

RUDY: THE TRUE STORY

Rudy Ruettiger

RUDY'S POWER THOUGHTS

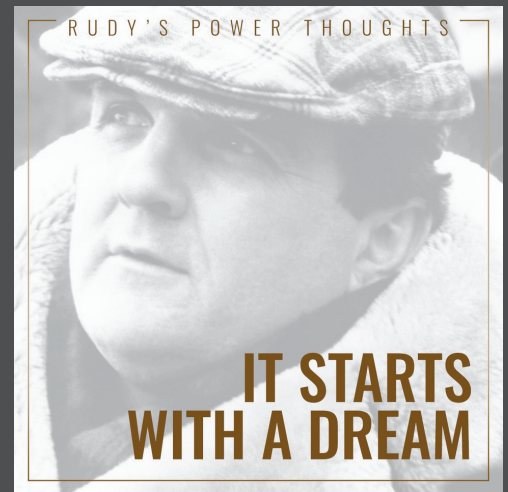


**IT STARTS
WITH A DREAM**



TRUE STORY

RUDY RUETTIGER



Where did Rudy grow up?

Rudy grew up in Joliet IL. He is the first boy and is the third of fourteen children. Rudy's parents had 7 boys and 7 girls.

Where is the real Rudy in the movie?

Rudy did actually have a cameo in the movie. Rudy was the fan in the stands during the last game of the season where he made his famous tackle. He was sitting right behind Ned Beatty (Rudy's dad in the movie) and Ned actually tugs on Rudy's shirt when everyone was cheering. Rudy was wearing a coat and hat.

Has Rudy always liked football? Did he play other sports too?

Yes, Rudy has always liked football. As a child he would watch Notre Dame games on TV with his Dad and brothers. Rudy played baseball in High School. He also loved wrestling, boxing, and water skiing. In fact, he was a championship boxer at Notre Dame. Because of his boxing notoriety, the Notre Dame Students became familiar with his story, and this is one of the reasons the student body chanted his name during his famous football play.



Did Rudy's Siblings also go to College?

Rudy was the very first sibling to graduate college. All of Rudy's siblings are healthy and happily married. Most of his siblings graduated college and are working in their chosen careers. All of Rudy's brothers have a masters in Education and have spent most of their lives coaching wrestling and other sports. All of Rudy's Siblings and their families have also had a significant involvement with their schools and churches throughout their lives.

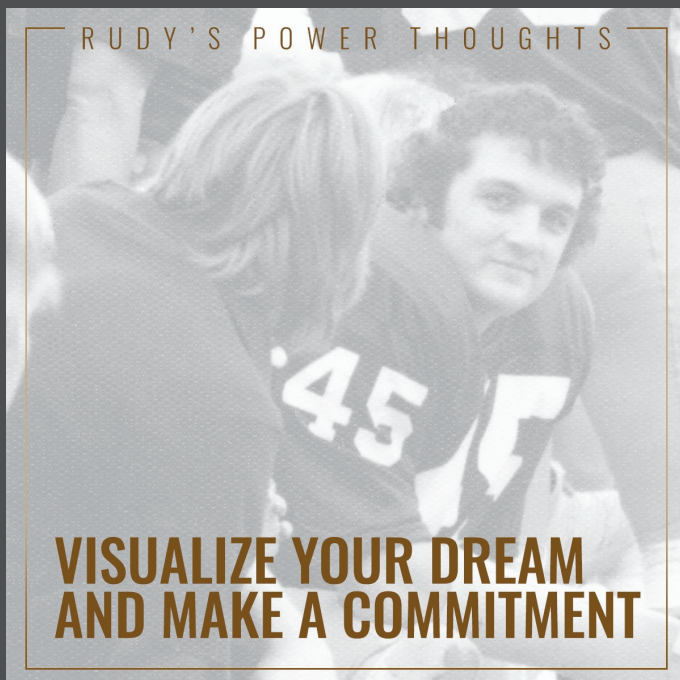
Where did Rudy go to college before Notre Dame?

Rudy went to Holy Cross Jr College for 2 years before transferring to Notre Dame. Holy Cross is located across the street from Notre Dame which made it possible for Rudy to stay involved at Notre Dame as much as possible and keep moving toward his dream. During his time at Holy Cross, Rudy was diagnosed with Dyslexia. He kept his grades up by working with a tutor. After 3 rejections from Notre Dame he was finally accepted in the Fall of 1974.



