

DISCIPLINE

Definition

Training yourself to do something by controlling your actions.

Story

Some years back, Alan Stein attended the inaugural Kobe Bryant Nike Skills Academy. The three-day camp included the country's top 20 high school shooting guards along with the top 10 college shooting guards. Among those individuals was Golden State Warriors MVP point guard, Stephen Curry. "The least recognized player there was Stephen Curry," said Stein. "But I knew immediately that he was the most impressive. Thinking long term, he was going to be a future NBA super star. It was all because of his work habits.

Stein describes how Curry would run through his own set of dribbling and shooting drills 30 minutes before the program's scheduled workouts. While all of the other campers sat around in flip-flops and their headphones, Curry drained between 100 and 150 shots and was in a full sweat by the time everyone hit the floor.

"He was meticulous with everything he did — perfect footwork, perfect shooting form. And he didn't need a coach to tell him; he just did it," Stein said.

If that wasn't enough discipline, Curry wouldn't leave the court until he swished five consecutive free throws — all in a day's work for the new face of the NBA.

Curry is a great example of what it means to stay focused on the goal. A lot like the donkey in the pit.

One day, a donkey fell into a pit. The animal cried and whined for hours while his owner tried to figure out what to do. Finally, the farmer decided that since the animal was old, and the pit needed to be covered up anyway, he'd just bury the old donkey. He got a shovel and started filling in the pit. When the donkey realized what was happening, he cried even more loudly, but then fell silent. As each shovelful of dirt hit his back, the donkey would shake it off and take a step up on the growing mound of earth. After an hour of furious shoveling, the mound had grown high enough for the donkey to jump out of the pit. The farmer paused to rest and to his amazement, he saw his old donkey jump out of the pit and trot away!

Quotes

“It’s not the will to win that matters. Everyone has that. It’s the will to PREPARE to win that matters.” *Bear Bryant*

“Everyone must choose one of two pains: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret.” *Jim Rhon*

“The distance between dreams and reality is called discipline.” *Unknown*

Interaction

1. What habits are you developing that will get you to where you want to go?
2. What are some low priority things you need to sacrifice in order to reach your goals?

Main Idea

We live in a world full of distractions that can keep us from success. No one can determine your future success better than you. If anything is worth having, then it is worth paying the price to obtain it. This requires intentional decisions to shake off the dirt and keep climbing. It is being intentional step by step; seeing what can be rather than what is.

Discipline comes through developing a plan that produces good, productive habits. You should plan the work and then work the plan. Identify what steps are necessary to walk toward success and then keep walking in full confidence of the plan. Strive to do what is necessary to be a high achiever, but know there will be people who will try to bring you down. Mediocre people don’t like high achievers and high achievers don’t like mediocre people.

Take Away

Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.

EMPOWERMENT

Definition

- To believe in someone by equipping or supplying them with an opportunity; To give power to

Story

On April 15, 1947, Jackie Robinson played first base for the Brooklyn Dodgers to become the first Black man to play major league baseball.

Robinson was chosen not only because he could play excellent ball, but also because the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Branch Rickey, believed Robinson could withstand the prejudice and racial discrimination he would encounter – both on and off the field.

Rickey questioned Robinson on whether he'd be able deal with the abuse without losing his cool. Robinson replied, "Are you looking for a Negro who is afraid to fight back?"

Rickey replied, "Robinson, I'm looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back."

Robinson's debut marked the beginning of an exceptional career that saw him rise to the height of baseball legend. His accomplishments include:

- Rookie of the Year in 1947
- Six time All-Star
- National League Most Valuable Player Award in 1949
- Selected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962
- In 1997, MLB retired Robinson's number 42 across all MLB teams. Robinson is the first professional athlete to receive such an honor.

By selecting Jackie Robinson, Branch Rickey empowered him to serve as the first African American to play major league baseball. Jackie Robinson's courageous actions empowered other African Americans to follow.

However, the greatest example of empowerment in the life of Jackie Robinson came in an unexpected way. May 13, 1947, in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the first game of the second road series, Robinson was playing second base. Robinson

committed an error. The crowds began to taunt and ridicule Robinson. There he stood humiliated, at second base.

Then, shortstop Pee Wee Reese came over and stood next to him. He put his arm around Jackie and faced the crowd. The fans grew quiet. Robinson later said that arm around his shoulder saved his career. Reese said, "If I were breaking into a Black league, I'd want someone to be a friend to me."

Quotes

"You are the most influential person you will talk to all day." ***Zig Ziglar***

"The role of leaders is not to get other people to follow them, but to empower others to lead." ***Bill George***

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." ***Eleanor Roosevelt***

Interaction

1. In what ways have you been empowered as an athlete?
2. How does it make you feel to be empowered with the task of competing?
3. In what ways can you empower others outside the world of sports?

