MMU – September 7, 2026

Note from Lisa – Who I am

Twenty-five years ago on September 11, the terrorist attacks in New York City shook American society and changed our sense of security. On that day, I was stationed at RAF Lakenheath in England. I had just finished making the rounds at the base hospital when I heard an announcement calling for the commanders to gather in the conference room. Thinking that it was another exercise, I walked back to the chapel and into the office to see everyone transfixed by the images on the small TV set in the front office area. The local news was replaying images of the plane flying into the first tower, and then we saw another plane fly into the second tower. The base went into immediate lockdown.

What I saw on the screen shook me to the core, as it did most of us. Then I noticed the tail colors of the American Airlines airplanes. My brother was a pilot for American at that time, and he was stationed out of Boston. I called my husband and asked him to contact my parents to see if my brother was okay. Fortunately, he was not flying that day. That was one relief. But it was the end of the day, and I was locked on base, and my son was in daycare off base, and my husband didn't have a way to pick him up. I called the daycare provider, let her know my situation, and she was gracious enough to allow him to stay beyond the eight-hour limit. I had no idea how long I would be on base, or what would happen next. I had no idea if we were safe or what would happen to my family.

Fortunately, all non-essential personnel, including me, were sent home, and a few hours later than usual, I picked up my son and headed to our home in Thetford. We were not allowed on base for a week. A month later, I was called in for pre-deployment support. I worked 36 hours without a break as we launched planes and sent personnel to the Middle East. It was a disorientating and hectic time. But, in all of that chaos, one of the beautiful things I experienced was the love and concern of the people of Great Britain. Our gates were lined with flowers and notes of care and concern. These people, whom we helped during their time of distress, helped us in ours.

That was my experience of 9/11. You all have your experiences based on where you were and your circle of family and friends.

When I was working at the Pentagon, I would often go and walk through the 9/11 memorial. I had friends who were in the building when it was hit. They carry the emotional and spiritual scars with them to this day. My brother visited once and went over the names of

the people who died at the Pentagon that day, and he pointed out pilots and flight attendants he knew and worked with. The loss was profound in his community.

As we remember 9/11, I want to remember those who lost their lives, those who suffer today from working at or near Ground Zero, and those who lost family, friends, and loved ones. My prayer is that they may find peace in their lives.