



This book is about leadership and decision-making. In From The Jungle To The Boardroom, author Mike Monahan, focuses on the lessons he learned in the jungles of Vietnam and in leading as CEO of Life Success Seminars, a Cincinnati based nonprofit organization that provided personal and business leadership development.

From The Jungle To The Boardroom

by Mike Monahan

Order the complete book from the publisher

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9297.html?s=pdf)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9297.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**

SECOND EDITION

#1 INC. MAGAZINE BESTSELLER!

FROM THE
Jungle

TO THE
Boardroom

MIKE MONAHAN

“Thanks to this terrific book, you have the opportunity to become familiar with Mike Monahan and his powerful and disarming message.”

— THANE MAYNARD —

Host of NPR’s “The 90-Second Naturalist”

Connect with Mike Monahan



Sign up for Mike’s blog at
www.ThinkMonahan.com



mmonahan1



MikeMonahan13



mikemonahancinti



thinkmonahan

Also available by Mike Monahan

Seven Simple Truths

Available in paperback and as ebook

Your Future is Stuck in Your Past

Available in paperback and as ebook

Occupy Your Future

Available in paperback and as ebook

Rainbow Centering

Meditation CD

Mountaintop Centering

Motivational CD

From the Jungle to the Boardroom

Copyright © 2011 ThinkMonahan, LLC

ISBN 978-1-63492-391-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author. Brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews are allowed.

Published by BookLocker.com Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla.

Jacket by Michael R. Mitzel

Edited by Ann Weber: <http://www.revealingwords.com>

Author photo by Julie Monahan Hogan

Printed on acid-free paper.

ThinkMonahan, LLC

<http://www.ThinkMonahan.com>

First Paperback Edition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE DAY MY LIFE CHANGED	1
My Story	5
AM I PREPARED?	7
The Draft	11
Not Doing Anything Is Doing Something	13
Basic Training and a Whole New World	15
Peer Pressure	19
AIT, aka Basic Training All Over Again	21
Putting Earrings on a Pig	25
Going to the Dogs	29
Walking to the Edge	33
California Dreaming	35
Missing the Journey	37
The Reunion	41
We Choose	43
Love Bites	45
Am I Prepared?	47
AM I SAFE?	49
Let's Get Swinging	53
Working With Difficult People	55
In the Doghouse	57
Fighting Back	59
Time to Go Into the Field	63

Making It Up	67
Landings and Take-Offs	69
Drop Zone	73
Rank: I Don't Think So!	75
Authority and Control	77
It's a Matter of Conditioning	79
The Bad and Good of Adapting	81
Back In the Field	83
Familiar and Comfortable	85
Going to the Mountaintop	87
Over the Top	89
Rotating the Scout-Dog Teams	91
Life's Not Fair	93
Walking Point	95
Leading Your Team	97
Off the Boat	99
Trusting Your Gut	101
The Perfect Landing	103
The Grass Is Always Greener	105
Am I Safe?	107

AM I ALONE? 109

The Lone Ranger	113
The Buck Stops Here	115
You Can't Pin a Medal on Chico	117
Following Your Gut	119
Caring Matters	123

Responsibility	127
Controlling Kentucky	129
In Over Your Head	131
Coming Off-Line	133
Pass It On or Pass It Up	135
The Sounds of Silence	139
Am I Alone?	141

CLARITY 143

The American War	147
Living a Life of Purpose	149
Meeting the Enemy	151
Putting It Down	153
Past, Present, and Future	155
It's a Wonderful Life	157

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 159

WHY MIKE MONAHAN 161

The Day My Life Changed

As our jet touched down and the captain turned off the air conditioning, I immediately felt the heat. An indescribable odor seeped into the plane.

The door of the plane opened as the engines went silent, and a set of stairs was pushed in place. As I stepped through the door, the heat almost knocked me over. It actually took my breath away.

I was filled with fear and, with each step, I could feel the fear taking over. It seemed like there were a hundred steps, but I finally came to the last stair. My life was about to change forever.

I took that final step onto the tarmac. I'd just entered a world that I'd dreaded for so long.

It was May 14, 1969. I was in Vietnam.

To my surprise, I heard applause. I saw a hundred or so men in worn-out fatigues. They looked exhausted. They were clapping, which seemed strange.