Main Idea

As athletes you have been empowered by your coaches, the school, and your family to compete. Take advantage of the privileged opportunity. Not only have you been empowered to compete, but you have been given a great role in empowering others. Empower your teammates by providing ongoing encouragement, but even more importantly, empower your teammates by competing according to the rules. The question isn't, "Who is going to let me?" The real question is, "Who is going to stop me?" And the answer to that is, "NO ONE."

Take Away

"Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others." John Maxwell

ENCOURAGEMENT

Definition

The action of giving someone support, confidence, or hope.

Story

Michael Jordan led the NBA in scoring in 10 seasons (NBA record) and tied Wilt Chamberlain's record of seven consecutive scoring titles. Jordan also holds the top career regular season and playoff scoring averages of 30.1 and 33.4 points per game respectively. Jordan's total of 5,987 points in the playoffs is the highest in NBA history. He retired with 32,292 points in regular season play placing him fourth on the NBA's all-time scoring list behind Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Karl Malone, and Kobe Bryant.

With five regular-season MVPs, six Finals MVPs (NBA record), and three All-Star MVPs, Jordan is the most decorated player ever to play in the NBA. Jordan finished among the top three in regular-season MVP voting a record 10 times, and was named one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History in 1996. He is one of only seven players in history to win an NCAA championship, an NBA championship, and an Olympic gold medal.

And just think, all of this almost didn't happen!

Michael Jordan was cut from the Emsley A. Laney High School basketball team the first year he tried out. It was the inspiring words of his father that encouraged him to never give up and to fight through failure. These simple words of his father pushed him to greatness: "You never know what you can accomplish until you try." – James Jordan (Michael Jordan's father)

Quote

"Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it."
Michael Jordan

Interaction

1. Do you have someone in your life who consistently gives you encouragement?
2. Do you feel like it has helped you to get over some of the hurdles in your life with the encouragement of that person?
3. Who do you offer encouragement to and when?
4. How important is it to you to hear words of encouragement? What impact does it have on you?
5. Each player stands up and encourages another player.

Main Idea

It is good to have support and also to give it. Appreciate those who support you and pay it forward. Let someone know you are there for them no matter what.

Take Away

“Do you know when someone is in need of encouragement? They are breathing.” **Truett Cathy** (Founder of Chick-fil-A)

EXCELLENCE

Definition

A talent or quality which is unusually good, and therefore, surpasses ordinary standards.

Story

Jacqueline Marie Stiles grew up in Claflin, Kansas, and attended Claflin High School. Jackie's athletic accomplishments are numerous, but she is best known on the basketball court. As a junior in high school, she scored 61 points in 17 minutes of the opening game of the season. By the end of her senior year, she became the leading scorer for boys and girls in Kansas High School history. Jackie is the state record holder with 71 points in one game. During her four years of high school, she won a state record 14 gold medals in track. She placed in the top three in state Cross Country all four years. She also played tennis for the Claflin Wildcats and placed 2nd in state all three seasons.

At Missouri State, she was known for her spinning jump shots, driving lay ups and 3-pointers. She was the all-time leading scorer in NCAA division one basketball history with 3,393 points. She had a compelling competitive spirit and stop-on-a-dime quickness. What she brought to the court was incredible jump shots and moves that defied defenses designed specifically to stop her. In the sweet-sixteen game she scored 41 points in an 81 – 71 shocker against top-ranked Duke. Jackie remains the only woman to score more than 1,000 points in a single season.

In the 2001 WNBA draft, she was picked fourth by the Portland Fire. She captured the rookie of the year title. She was named to the 2001 WNBA All-Star team and was picked WNBA Player of the week averaging 22 points on 54% shooting.

Jackie played briefly in the Australian league before retiring in 2006. Jackie's career was one that every player dreams of. These goals were not reached without lots of hard work and dedication to excellence. While Jackie was in high school, she made 1,000 shots a day to achieve these goals. If she had a rebounder it took her 2 hours. If she did not have a rebounder it took her 4 hours. This was a major sacrifice. She did this routine every day.

Quotes

“Practice does not make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect.”

Jacqueline Marie Stiles

“Good, better, best. Never let it rest. Until your good is better and your better is best.” ***Tim Duncan*** (NBA MVP)

Interaction

1. How do you think Jackie was able to accomplish all of these levels of excellence?
2. In what ways do you think Jackie had to make sacrifices in her life to achieve so much?
3. What are some things you are doing in an attempt to become excellent in your life?

Main Idea

You are not born excellent. Excellence is earned. It takes consistent deposits of hard work and training to become excellent at something. Sometimes you need to make sacrifices every day.

Take Away

When we chase perfection, we catch excellence.

FORGIVENESS

Definition

The intentional act of releasing someone from wrongdoing.