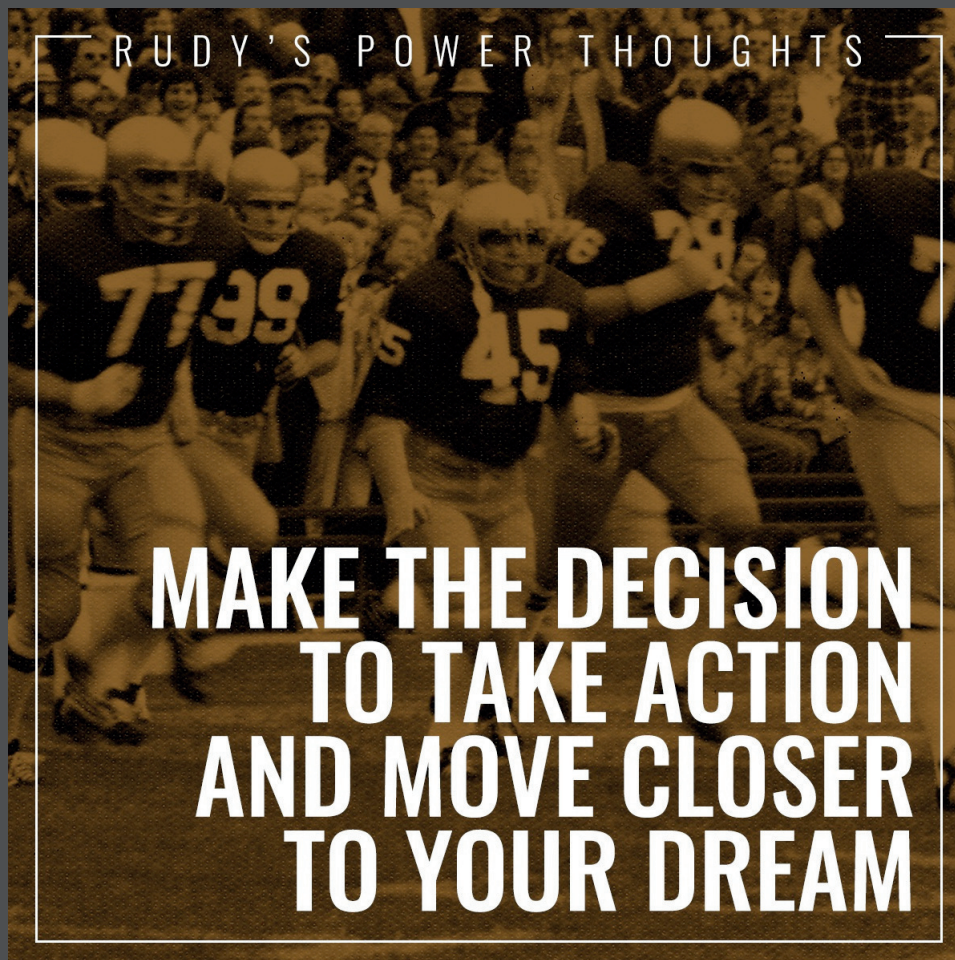
What was Rudy's experience at Notre Dame?

Rudy transferred to Notre Dame in the fall of 1974. His focus at Notre Dame was his studies. Rudy was so inspired to actually attend this University, that had been such a dream for him since childhood, that he would do whatever it took to keep his grades up and earn the respect of his peers. While at Notre Dame, Rudy developed another dream to play football for the Fighting Irish. Rudy walked-on the team under the coaching staff of Ara Parseghian in 1974. He worked hard everyday and treated every practice like it was a real game. Rudy Never Quit and won the respect of his teammates. It was this enthusiasm that eventually got Rudy to play in a game and live his 2nd dream. While in the game, Rudy saw an opportunity to make his move. "When the ball moved, I moved", explained Rudy. Rudy got the tackle because he was prepared. He worked hard and set his goals everyday no matter how tough it got. When his opportunity came, he was ready because he had prepared for his moment.



Is the movie RUDY a true story?

The movie RUDY is based on the real life of Daniel Rudy Ruettiger. Rudy's Dream was real. The Tackle was real. The Carry-Off was real. The struggle was real. The victory was real. Some moments in the movie were created to portray the significance and impact that Rudy's real life situations had on him in the moment, even if sometimes those moments didn't happen exactly the way they are portrayed in the movie. The movie was made to tell a story in a way that would inspire others - to let people know that no matter what the odds are, they can overcome them - they can find a way to win. No matter what your background, your grades, your size, you can find a way. It won't come easy. The message is real that it takes hard work and many struggles along the way. You will need to do the work, prepare, and earn your DREAM.

