

Michelle Curran

Combat Veteran: USAF Thunderbird Lead Solo, F-16 Fighter Pilot and Founder of Upside Down Dreams

The Power of Vulnerability. With a powerful story and breathtaking visuals, Michelle, also known as Mace, takes her audience on a surprising and compelling journey through her career as a Fighter Pilot, culminating in her role as the Lead Solo Pilot for the Air Force Thunderbirds. Mace shares her struggles with self-doubt, imposter syndrome, and finding her identity in a high-performance, type-A culture. Her evolution from struggling with a crippling fear of failure to flying inverted only inches from other aircraft at 500 mph will inspire audiences to get comfortable being uncomfortable. Drawing on over a decade in high-performance aviation and her own transformation, Mace teaches audiences what they are capable of when they let go of fear, lean into vulnerability, and make bold choices.

Workshop: Going to War with Your Inner Critic. No matter how confident and independent we appear to be, we all face pressure to fit in, be liked, and meet the expectations of others. This pressure often leads to us becoming our own harshest critic and standing in the way of our own success. In this workshop, combat veteran Michelle Curran draws from her experiences as an F-16 fighter pilot and USAF lead solo pilot for the Air Force Thunderbirds to walk audiences through interactive exercises to help them identify characteristics of their own inner critic and the reality (or lack thereof) of what it says, as well as provide tools and resources for overcoming the war within.