

# Amazing Determination!

## From Pit Bull Attack to Full Recovery

In this interview we are talking with Jared Cornelius who used kettlebell training, iron determination and a strong faith in God to fully recover from severe bites inflicted by a pit bull.

*Warning, there are some graphically intense pictures of Jared's arm and leg after the attack. If you have a weak stomach be careful when looking at these pictures!*

**Brian:** Hello Jared, can you tell our readers what happened?

**Jared:** Sure. About 2 months ago I was attacked by a pit bull. The dog was trained to attack if someone points at him or he gets scared in the event a burglar came in and was pointing a gun at someone.

**B:** How badly were you injured?

**J:** He bit me nine different times. Both hands, both wrists and forearms, right foot, and right calf. My right forearm and right calf had pieces of muscle missing, which was from trying to pull away too fast and he would catch me anyway.

My forearm was ripped to the white (looked like bone) and calf was so deep I could stick my index finger up to middle knuckle joint 'into' my leg. Pretty deep. Nothing had any feeling to the touch. I took photos day-by-day to track the progression of my recovery. I even have pictures from within 5 minutes after the attack when I was waiting on the ambulance.

**B:** First off you are a very sick man for taking picture that soon after the incident ;- ) Did anyone come to help you?

**J:** The whole neighborhood heard it and came to help, but when they saw what was happening, even though they had shovels, everyone was too scared to get close. We were ALL too scared, which is understandable. I would have felt really bad if someone was put in the same place I am now.

***Little did I know this would be the hardest struggle I have ever gone through in my life.***

**B:** So then what happened?

**J:** When the attack was all over I thought the worst was over but it hadn't even begun yet. Little did I know this would be the hardest struggle I have ever gone through in my life. They took me downtown to the ER and had me there about 4-5 hours.

They had me doing different scarecrow positions while they X-Rayed from different angles. Holding my arm up after this happened hurt soooo bad.



*Jared's arm day 1*

From trying to pull my hand out of the dog's mouth I ended up pulling a lot of the muscles in my right shoulder and backside. I didn't know this at the time though, and I couldn't figure out why someone whose shoulders were as strong as mine became so weak all of a sudden.

When I came home that night from the hospital, I was so relieved to be back and safe in my room. I tried to Deadlift with my wraps on, and even though I could put my hands around the bar, I couldn't Deadlift even an 8 lb EZ-curl barbell.

***I could push on my hand and leave a dent for about 6 seconds because I was holding so much fluid.***

I didn't get any real sleep that night and I had about twenty nightmares so vivid they were like High Definition TV! When I woke up the next day I knew my struggle hadn't even truly begun yet.

I woke up and looked at my pillow to see that I had been sweating so badly I left a chalk outline on my black blankets and pillowcase. I was already infected at this point. I was bruising up and swelling so badly I didn't look human. I could push on my hand and leave a dent for about 6 seconds because I was holding so much fluid.

**B: Were you thinking, "this is it, I'll never be strong or able bodied again?"**

J: Well I sat down and began thinking of a strategy, just like in a Jiu-Jitsu match where you think of an attack plan against your opponent. I looked at the paralysis as the enemy, and I had to attack it with everything I had. When I got out of bed and started walking around that morning, I realized I couldn't walk without a heavy limp. When he bit me on my arms I thought, "Crap, there goes Presses!" Just like when I tried to run and he bit my leg I thought, "Crap, there goes Squats too!" Ha ha!

**B: I'm sure our readers would love to know what plan of attack you followed.**

J: I knew I had to try something different. I didn't think regular powerlifting would cut it, just like I didn't think calisthenics alone would either. I felt there was something more out there that I needed to try. I had done kettlebell lifts with dumbbells before and liked it, but knew real kettlebells had a completely different feel so I wanted one for myself. I started looking online for one and I got really REALLY scared I would get one too heavy.

While I waited on the Kettlebell, I practiced as much bodyweight calisthenics as I could and what Qi-Gong I could to try and detoxify my system and get the infection out.



*A very infected arm on day 4!*

At the time, even doing a pushup on my knees was impossible. All of the small bones on top my right hand were broken and I could roll up the whole thing like a newspaper.

For the hands/wrists I started off just opening my hand with a rubber band around the fingertips. I would keep looping it and making the resistance tighter, because at first I couldn't even open my hand. The swelling was so bad my hand couldn't wrap around a Rockstar and I had to hold it with two hands; even that was tough! Once I could open my hand around the can, I would do static holds with the can.