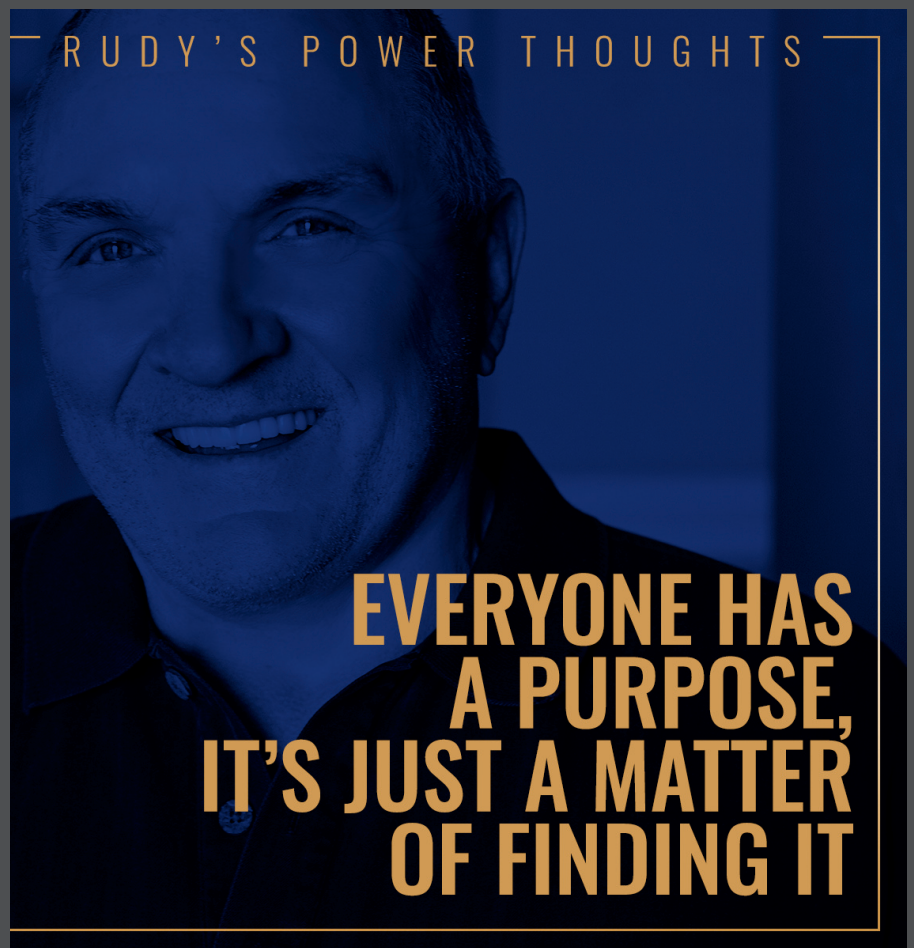


Did the team actually lay the jerseys on the coach's desk?

In the movie the team laid their jerseys on the coach's desk as a way to represent the sacrifice that some players made in order for Rudy to dress. That scene in the movie represented the impact that even the smallest gestures had on Rudy in his real life. In real life, Rudy's teammates did respect his hard work on the field everyday, helping them prepare for the games. In reality, it was the team captain who approached the coach and asked him to give Rudy a chance to dress for a game. When this opportunity came Rudy was ready.

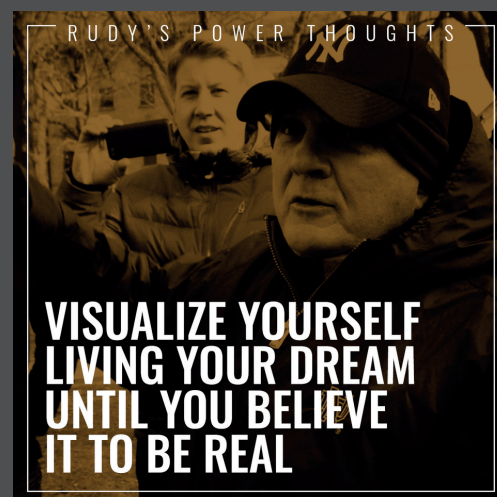
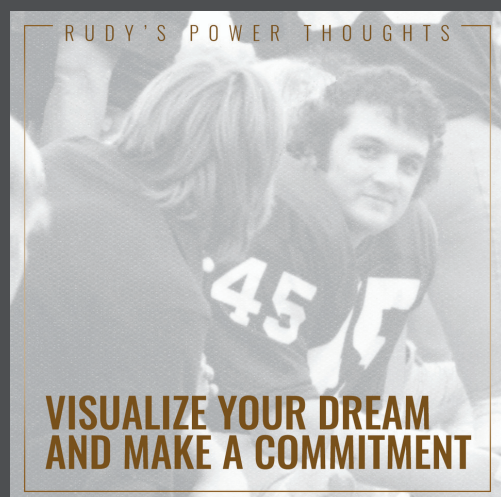
Is Rudy still friends with the janitor?