Story

It was 2005 in Long Island when a teenager decided to toss a 20-pound frozen turkey from a speeding car headlong into the windshield of another car driven by 44-year-old woman. She endured six hours of surgery using metal plates and other hardware to piece her face together, and learned she would still face years of therapy before returning to normal. She even was told she ought to feel lucky she didn't die or suffer permanent brain damage. Later, she learned that her assailant and his buddies had the turkey in the first place because they had stolen a credit card and gone on a senseless shopping spree just for kicks.

The district attorney said this is the sort of crime for which victims feel no punishment is harsh enough. "Death doesn't even satisfy them," he said.

The victim, Victoria Ruvolo, was more interested in salvaging the life of her 19-year-old assailant than in exacting any sort of revenge. She insisted on offering him a plea deal. He could serve six months in the county jail and be on probation for 5 years if he pleaded guilty to second-degree assault. Had he been convicted of first-degree assault, he could have served 25 years in prison, finally thrown back into society as a middle-aged man with no skills or prospects.

On the day of court, the young man carefully made his way to where Ruvolo sat in the courtroom and tearfully whispered an apology, "I'm so sorry for what I did to you." She then stood and embraced the young man. She patted his back as he sobbed, and said, "It's OK. I just want you to make your life the best it can be."

Quotes

"Forgiveness is not an occasional act, but a constant attitude." ***Martin Luther King Jr.***

"Forgiveness is me giving up my right to hurt you for hurting me." ***Unknown***

"Forgive. Because none of us are perfect." ***Unknown***

Interaction

1. Who has offered you forgiveness and how did it make a difference in your life?
2. Who have you wronged and need to seek their forgiveness?
3. Who has wronged you and you need to love them unconditionally?

Main Idea

There comes a point in life when you realize you can't control the actions of other people. This also brings to light that your own actions are choices you make. Easy decisions are easy but not always best. One of the most difficult things in life to do is to forgive someone when they have offended and wronged you. But, it is also one of the greatest gifts you can give others because it changes the future.

Forgiveness recognizes wrongdoing. It confronts the wrongdoing in love. It looks for the best in another. It seeks to understand. It strengthens the relationship. It can be so powerful that it causes things to seem as if they never even happened.

Take Away

When you forgive you don't change the past, but you do change the future.

HUMILITY

Definition

The quality of not thinking you are better than other people; modest view of one's own importance.

Story

Michael Jordan was cut from the Emsley A. Laney High School basketball team in Wilmington the first year he tried out. And he never forgot it.

He lost his high school championship game facing West Charlotte, losing 84 to 67 at the Chapel Hill Smith Center. And he never forgot it.

His memories didn't weaken his ambition. They haunted him. He knew he could be defeated.

As a pro, he missed almost 9,000 shots. He lost almost 300 games. He's taken game winning shots and missed. Yet, he became one of the best athletes in the history of civilization.

Although he had the world's cockiest swagger, he was basically the most teachable and coachable player any team ever had. He became one of the greatest basketball players to ever play the game. He made 12,192 shots, was a six-time NBA champion, five-time MVP, 10-time All-NBA First Team, All-NBA Second Team, Defensive Player of the Year, nine-time All-Defensive First Team, Rookie of the Year, 14-time All-Star, three-time All-Star MVP, and Olympic gold medalist.

Quotes

“My best skill was that I was coachable. I was a sponge and aggressive to learn.” ***Michael Jordan***

“Humility is the mother of giants. One sees great things from the valley; only small things from the peak.” ***G.R. Chesterton***

Interaction

1. What is one thing an authority figure in your life has been teaching you that you have ignored?
2. What is one thing you can learn from a current teammate?

Main Idea

You may think you are the best at what you do, because that is what you have always been told. You may think you are not very good at anything, because that is what you have always been told. The truth is, there is always somebody better than you and you are always better than someone else. However, it is best to not compare yourself at all. Just be you! And when you know you, you know what to work on.

To be coachable is to know that there is someone out there who cares about you enough that they are willing to help you in those areas in which you need improvement. It shows great honor for you to allow someone else to come alongside you with their knowledge and teach you. In reality, we need other people. People see things in us that we can't see in ourselves. And who knows, maybe one coachable moment will lead to a lifetime of people wanting to "walk in your shoes."

Take Away

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less." **C.S. Lewis**

INTEGRITY

Definition

Excellent moral character; honesty

Story

There was once an Emperor from China who had no children and needed to choose a successor.

Thousands of children from across the kingdom came to the palace and were surprised when the Emperor exclaimed that he was going to choose one of them. He gave them all a seed. They were to go home to their villages, plant the seed in a pot, and tend it for a year. When they returned in a year, the Emperor would judge their efforts and choose his successor.

There was a boy named Ling who received his seed and returned to his village. His mother helped him to choose a pot and put some soil into it. Ling watered his pot every day. After a few months, everyone's seeds really came to life. But poor old Ling still had nothing growing in his pot, leading the other children to make fun of him.

