shaped Scott's life — the fears, failures, turning points, and breakthroughs that taught him what tenacity really means.

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Along the way, you'll hear from remarkable people whose stories show that persistence, not perfection, is what changes everything.

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