The janitor in the movie actually represents three different people who were very influential to Rudy during that time of his life. Due to time limitations in the film, they were not able to develop three individual characters, and found that it would be more effective if all three people were rolled into one in order to represent the impact they had on Rudy.



In the game Rudy played in, did the offense actually decide on the field to go against the coach's set play, while throwing a half-back pass, scoring a touchdown and allowing the defense to play the field again? or was this just a Hollywood embellishment?

The 1975 season was Dan Devine's first year. The team had a difficult time adjusting to all of the transitions that season. Also, the NCAA implemented a rule only allowing 60 players to dress during Rudy's senior year. That was the only year that the rule was actually applied. The seniors who were in the game that day did what they had an opportunity to do. If they had a chance to score, they would go for it, regardless of the play that was called. It was not really meant for Rudy, but some of the seniors came running off the field and said, "Now it's your turn". The film makers took artistic license to modify the game a bit to be able to tell the story in a shorter amount of time without losing the significance of certain moments in Rudy's real life experience.



What was Rudy's height and weight when he played at Notre Dame?

Rudy was 5'6" and weighed 165 lbs

What was Rudy's major at Notre Dame?

Rudy graduated with a degree in Sociology

What is De-Bob doing today?

Real names could not be used in the movie to protect the rights of the actual people involved in Rudy's life at the time. The character that De-Bob actually represented is a federal judge in real life.

Was Rudy's family supportive of his dream?

The Ruettinger family always wanted everyone in the family to do well. Family was always the central focus. Rudy's parents knew that he was putting everything on the line and that many odds were against him. They just didn't want him to get hurt. Although Rudy didn't blame them, he continued to move forward and followed his heart. By living his dream, Rudy inspired his brothers and sisters to pursue a college education and go for their dreams as well.



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How did the movie RUDY get made? Did Hollywood contact Rudy?

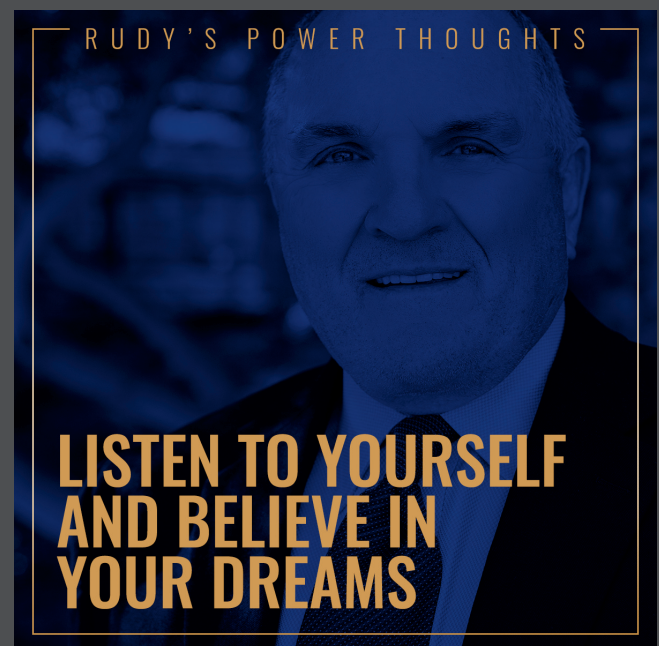
For me, it began with a dream about going to Notre Dame, it was more of a fantasy than an opportunity. Then as I kept my passion alive and kept moving forward, the fantasy turned into more of a potential reality. The reality was then broken down into goals. Once I got through the struggle of achieving those goals, I started the small steps towards the movie. I started talking about the movie, and developing it in my mind. After that I put the ideas on paper outlining it moment by moment. The next step is to find the right people and discover how they may be able to contribute to the process. It's also about eliminating the ones who are not a good fit for your project as well. The goal is to build a solid team of people who are passionate about the message and have the connections to bring the idea to the next step. You never know who those people are going to be and who they may know to move things to the next step. Keep in mind that there is always six degrees of separation. I finally met the writer through a hotel manager whose brother was roommates with him in college -- like I said, you never know. The writer was very sensitive to me and the story I wanted to tell, so we worked very closely on it to completion. There was much more work ahead before leading up to getting all approvals from Hollywood. The entire process took 10 years to complete. Never give up on the things you believe in. It's a super long story that I will share in another book down the road.