A year passed and it was time to return to the palace to show what had grown and decide on the new heir. Ling was worried as his pot still showed no signs of life. His mother looked him in the eye and explained that whatever the consequences were, he had to return and show the Emperor his empty pot.

Ling and the other children entered the palace gates. The Emperor came out and started to make his way through the crowd, looking at the many impressive trees, shrubs and flowers that were on display. The boys all puffed their chests out and tried to look as regal as possible, hoping that they would be chosen as the heir to the empire.

Then the Emperor came to Ling. He looked at the pot then he looked at Ling. "What happened here?" he asked.

"I watered the pot every day, but nothing ever grew," Ling muttered nervously.

The Emperor spoke out, "Clearly, some of you desperately want to be Emperor and would do anything to make that happen, but there is one boy that I would like to point out as he has come to me with nothing. Ling, come here please. A year ago, I gave you all a seed. I told you to go away, plant the seed, and

return with your plant. The seeds that I gave you all were boiled until they were no longer viable and wouldn't grow, but I see before me thousands of plants and only one barren pot. Integrity and courage are more important values for leadership than proud displays, so Ling here will be my heir."

Quotes

"Integrity, the choice between what's convenient and what's right."
Tony Dungy

"Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching." *C.S. Lewis*

Interaction

1. Are you honoring your parents, teachers, coaches and other leaders by making right and responsible choices?
2. What people and situations tempt you to compromise and how can you avoid them?
3. Do your life choices set an example of integrity?

Main Idea

Right is right and wrong is wrong. However, this seems to go against the grain of the culture in which you and I live. We live in an entitled society that wants you to believe you can have what you want, when you want it, and how you want it. The problem is that when you make it all about you, there is no true compass for what is right. Everything becomes relevant as long as it gets you satisfaction.

You are more than a temporary feeling. You ought to be a person of great character; a person that does the right things in the right way, even when no one is watching. You should be more concerned with your character than your reputation because character is who you really are, while your reputation is merely who others think you are. Do not take shortcuts. There are great rewards in doing what is true, honest, and of good report.

Take Away

Live in such a way that if someone spoke badly of you, no one would believe it.

LEADERSHIP

Definition

The process by which a person influences the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of others.

Story

Leaders are necessary on any team. They give other athletes the confidence of knowing they can look to someone for guidance, either by words (encouragement) or by example (on-field excellence).

True leadership is about influence and bringing out the best in others.

Mike "Coach K" Krzyzewski is the Head Men's Basketball Coach at Duke University and the winningest basketball coach in Division 1 history. Although he has been wildly successful on the court, his leadership skills go far beyond the game of basketball. Coach K once said, "I don't look at myself as a basketball coach. I look at myself as a leader who happens to coach basketball."

One summer morning in 1999, Coach K called Shane Battier, a rising junior at the time, and asked him if he had looked in the mirror and seen next year's conference player of the year. When Battier fumbled his words, Coach K hung up.

The next day he called the forward again and asked him if he had pictured himself scoring 30 points in any game the following season. Battier was clearly not ready for that question either, so he encountered another dead phone.

It was Coach K's plan to make Shane Battier, a star player during the 1998-1999 season. This was made more difficult, because the player had never imagined himself as a star player.

After the second call, Battier called Coach K back, asking him not to hang up on him again. Coach K replied, "I won't hang up on you if **you** won't hang up on you."

How many times have we seen players who are so blessed with talent and ability but just don't believe in themselves? A true leader will always bring out the best in others!

Quotes

“Everything rises and falls on leadership.” *John Maxwell*

"Leadership is getting someone to do what they don't want to do, to achieve what they want to achieve." *Tom Landry*

“Life’s most urgent and persistent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”
Martin Luther King Jr.

Interaction

1. Who is the greatest leader you know? What makes them a great leader?
2. How can you demonstrate servant leadership to your teammates and coaches this week?

Main Idea

Leadership is influence...and everyone is capable of influencing others. Therefore, it is safe to say that everyone is a leader because we all influence others in some capacity. What we say, do, and think has an effect on the people around us...whether it is family members, friends, teammates, or fans. The question we must ask ourselves is simple, "Am I setting a good example for others to follow?"

Take Away

Leadership is about making people better as a result of your influence,

LOYALTY

Definition

The unshakable faithfulness to a cause, ideal, product, commitment or obligation.

Story

Loyalty is essential in the world of sports. It is an unswerving, unshakeable faithfulness at all times. There should be no denying our loyalty to our team. Athletes and coaches change schools, teams, and programs at the drop of a hat. It seems loyalty is a thing of the past. But for the success of a team, loyalty is imperative!