Holding the can was pretty hard and any more than 7-10 seconds I would drop it. Mark Reifkind's Stick Dislocates really opened up my wrists and my hurt right shoulder.

All the household chores that I took for granted, became like a powerlifting competition and I was using everything I had to get that weight up! Even the bar of soap felt like the 'Beast' (a 106 lb kettlebell). Turning door handles and faucets, pulling my blanket over me in bed, lifting the toilet seat, feeding myself, drinking water, opening a protein bar, getting dressed, opening a window, etc.; all these things were nearly impossible, and if I could do them I would be in severe pain doing it.

When my first kettlebell arrived, only 18 lbs, I could barely lift it. Within the hour I could Deadlift and Swing it with one hand or two, and I eventually Clean and Pressed it that afternoon.



*So you think YOU had a bad day? I think Jared knows a thing or two about bad days!*

Only 18 lbs but it's better than nothing right? For the first few days I ignored everything I read or heard about overtraining. I put a disbelief in it, and more belief in God. I trained everyday with the exact same lifts, ALL DAY. Literally, I trained all day. I would rest about 5-10 minutes and went back for more. I tried going at it hard, but never burning out so I could keep coming back at it. Like the Grease The Groove principle Pavel Tsatsouline always writes about except Pavel probably would have called me nuts on this one!

By the 6th day I was One-Arm Swinging, Clean & Pressing, Snatching, Front & Overhead Squatting, and doing Turkish Getups 'all' with a 45 lb kettlebell. People were thinking it was strange how fast I was recovering and told me the last thing I needed was the hospital to rehab me if I was doing this good on my own. They said my methods blew theirs away. I personally thanked Pavel on the [www.dragondoor.com](http://www.dragondoor.com) forum along with a few others for the methods they've released to the public, because the methods are what count.

Over the next few weeks my depression got more under control and I got happier each day because of the progression I was making, and how I felt I was getting closer to God. I felt really blessed to still be alive, and to be overcoming something as tough as this. On the 7th day, I went into my backyard and was able to hit the heavy bag once again. It hurt at first, but I quickly adapted to each punch and ended up having the best bag session of my life that night.

***I'm doing ballistic Snatches with a 70 lb kettlebell. I've used a 90 lb kettlebell for One-Arm Swings and for Cleans already.***

This was one of the things I was really hoping I could still do. Hit the bag, grapple in Jiu-Jitsu, compete in weightlifting, and play my bass with my buddy again were all things I planned on going back to. Especially the bass seeing as how I had to use my hands/wrists as much as I did. Though I didn't want to be half-arsed, you know? I asked God to help me prove this to myself and to everyone else, that I could come back after

something like this. That would show people how strong 'they' can truly be, when all they have to do is truly believe. So here I am now, two months later, re-building the rest of my life and trying to shape everything together that's happened.

Now I'm doing ballistic Snatches with a 70 lb kettlebell. That much weight feeling as light as it does is really weird. I go from Snatches, into Clean & Presses, to Around-the-Body passes, Between-the-Leg passes, and work on swinging it with just one arm for as long as I can. I've used a 90 lb kettlebell for One-Arm Swings and for Cleans already. Joint Mobility really helped me as well.

**B:** WOW Jared that is impressive as heck! You are one dedicated person, where did you find all of this determination and strength to recover so quickly?

**J:** I've always been the kind of person who credited God more than anyone or anything and felt if I didn't have the faith I did, I wouldn't have made it this far. Every experience I've gone through has made me a better man, so I try being as positive as I can even if it's something like this.

Everyday that has passed has gotten a little easier and a little harder in it's own way, physically for sure but a lot harder mentally because of the scars. God is the one who got me through this as far as I have. The first thing I said to Him after it was over was "Thank you I'm still alive, and thank you he didn't get my throat or my face."

**B:** Jared you are an inspiration, I too suffered from a severe physical setback many years ago and didn't give up despite incredible pain and now I am fully recovered and pain-free. I think if I had heard your story back then I would have been more motivated and recovered quicker. I hope others find your story inspiring so they can get over whatever is holding them back mentally and physically.

**J:** Thanks for the opportunity to tell my story, I hope it does help to motivate someone what has suffered an injury and thinks they can't come back from it. You, many others and I have proven that a strong will is not to be discounted!

About the Author:

### **Brian Copeland, RKC**

Brian Copeland is a Denver, Colorado based strength and conditioning trainer and Certified Russian Kettlebell Instructor. Brian's clients include hard comrades like military, law enforcement, martial artists, athletes, and everyday men and women who are fed up with the touchy feely drivel that is being passed as fitness advice.

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