What message does Rudy want people to get out of the movie?

I want it to inspire you to the next level of whatever level you are currently in your life. The movie delivers a message of "You Can Do It". It shows you that whatever odds are against you, you can get up and find another way to make it happen. The movie has been classified among the top sports movies, but most people see it as more than a sports movie. The subtle spirituality in the movie is the magic. The message is rooted in the dynamics of a human being, from the struggle of the preparation, the reality of the academics, the development of friendships, the journey of finding myself at Notre Dame, and the naiveness of the Dream all culminated into a message of hope and the triumph of the Human Spirit. In the end, the movie was not about a tackle or even about football, it was about believing in a dream and never giving up - it was about a passion that inspired you to keep pushing forward because there was a message in there -- a message of hope that would inspire others to keep going and let the doors open along the way.

The movie definitely changes lives. When I speak, people come up to me and tell me how the movie impacted their life. A dad told me how his son gave up on sports and school and that the movie inspired him to live! Others have similar stories of hope after seeing the movie and were inspired to never give up on themselves. That is what the movie is really about.





**YOU CAN'T SUCCEED
IF YOU NEVER TRY**

What advice would Rudy give to others who want to pursue a Dream?

Do what you really want to do. Don't let the words of others hold you back. Take a step towards your dream. As you move closer to your dream, new opportunities will

open up for you that you never imagined possible. Along the way, the journey will be full of hard work and struggles, but I learned "the greater the struggle, the greater the victory". After all of that hard work, you will not regret reaching your dream or the fact that you are now a better, stronger person than ever before. As you move towards your dream, you will be an inspiration to others as well and that alone is huge! If you commit to something, the blessings come when you follow through. Commitment introduces new opportunity. Commitment and Accountability keeps you on the right track and holds everything together. Once you make a decision to move toward your dream, that is when you make the commitment. I decided to do whatever it takes to keep my commitment to my dream. Whether it was cutting grass, cleaning bathrooms, or selling cars to pay the rent, it didn't matter as long as I was doing everything I could to pay the bills and stay on course.

Does Rudy have children?

Yes! Rudy has two children. He has a daughter (Jessica Noel) and a son (Danny Joseph).

Did Rudy serve in the Armed Forces?

Yes, Rudy served in the Navy before he went to Notre Dame. Not only was Rudy proud to serve his country, he was able to pay for a portion of his college education with the GI Bill. Rudy's experience in the Navy also helped to build his character and self-confidence. These qualities definitely played an important role in the pursuit and development of his dream.

How did you get started in Motivational Speaking?

I have always wanted to help people to become the very best version of themselves. It was just something that made me feel like I was making a difference that mattered. Inspiring people from my heart was the greatest gift I could offer and I wanted to somehow make it what I did everyday. After graduating from Notre Dame, I pursued a few speaking opportunities just for fun. Mostly I spoke for free and just enjoyed the opportunity to inspire other people. At that time, speaking wasn't my career, but I always had a vision of one day making that happen. I knew that it was something that I could be good at - and a way to deliver a message to people based on my real-life experiences and not just on information that I read in a book. I wanted to inspire people to Never Quit on their dreams - to tell them not to let the words of others hold them back - that no matter how big the struggle, the victory was still possible and would be worth it! I wanted people to know that if I could do it, they can too. I wanted them to know that when we surround ourselves with great information, that is what we become.

My speaking career began when the movie was released in 1993. I received a phone call from a corporate executive who wanted me to inspire his team with the same messages that were in the movie. From that one event I received other speaking engagements. Then I started to get calls from various corporations, universities, sports teams, high schools, and community leaders to deliver the same message to their group. My speaking career had begun and I will continue speaking as long as God continues to bless me to do so.