Former NFL safety, Pat Tillman, had options. He walked away from more than \$3 million to join the Army Rangers and fight for his country. When Tillman learned he could opt out of his military service, NFL teams were clamoring for his service.

"They all wanted Pat," said Frank Bauer, Tillman's agent. "And they all said the same thing: 'Frank, this kid can get out of it. He's already served in a war. Just file his discharge papers.'"

Pat said, "Frank, I know it's flattering and all, but the bottom line is I made a commitment. I'm going to give it one more tour, then I'll get ready and train (for the NFL)."

Four months later, Tillman died in a firefight in Afghanistan at the age of 27. Tillman made a decision that symbolized his life—a decision of loyalty to his country.

Quotes

"Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved."

Martin Luther

"Loyalty means nothing unless it has at its heart the absolute principle of self-sacrifice." ***Woodrow Wilson***

Interaction

1. What are you 'loyal to' in life?
2. Who is the most loyal person you know? What makes them loyal?
3. What are some specific ways you can demonstrate loyalty to your teammates and coaches?

Main Idea

Loyalty is essential to every relationship we have in life that matters. The loyal person acts for, stays with, and remains committed even when it is tough. We can be loyal to many things—a team, friends, family, church, school, community, country, or employer...just to name a few. And some loyalties can be more important to us than others. Yet in all cases, loyalty implies a specialness of the relationship.

What makes it special is our identification with the object of our loyalty—at some level, we think of it as belonging to us. There comes a point at which one must plant one's loyalty in the simple fact that it is **my** team, **my** friend, **my** alma mater, **my** nation.

The word "my" implies ownership. We "own" things because they bring value to our lives; otherwise, we would discard them. Ownership demands responsibility. When a relationship falls into the category of "my," that responsibility is our loyalty.

Take Away

You have to give loyalty to get loyalty.

PATIENCE

Definition

The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.

Story

Kurt Warner, the former two time NFL MVP quarterback and perhaps one of the greatest performers in NFL playoff history, could have been that guy bagging your groceries.

As a high school quarterback, Kurt Warner was overlooked by major division one schools, and ended up at the University of Northern Iowa. After redshirting his freshman year, he sat on the bench for the next 3 seasons. Finally, during his senior season he won the starting position and led Northern Iowa to an 8-3 record and received conference honors as the Offensive Player of the Year.

However, Warner's dream of playing in the NFL seemed unlikely when he went undrafted in 1994. The Green Bay Packers invited him to training camp, but the team cut him just five weeks later.

But Kurt Warner patiently pursued his dream of playing in the NFL. While bagging groceries for \$5.50 per hour at night, Warner kept working to achieve his ultimate goal of being a starting NFL quarterback.

There were two things Warner never gave up on: his faith in himself and his skills. Warner moved on to play in the Arena Football League and then stepped up to more talented competition in NFL Europe. Finally, Warner caught the eye of NFL scouts and landed a job with the St. Louis Rams.

After an injury to the starting quarterback, Warner was sent in as quarterback in 1999. That season, Warner was second in the NFL in passing yards and led the league with 41 touchdowns and an incredible 65.1 percent completion percentage. Warner went on to win the MVP that season and lead the Rams to a Super Bowl victory, while making a league minimum of \$250,000. He signed a four-year contract in 2000 for more than \$46 million and in 2002; he was named the league's MVP and led his team to a second Super Bowl.

However, St. Louis began to decline as a franchise after 2002, and so did Warner. Just a few years after being one of the NFL's best quarterbacks, constant interceptions and fumbles made Warner look washed-up.

Everyone gave up on Warner, but not Warner himself. Warner signed with the New York Giants and continued to struggle. In 2005, the Arizona Cardinals took a chance and signed Warner to a 4 year deal. He became the starter in 2008 and finished second in the NFL with a 67.1 percent completion percentage. He also took the Cardinals to the Super Bowl for the first time in 2008.

There aren't many athletes who exemplify patience better than Kurt Warner.

Quotes

“Never give up on something you really want. It is difficult to wait, but it is more difficult to regret.” *Unknown*

“Patience is not the ability to wait, but how you act while waiting.” *Joyce Meyer*

“The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it.” *Arnold H. Glasow*

Interaction

1. In regards to the past, what is one example of how you have you been impatient?
2. Why is patience so difficult?
3. What are two of your personal goals?
4. What habits and/or behaviors are necessary to achieve these goals?

Main Idea

The key to Kurt Warner's success was his ability to accept the delay in the fulfillment of his dreams. This is what patience looks like It is a form of action.

Never give up on your dreams. Set reasonable goals and patiently endure the pain that is necessary to achieve them. If you are patiently waiting for something significant, then you are in good company.

Take Away

Patience is not about how long you wait, but on how you behave while waiting.

RELENTLESSNESS

Definition

Showing no loss of intensity, strength, or pace.