But then it hit me why they were clapping. The ovation wasn't for us. They were applauding the *seats* in which we'd just arrived. They were excited because in a few minutes, after the plane refueled, they would board the jet to fly back to "the world," back to the United States. They had made it through their Vietnam tour.

Mine was just beginning.

As we walked toward the check-in area, I felt sick to my stomach. I walked by all the GIs waiting to go home. They were weathered and worn out; I could see it in their faces. I tried to imagine me standing there a year later, but I couldn't. It just didn't seem possible.

The other arriving soldiers and I went into a makeshift wooden building with a tin roof. As I waited to be helped, I could hear the plane engines rev. A few minutes later, the jet took off, beginning the trip home.

FROM THE JUNGLE TO THE BOARDROOM

I couldn't believe that I really was in Vietnam.

It seemed like it took forever to process our information. I just wanted to get to where I was going so I could figure out what I needed to do to get my head straight.

For the next few days, I was close enough to Bien Hoa Air Base to see planes come and go. Twice a day, flights would arrive from the US, delivering new troops and then returning soldiers home from the war. As I watched each flight leave, I had a sinking feeling in my gut. All I could think was, *I will never make it home! The odds are slim to none that I can make it home in a year.*

I was depressed. This was my worst nightmare. I was twenty years old, away from home, in a foreign land.

I really was in Vietnam.

Each day as I watched the planes leave for "the world," I became more depressed. One day as I stood watching, I knew that I somehow needed to change my attitude. But at that moment, I didn't know how I would get over my feeling of hopelessness.

How could I convince myself that I could make it through alive and be on a plane heading back home in a year?

My Story

It's been more than forty years since I returned from Vietnam, but I can still remember certain things like they happened yesterday. I was twenty years old when I arrived in Vietnam. One year later, when I returned home, I felt much older than twenty-one.

Oddly enough, returning home from the war wasn't as easy as it would seem. Americans were tired of seeing the killing on the news, and it was reflected in the country's mood. The feeling was, "Let's not talk about it!" So I didn't talk about it. That worked out pretty well, because I didn't know what I wanted to say about my year in Vietnam, anyway. I had feelings stuck inside me, and I really wasn't sure what they were about.

When I was sent to Vietnam, I was told that I'd be fighting for freedom. Maybe it was just me, but I spent a full year in Vietnam and never once did I feel like I was fighting for freedom. I never felt like the Vietnamese people saw us as fighting for their freedom, either. We simply patrolled and never took control of anything.

I was actually in a fight for my life.

I'm still not sure what the whole war was about, and I never will be. I probably wouldn't believe the truth even if I heard it today, because I have too many of my own opinions.

My memories of my time in Vietnam and the stories I'm sharing with you are both comical and serious, and I'll show you how they relate to everyday

situations—at work and at home. But my stories aren't tragic, like many depictions of the war in books and movies.

So I have a few fears about sharing my story with you. First, I feel as if I was lucky and that I may offend the real heroes of the war by telling my story.

My second fear is the same fear I had when I came home in April 1970, and that's the fear of being ridiculed.

I'm proud that I served in Vietnam but hate the fact that we never seem to learn from our mistakes. The thought of my wife, Nancy, and I sending one of our children or grandchildren to war makes me feel sick.

In the following pages, I'll share three questions that I asked myself while I was in Vietnam. And I still ask myself these three questions each day—as a husband, dad, and executive director/CEO of a nonprofit organization:

1. Am I prepared?
2. Am I safe?
3. Am I alone?

These are leadership questions. We're all leaders, twenty-four hours a day—we're leading ourselves and we're leading others at work and at home.

The three questions seem pretty simple, but they aren't easy. And you may be surprised by my answers!

Past, Present, and Future

The three questions that I asked in this book are about the past, present, and future: Am I prepared? Am I safe? Am I alone?

You can't separate your life into compartments like a set of dresser drawers. Try as you may, it's impossible to erase your past. Your past has a big impact on your present life. And your present decisions are the foundation for your future.

Your life will continue to be woven together by past, present, and future events.

Am I prepared? When you ask this question, you review your past experiences and results. If you succeeded in the past, you'll probably feel confident. But if you experienced failure, you may not feel prepared. If you make your current decisions based solely on the past, your future will look just like your past. Because you failed in the past, does that mean you'll fail today or tomorrow?