RUDY'S POWER THOUGHTS

**CREATE DAILY SUCCESS
HABITS AND SURROUND
YOURSELF WITH INFORMATION
THAT WILL EMPOWER
AND INSPIRE YOU**



What is the best advice your mom and dad ever gave you?

The best thing I learned from my mom and dad was to always back up your teammate, your wingman, your partner, your spouse, when in front of others. Any type of disagreement or discourse should happen behind closed doors and not in front of others. Any issues can be resolved through the best communication. You always want to set your partner up for success. The example they showed us kids was that they never argued in front of us. They always were a united front. This helped to build a solid foundation for us kids. It gave us strength and confidence and a strong character. The more love that spouses show each other in front of the kids, the stronger the kids become.

What insights can you give others who are striving for their dream? Additional Thoughts

First, I would recommend that you read my book, RUDY MY STORY. It's a combination of real life experiences and the insights I learned along the way. When I committed to my dream of attending Notre Dame, I decided then that I would keep moving forward no matter what the obstacles. Even if I had to change my approach or do things differently in order to get there. If you commit to something, you have to follow through. A lot of us don't do that. That is what I learned and it is an important message for all of us. When you make a commitment, new opportunities show up. Everything builds on accountability and responsibility -- ownership of ourselves, our actions, and the process. Once you make the decision, make the commitment.

Following your dreams creates an incredible energy that propels you to the next level. Being connected to such a high level energy brings the right people in your path. At that point there is not a time limit - the key is to keep moving forward. The Power of Life is in your dreams. As you move, others will be inspired and more greatness happens. Set your goals, commit to the process and take one step at a time. Surround yourself with positive information to stay inspired. Keep the faith and Never Quit. The magic is finding hope when all the odds are stacked against you. The rewards are revealed when you persevere and keep moving forward. Sometimes we can't see the rewards in the darkness - get through the storm and they will be there.

Would you say, looking back now, that the movie exceeded your expectations?

ASOLUTELY!! There are so many ways that the movie has exceeded my expectations. Mostly it's all of the emails and stories that I hear about how the movie has inspired people to keep going, to believe that they can do it, to realize that their contribution matters, and that they are valuable. That to me is everything!! The movie is so much more than a football movie, It's about the power of dreams, it's about finding yourself, believing in the value of life, understanding the value, and living with a pure and sincere gratitude for all that you are able to accomplish.

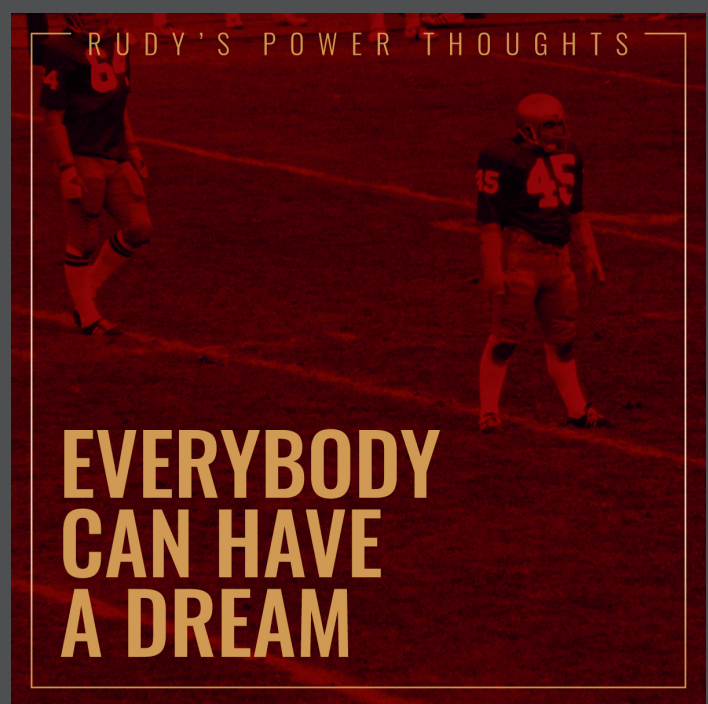
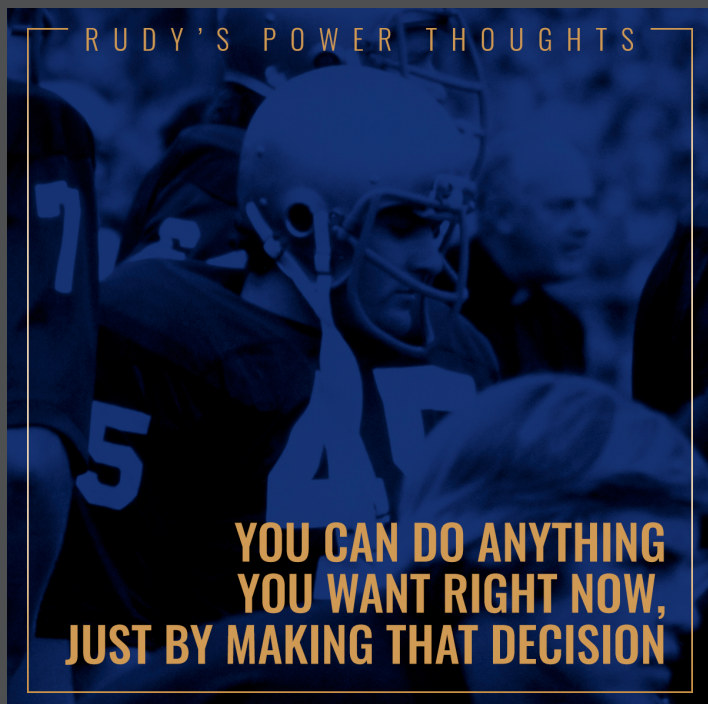
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How do you handle that responsibility?