Story

Tim Tebow sat on the Florida locker room floor, leaning his exhausted frame against coach Urban Meyer and replaying the crushing defeat over and over. The teary-eyed Tebow blamed himself for the No. 4 Gators' stunning 31-30 loss to unranked Ole Miss. The team's Heisman-winning quarterback knew he never wanted to feel this way again. He eventually composed himself, showered and headed toward post-game interviews, pausing next to the iconic gator head near the locker room to be alone with his thoughts one last time. Somewhere along the way, *"The Promise"* was born:

"To the fans and everybody in Gator Nation, I'm sorry. I'm extremely sorry. We were hoping for an undefeated season. That was my goal, something Florida has never done here. I promise you one thing, a lot of good will come out of this. You will never see any player in the entire country play as hard as I will play the rest of the season. You will never see someone push the rest of the team as hard as I will push everybody the rest of the season. You will never see a team play harder than we will the rest of the season. God Bless."

Tebow led his team to the SEC Championship game where he threw three touchdown passes in the defeat of the Alabama Crimson Tide. The Florida Gators went on to play the Oklahoma Sooners in the Orange Bowl; a game in which Tebow threw two touchdown passes that helped his team to win the College Football National Championship.

Quotes

**"Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion."
*Muhammad Ali***

"It's hard to beat a person who never gives up." *Babe Ruth*

**"If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward."
*Martin Luther King, Jr.***

Interaction

1. In your life, what has you feeling defeated and how do you plan to overcome it?
2. If the team is as dedicated as you, how dedicated is it?

Main Idea

In every circumstance of life, whether it's personal relationships, family life, school, or sports, there will be times when you will want to consider giving up and quitting. It may seem that the end result is not worth the fight. However, one decision can make all the difference. You can be the difference. The key is to have your mind made up before the circumstances arrive. It is to wake up everyday and prepare your mind to stay focused on the prize, or the desired outcome.

One of the most valuable things you can do to be relentless is to be honest with yourself and others. Take responsibility where you have failed and move forward with the determination to not make the same mistake again. Honesty about yourself can be one of the greatest motivators in your life. You are a champion, and champions find a way to overcome.

Take Away

Determination leads to destination!

RESPECT

Definition

A feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements.

Story

When Mario Herrera walks through the halls of South Houston High School, he can be difficult to find – he's barely four feet tall. But the varsity football-playing senior is a big man on campus when it comes to the respect he's earned from teammates and opponents alike. Herrera was born with a rare birth defect called Unusual Facies Syndrome. While his upper body is of normal proportion his thighbones never fully formed. Herrera had a difficult childhood, but he worked up the nerve to approach South Houston High football coach Dwayne Lane.

Lane said about Herrera, "He's looking up and he goes, 'Do you think I could play football?'" Lane told Herrera, "If the doctors approve you to play, I'll let you play football. I no more than got that sentence out of my mouth and he said, 'I have a physical on file with the trainers. I'm ready to go.'"

Herrera played two years on the junior varsity team. He wasn't in the starting lineup, but he did get to play from time to time. However, one thing clearly bothered Herrera. Once an opposing team clearly eased up on Herrera and moved out of his way. "I don't like anything being given to me," Herrera said. "I like earning it. Dream big and work hard. I'm dreaming big to play varsity and I'm working hard to get there."

Herrera made the varsity football team that year. And in a game against the South Houston Trojans that was a blowout, Lane decided to give Herrera his chance at left corner on defense. The opposing team's running back swept right, directly toward Herrera. Herrera wrapped his arms around the running back's legs and hung on for dear life.

Herrera said, "As he spins around I know I have him! I have him! A couple seconds later I hear the PA announcing my name saying that I got the tackle. I hear the crowd cheering for me. It's an amazing feeling. That's a moment I will never forget."

Herrera has become an inspiration to others. Coach Lane said, "Everybody was just excited for Mario, looking up to Mario, like wow, he can do it."

One of his friends was quoted saying, "He's earned everybody's respect, and we respect him tremendously, and he's just an amazing guy."

Mario says an opposing coach once told him after a game that he was what high school sports was all about. Herrera said, "That moved me and that made feel really good." He hopes to take that heart into a career as a motivational speaker.

Quote

"I've worked too hard and too long to let anything stand in the way of my goals. I will not let my teammates down, and I will not let myself down." **Mia Hamm**

Interaction

1. What are some things you can do to earn the respect of your teammates?
2. Have you ever felt like you did not have the respect of someone? How did that make you feel?
3. Who is someone in your life that you have or had great respect for? Why did you respect them?

Main Idea

It is good to show respect, but it is also good to work hard to earn it. Take pride in earning the respect of those you admire.

Take Away

Respect is not imposed nor begged. It's earned and offered.

