

Alex Stavros

Addressing the Mental Health Challenges of America's Youth as a Service-Minded and Humanitarian Leader

Some of the greatest people in History have said that serving others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves, is perhaps the best we can do. Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Such a sense of service to others, of lending a helping hand to people in need, and of altruism is the message of Alex Stavros, a humanitarian, entrepreneur, and the CEO of America's leading mental health treatment providers specialized in serving preteens, teens and young adults: 'Embark Behavioral Health'. Mental health issues among our youth is among today's most serious concerns. "Embark's big goal is a bold one: To lead the way in driving adolescent and young adult anxiety, depression as well as suicide from the all-time highs of today to all-time lows by 2028. This is the lion we are chasing," Stavros says.

Recent statistics are showing there is an alarming increase in the number of people having mental health challenges, especially among youth. Sadly, this is far beyond the capacity and ability of traditional providers. Hence the dire need for bold initiatives like what Embark Behavioral Health is tackling.

Embark's first program started 25 years ago, with an intention to provide outcomes-driven, and evidence based family systems treatment in a residential treatment setting. Embark has now



CEO
Embark Behavioral Health



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set out to increase the awareness and lower the stigma of our society's mental health crisis, as well as making good quality treatment more accessible. Hence most of their efforts are collaborative, social, action-oriented, and proactive in spirit, as they endeavour to provide some of the highest quality mental health support services available in the USA.

Embark: The Nation's Leading Family Behavioral Healthcare Provider

Embark believes that systemic healthcare challenges can only be overcome through a full continuum of services. A spectrum of services allow for intervention to happen at the most appropriate and least invasive level of care. Which is why, over the years, Embark's services have matured into a diverse range of programs capable of helping clients, as well as their families, when and where they need it. These programs and service levels include inhome therapy, virtual coaching/ therapy, outpatient clinics, wilderness therapy, short and long-term residential programs, therapeutical boarding schools, and young adult transitional living. Furthermore, thanks to a distribution of many facilities throughout the nation, they are steadily reaching more and more families in need of help.

Over the years, the company has become recognized as the country's leading mental health service

provider for youth. Embark's uniques include:

1. A full continuum of care, unlike any other organization.
2. A unique specialization and deep 25-year legacy of serving youth.
3. Treatment that is relationship-focused, family systems, and evidence-based.
4. A set of internationally validated outcomes to drive treatment in real-time.
5. The highest levels of quality care and safety standards.

The company's name 'Embark' is intended to inspire a journey toward a better future, through action and collaboration. Underneath, their purpose is "to create joy and heal generations" through values like empathy, service, trusting relationships, growth, and results.

Tracing Mr. Stavros's Professional Journey

Alex Stavros's desire to live a life of service, arose in his childhood. He grew up in Peru, alongside some of the region's troubled and desolate orphans. Seeing their trauma first-hand taught him empathy. He started to realize there was joy in finding purpose

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and meaning, especially in helping people close to us. He realized that we all needed to have humility and gratitude for all the blessings we do have in our lives presently. Over the years, his desire to live in service of others guided his education as well as professional endeavours. As part of his formal education, he studied economic theory, international relations, business and social entrepreneurship at renowned universities.

In his career, Mr. Stavros has completely dedicated his professional life to the service of others. Before Embark, he had been the leading figure in many international humanitarian organizations. He also set up an investment firm to acquire and lead mission-driven businesses. Over the course of many years of service, he developed a firm belief that “business can and should be a force for good”.

“Entrepreneurship gave me an opportunity to create the culture to match the kind of man I strived to be: Empathetic, service-minded, relationship-driven, with a growth mindset and oriented towards results,” Stavros reflects on the beginnings of his entrepreneurial journey.

Even then, Stavros wanted to remain grounded in a life of service and sacrifice, alongside helping people in need. All this pointed toward the healthcare sector. Moreover, healthcare also attracted other leaders and front-line staffs, all similarly service-minded and compassionate. So, he decided to work hard within this sector for the rest of his career through Embark Behavioral Health.

Approaching a Brighter Future

Over the course of the decades, Alex shares that his professional journey has been an incredible learning and humbling experience. He firmly believes that he was guided by faith in God as well as the support of many at Embark, his friends and family, and in particular his wife, Maria-Paz – the daughter of immigrant parents from Chile and Uruguay – who has taught him what it means to serve selflessly. Today, he has learnt that CEO just means Chief Servant and Visionary: an executive that sets a vision and then looks to serve others. Further, he says that we need to see our jobs as service and our path to joy; this way, we can see our jobs from a place of humility and deep gratitude. “I feel a deep responsibility for reaching the big goal we have set out to tackle. I love this company, our people are amazing, and the families we serve are giving their all. I work for them. I want my work to be my life, not a means to an end,” Stavros says.

“Adopt a growth mindset and believe that anything is possible. Combine a will to succeed with humility and a deep penchant for learning and getting better. See people not as objects but as people with unique histories, motivations, and emotions. Acknowledge that the beauty of business and life overall hinges on the development of these complex relationships. Enjoy the challenge. Love people,” Mr. Alex gives advice to today’s youth. He concludes by encouraging young people to, in Mark Batterson’s words: “Chase the Lion” i.e., to dream big, to consider taking risks and to work hard to make their dreams come true.