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On Wednesday, July 8th, I traded my right knee I was born with for a pair built to keep me moving for the rest of my life.

A little nervous. Mostly ready. And I've decided to do something I don't do often enough — share the whole thing in the open: the decision, the recovery, and the return to a life where I move for at least an hour every single day.

Here's how I got here.

At 40, I tore my right ACL skiing. Five years later, I tore my left MCL — not from a fall, but from years of quietly favoring the knee I'd already hurt. The injury you protect becomes the one you create.

Then, about five years ago, the diagnosis I didn't want: osteoarthritis in both knees, cartilage thinning on both sides.

I did everything you're supposed to do first. Stretching. Braces. Injections every 90 days. I lost 35 pounds. For a while it genuinely worked.

Then, slowly, it didn't. The injections gave me less and less relief. The pain gave me more and more. The math stopped adding up.

So I made the call.

In leadership, we run the low-cost experiments first — and when the data changes, we have the discipline to change the decision. This was no different. Replacement wasn't giving up on my knees. It was choosing the next 40 active years over a few more managed ones.

My goal is simple: full mobility, an hour of movement a day, and the same energy and enthusiasm I bring to everything else.

I keep meeting people who've had this surgery — or are weighing it right now. So I'm going to document the journey here once a week until I'm fully back.

If that's you, or someone you love, follow along. Let's do the hard, hopeful things out loud. 💪



See you on the other side, I said

I'm here. It's July 10. A new knees' worth of hardware in one leg, a walker I've already nicknamed "Grandpa", and the first real lesson of this journey:

Recovery isn't a feeling. It's an operating system.

Before surgery, I did what I help Leaders do — I built an operating rhythm and committed to it before I'd need it. Because I knew the version of me on Day 3, sleep-deprived and sore, was not going to be the one making good decisions in the moment.

The system has three parts:

1. Non-negotiables. Ice cycles all day — 40 minutes on, 20 off. Pedaling five times a day. Ankle pumps every waking hour. No debate, no negotiation with myself. The decision was made once, in advance.
2. Leading indicators. 750 steps a day this week. Full knee extension by Day 7. I'm not measuring how I feel — feelings lag. I'm measuring the inputs that predict where I'll be in Week 12.
3. Consistency - that doesn't care about my mood. Motivation showed up for about a day and a half. The system shows up every 60 minutes.

It's the same thing I tell leadership teams: clarity plus consistency plus the discipline to run the play on the days you don't feel like it. Turns out it works on knees, too.

And since I talk a lot about vulnerability-based trust, here's mine this week: it hurts. Sleep comes in fragments. There was a 2 AM moment when I questioned the whole decision. Then the alarm went off, I did my ankle pumps, and the system carried me when my willpower couldn't.

One note — my medical plan belongs to my surgeon and my PT, so that stays between us. What I'm sharing here is the system around it, not medical advice.

Week 2 goal: 1,000 steps a day and 90 degrees of bend.

If you're facing this surgery — or the season after one — follow along. We're doing the hard, hopeful things out loud. 💪



It's July 15 - one week ago I had my knee replaced. The hardest part wasn't the surgery — it was hour 37.

Here's what nobody tells you: the first 36 hours feel deceptively easy. The surgical meds are still doing their job, and I caught myself thinking, "I've got this." Then the meds wore off, and the next 24 hours were the most humbling of the journey so far.

This week's progress: Since that low point, every day has been better than the one before — more motion, less swelling, less pain.

Two things have moved the needle most. First, physical therapy: a good PT pushes your range of motion further than you'd ever push yourself, and that's exactly the point. Second, something almost embarrassingly simple — getting up every hour and walking the house. I started at 750 steps a day. This week I crossed 2,500.

The leadership parallel: Every hard change follows the same curve. Early ease creates false confidence. Then reality arrives, and it's worse than you planned. The leaders who come through it aren't the ones who avoid the dip — they're the ones who expected it, kept moving through it, and trusted small daily reps to compound. Recovery, like leadership, is won an hour at a time.

Looking ahead: Next week: more flexing, more steps, less walker. And a debt I can't repay — my wife and a circle of friends rooting and praying for me have carried this recovery as much as I have. My progress at 30, 60, and 90 days will be theirs too.

If you're an active leader determined to stay active into your 90s, follow along. Let's do the hard, hopeful work out loud. 💪

Week 1 of the journey. See you next week.

P.S. Wimbledon, the World Cup, the All-Star break, The Open, and a stack of good books — recovery timing has its perks. 🏆🎾📚



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