I recognize that it is definitely a responsibility that I was called to handle. I recognize that it is an opportunity to inspire others. I work to remain humble knowing that I am grateful for the opportunity to deliver a message that gives hope and uplifts the human spirit. When people ask why would they make a movie about a guy who made 1 tackle? I respond, because it changes lives for the better. Keep Dreaming Big and Never Give Up!

Why wasn't Rudy's name on his jersey?

My name wasn't on his jersey because it was a last minute decision to allow me to dress so there was no time to put my name on the jersey. Then, getting to play in the game was a dream come true. I'm glad I didn't quit.



Rudy, tell us about your experience in the Navy. How did the military help you in your college years? How did your military service, your patriotism, and sense of duty to your country help shape your success?

The experience in the Navy set my goals in order and gave me more confidence because I did something totally unexpected by joining the Navy. I found a direction and pursued that path. The time in the military helped me to understand that you must develop your self esteem to get anywhere in life. The Navy helped my college journey in many ways. It helped me to define the "want to" and the "know how" at Notre Dame. I eliminated the distractions and my goals were very clear. It was the GI Bill that gave me the opportunity financially to go to Notre Dame. I am forever grateful for that blessing. I understood Patriotism at a new level. I was even more inspired by my father, his father, and all of our forefathers that have fought for our freedom. I understood that commitment and realized that it was the team that was important - a common mission - It was something so much bigger than myself. I was blessed to find the opportunity to contribute to that mission.



Rudy, you were also a boxer at Notre Dame.
How did that experience impact your life?



It is perfectly clear now how much boxing impacted my life. It was everything for me at Notre Dame. It connected me to people. In college and in many other areas of our lives, it is so important to stay connected to something - something that gives you some structure to build your life around. It keeps you moving, keeps your blood flowing, keeps you from getting lonely, gives you a network of friends and accountability. Boxing gave me strength both physically and mentally. It helped me stay in shape for football and was a great way to release stress to clear my mind. It was because of my boxing experience at Notre Dame that the students knew who I was. I was the Bengal Bouts Champion at Notre Dame. That is why they knew who I was when I got put in the game. That is why they chanted my name. It all came back around full circle. That is another reason that I am glad I never quit. Never Quit.

Rudy, how do you want to be remembered?

I want to be remembered as someone who never gave up. Someone who believed in a dream and the power of the human spirit. I want to be remembered as someone who gave hope to others and inspired others to believe in themselves. Through the journey of my own struggles and victories, I hope to let others know that they are valuable and that they too can live their dreams. I want to be remembered as someone whose life mission made the world a better place.



RUDY'S POWER THOUGHTS



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE
IN A KID'S LIFE**

Tell us about the Rudy Foundation

The mission of the
Rudy Foundation is to
help kids reach their
full potential
cognitively, emotionally,
physically and
spiritually.

The Rudy Foundation developed a Character Education Program, called the RUDY AWARDS, for children in middle school & high school across the nation. It was designed to help kids set goals and develop a career path. The Program awarded scholarships to Youth for self-improvement that could be used towards college, vocational schools, training programs, or continuing education programs to strengthen themselves and their education as a pathway to support their career goals. The Rudy Award Winners are recognized with a Rudy Medallion, School Plaque, and a scholarship for further education and self improvement. The Rudy Award Program also recognized College Athletes who not only achieved excellence in sports but also demonstrated heart and a connection to the human spirit on and off the field.