SELF-CONTROL

Definition

The quality that allows you to stop yourself from doing things you want to do, but that might not be in your best interest.

Story

Todd Marinovich was raised by his dad with the purpose of making Todd the perfect athlete. Todd's father, Marv, is a former pro football player and a strength and conditioning trainer. The young Marinovich was meticulously engineered and nurtured into a star quarterback by his father. As a high school quarterback in California, he passed for 9,182 yards, which stood as a record for more than two decades. In 1987, he was named the National High School Player of the Year, *Parade* magazine All-American, and the National High School Coaches Association's offensive player of the year. He attended the University of Southern California, where he was named the College Freshman of the Year, won a Rose Bowl, and was considered for the Heisman Trophy Award. Todd Marinovich entered the NFL draft in 1991, after his junior year, and was selected by the Oakland Raiders with the 24th pick in the first round.

In 1994, three years after his NFL start, Todd Marinovich quit professional football. What went wrong?

Growing up, Todd Marinovich was the poster child of self-control. His father wanted to answer the question, "How well could a kid develop if you provided him with the perfect environment?"

As a baby, Todd Marinovich was fed only fresh vegetables, fruits, and raw milk. For 9 months prior to Todd's birth, his mother used no salt, sugar, alcohol, or tobacco. Before he could walk, he learned to crawl on a balance beam. While in the crib, Todd's dad would stretch Todd's hamstrings. During his first 18 years, Todd never ate a Big Mac, Oreo, or any processed food. When he participated in birthday parties, he would bring his own cake and ice cream, prepared without refined sugar and white flour.

Marinovich's discipline and self-control was previewed on the cover of *California* magazine with the headline "ROBO QB; THE MAKING OF A PERFECT ATHLETE." A month later, *Sports Illustrated* published an article, titled "Bred to Be a Superstar," which declared Marinovich "America's first test-tube athlete."

In truth, Todd was living a double life. He began smoking marijuana during his senior year of high school. By the end of his freshman year at USC, he was addicted to cocaine, which led to his first arrest. During his brief NFL career, he would take amphetamines before games, and one time he cut his hand with a crack pipe during half-time. He later became addicted to heroin and was arrested a total of 9 times.

What went wrong with Marinovich was that he realized that he could and decided that he would. Self-control is knowing you can, but deciding you won't.

Quotes

“What lies in our power to do, it lies in our power not to do.” *Aristotle*

“One can be the master of what one does, but never of what one feels.”
Gustave Flaubert

“The best fighter is never angry.” *Lao Tzu*

Interaction

1. How might Todd Marinovich's life been different today if he had exercised self-control?
2. How would your life be different today if you had exercised self-control in the past?
3. How will your life be different tomorrow if you exercise self-control today?

Main Idea

One of the greatest challenges in life is learning to control oneself. The next time you are upset at something or someone, think before you act. Never do something permanently foolish, because you are temporarily upset. You are always responsible for how you act, no matter how you feel. Self-control means doing what matters the most, not what feels the easiest.

Take Away

Self-control is knowing you can, but deciding you won't.

Teamwork

Definition

Individual commitment to a group effort.

Story

Perhaps the greatest tragedy in the history of mountaineering happened on August 1, 2008. On the mountain in Pakistan known as K2, 11 climbers perished while trying to reach the summit of the world's most dangerous mountain.

Pakistan's K2 is the world's second tallest mountain and the most dangerous. On the border that separates Pakistan and China, K2 rises 13,179 feet from base to peak, which equals the height of 23 King and Queen Towers in Atlanta. Though Everest is taller by nearly 800 feet, a journey from foot to peak is actually greater. While Everest has a fatality rate of approximately 5% for year-round climbs, K2 has a fatality rate of about 25%, meaning that one out of every four climbers have died. Before 1990, it killed 41 percent of the climbers who tried it.

In August of 2008, the worst single accident in the history of K2 occurred when an enormous ridge of ice fell during an avalanche. The avalanche severed the ropes along the route and stranded climbers in the "death zone," above 26,250 feet, where there isn't enough oxygen for humans to breathe. Many deaths in high-altitude mountaineering have been caused by the effects of the death zone, due to the loss of vital functions or wrong decisions made under stress and physical weakening. In the death zone, lack of oxygen causes deterioration of bodily functions, loss of consciousness, and death.

This climb was not only the date of the greatest tragedy in mountaineering history; it also illustrates the consequences of bad teamwork. The most important element in climbing a peak like K2 is the fixed ropes. According to witnesses, on the morning when the summit climb began, the climbers noticed that the fixed ropes had been planted where they were not needed. They also discovered that a team member had only brought half of the amount of rope needed. As a result, there was no rope at the most dangerous part of the climb. This caused a dangerous delay in the schedule.