So am I prepared? I will do my best to keep learning and growing, but I won't know until I finish. I'm prepared to make new decisions each day. I'm prepared to make mistakes along the way. I'm prepared to surround myself with the best people. I'm prepared to make unpopular choices that I think are the right decisions. I'm prepared to make it up when I don't feel prepared. I'm prepared to have fun with all my decisions and with the people I interact with each day. I'm prepared to die someday and know that I lived a full life.

Am I safe? Fear is the biggest hindrance to living a great life. Most people experience fear from two perspectives. The first source of fear is

past experiences where the outcome is perceived as bad. The second source of fear is the unknown. It's easy to understand the struggle: You can't change the past or guarantee the future, so making decisions in the present is scary. What role does fear play as you make decisions and take action—or not take action?

So am I safe? I'm often afraid as I face tough decisions, but this doesn't mean that I'm not safe. Sometimes I feel like I'm walking point in Vietnam again. But even when I don't feel safe, I can act anyway. Fear is just a feeling. It's what I do with that fear that matters.

Am I alone? Feeling alone is common. Maybe it's not your parents' fault that you feel alone—or your boss's or your ex-wife's or your old high-school flame's. Could it be that feeling alone is just a feeling all of us have? How is feeling alone any different than any of the other fears you have?

So am I alone? I have a great circle of influence, but I often do feel as if I'm alone. I wish I could take a break from leadership sometimes, but it doesn't work that way. Being alone is not being lonely. When the buck stops with me, alone is good. It's my decision.

All three questions usually are evoked by emotions, and the bottom-line emotion is the feeling of fear. If you took feelings out of the equation and did a logical checklist, your results would change dramatically.

If you want to accomplish something different—if you want to be a leader—the three questions change to something like this:

- Do I want to do this? Yes or no.
- Has someone else done it? Yes or no.
- Do I need help? Yes or no.

And this is the action step: Just do it!

Once you pull the drama out of your decision making, the pace immediately picks up. Feelings—especially the feeling of fear—are the reasons most people use to slow down life. Why do you slow down your life? So you can feel as if you're in control and minimize your fear of failure or of being hurt?

Don't get lost in your past experiences or your fear of the future. The only way I know that you can master your present is to stay in it.

Why Mike Monahan

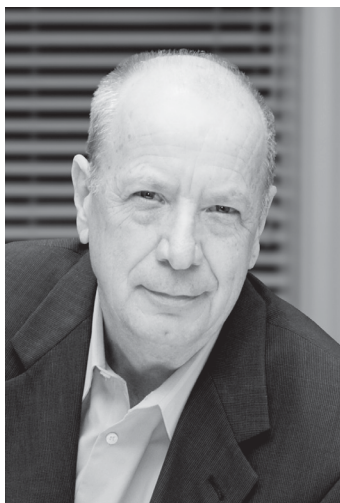
After 45 years of working and running a business, I find my passion and strength is in working with entrepreneurs and business people who are serious about growing their companies.

I believe that each of us experiences defining moments that lead to success. And it's up to us to seize the opportunity in those moments or let them pass us by.

In Fall 2013, I retired from my 19-year career as CEO/executive director for Life Success Seminars, a Cincinnati-based nonprofit. And in Summer 2014, I retired from my 16-year tenure as the lead facilitator for Life Success' monthly seminar that focuses on personal discovery and empowerment.

In 2011, I founded my own company, ThinkMonahan, LLC. At ThinkMonahan, I work with coaching clients and offer Power7, a training designed for clients to look at their careers and build their businesses.

My coaching business is built on my 25-year history in the personal-development field and my work with thousands of people. Along with coaching and training, I am requested to speak to groups about my books.



Copyright © Julie Monahan Hogan



This book is about leadership and decision-making. In From The Jungle To The Boardroom, author Mike Monahan, focuses on the lessons he learned in the jungles of Vietnam and in leading as CEO of Life Success Seminars, a Cincinnati based nonprofit organization that provided personal and business leadership development.

From The Jungle To The Boardroom

by Mike Monahan

Order the complete book from the publisher

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9297.html?s=pdf)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/9297.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**