Have a question for Rudy? Email us!
RudyInternational45@gmail.com

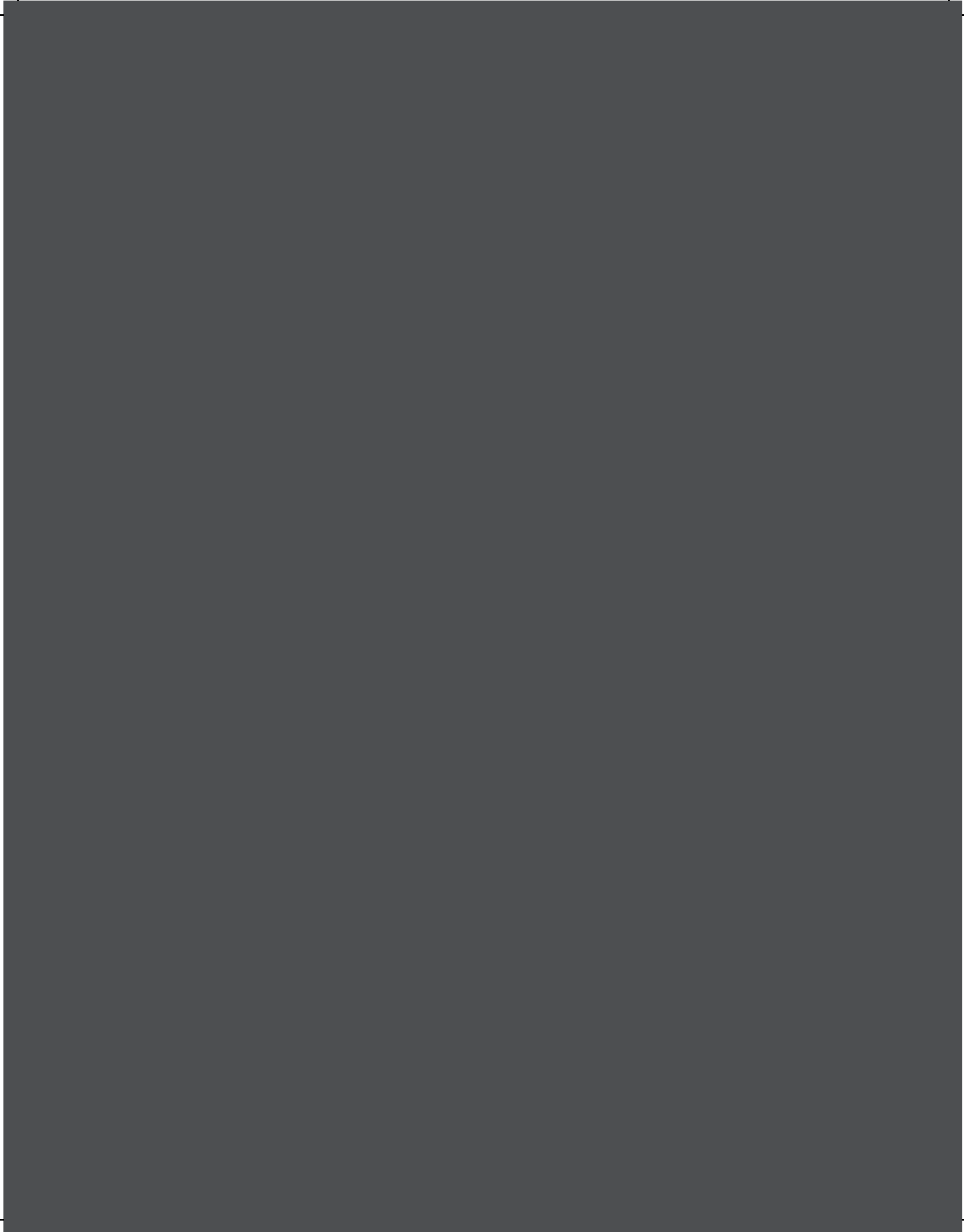


RUDY'S POWER THOUGHTS

**FIND A MENTOR
WHO WILL SUPPORT
YOU AND PUSH YOU
TOWARD YOUR DREAM**

Rudy Ruettiger

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