Although a giant piece of ice falling from the mountain and destroying the ropes was completely out of the climbers' control, the other problems could have been avoided if each individual team member had done their part. On this particular day, poor teamwork contributed to the greatest disaster in mountaineering history.

Quotes

“None of us is as smart as all of us.” ***Ken Blanchard***

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.” ***Phil Jackson***

Interaction

1. What is essential for a team to be successful?
2. What is your role on this team and why is it important to the overall success?
3. Show the importance of teamwork by contrasting the effort required in cutting a single cord rope vs. a multiple cord rope. (Items needed: scissors, single cord rope, threefold cord rope)

Main Idea

Teamwork is an individual commitment to a group effort. You must trust the coaches in their assessment of your role for this team, commit yourself to working with your teammates in achieving the stated goals, while competing against your teammates in preserving your position or winning it.

Take Away

None of us is as GOOD as ALL OF US. We are better together.

Trust

Definition

- Reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, surety of a person or thing; confidence.
- Confident expectation of something; hope.

Story

Charles Plumb was a US Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!"

Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he might have looked like in a Navy uniform. I wondered how many times I might have seen him and not even said, 'Good morning, how are you?' Because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor."

Plumb thought of the man hours the sailor had spent on a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands the fate of a pilot he didn't know.

When Plumb pulled the parachute cord that saved his life, he didn't think twice about whether or not it would open...he simply trusted that someone put in the hard work to make sure it would function properly.

Quotes

"Players need to trust and respect the fact that if I do my job we have the best chance of being successful. I don't have to make every play I just need to make the plays I'm supposed to make in the gap I'm supposed to make them, and trust the guy next to me will do the same."

Nick Saban

"Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters." ***Albert Einstein***

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it."

Warren Buffett

Interaction

1. What does it mean to trust something or someone?
2. How important is trust to a team? How can broken trust affect a team?
3. Has your integrity ever been questioned? How did it make you feel?

Main Idea

In team sports it is imperative to trust. Trust yourself, trust your teammates, and trust the system. It often takes tremendous time and effort invested to develop that trust. Trust is usually reciprocal. It is hard for a player to trust a teammate when that teammate does not trust him.

Trust begins from within and spreads outward. Integrity is at the heart of trust...it is who you are when no one else is looking.

In the 1990 qualifying school for the PGA Tour, golfer Tom Lehman called a penalty on himself when noticing a strong breeze caused his ball to move slightly as he addressed it. He wound up missing the cut by one stroke.

"If a breach of the rules had occurred and I didn't call it on myself, I couldn't look at myself in the mirror," he responded. "You're only as good as your word. And your word wouldn't be worth much if you can't even be honest with yourself."

Take Away

If you want to be trusted, then be trustworthy.

Wisdom

Definition

The soundness, stability, & strength of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience, knowledge, and good judgment.

Story

Wisdom is the reward of life's good and bad experiences. A man known for his wisdom was basketball coach John Wooden.

His teaching methods were often unconventional... but always effective.

The first day of practice at UCLA was always a day full of anticipation and excitement as the new recruits awaited the arrival of Coach Wooden. As they waited, each wondered what secrets of the game, what strategies for winning would spring forth from the famous coach on Day One.

"Please take off your shoes and socks," Coach announced to the team, seating himself upon a locker room bench. "I'm going to show you the proper way to put them back on." The new players looked at one another in disbelief -- had the old man lost his mind? What on earth did this have to do with basketball?

"Now, when you pull on your sock," he said, "I want you to make sure that there are no wrinkles or gaps," as he put his own socks on. "Make sure your heel is full seated in the heel of the sock; run your hand over the toes and make sure to smooth out any bumpy areas." Then he showed each player how to properly lace his shoes and tie them snugly so that there was no room for the shoe to rub or the sock to bunch up.

As Coach Wooden got up to leave the locker room for the gym, the players behind him were silent, still wondering what their coach could possibly be doing by starting out the season talking about shoes and socks. Here they were, the best schoolboy players in America, and this legend had just spent 30 minutes teaching them about shoes and socks.

Just then, Coach Wooden would turn around and, with a glint in his eye, say "That's your first lesson. You see, if there are wrinkles in your socks or your shoes aren't tied properly, you will develop blisters. With blisters, you'll miss practice. If you miss practice, you don't play. And if you don't play, we cannot win."

Quotes

"What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player." ***John Wooden***

"Knowledge comes from learning. Wisdom comes from living." ***Anthony Douglas Williams***

"You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one." ***John Wooden***

Interaction

1. Who is someone you have known that you consider wise? In what ways have they helped you?
2. Have you ever been given an opportunity to share a life lesson with someone? How did it make you feel to help someone?

Main Idea

John Wooden was affectionately nicknamed "The Wizard." Wooden told his players, "If you want to win championships, you must take care of the smallest of details." John Wooden was right. Blisters happen to everyone. But you must make the choice to allow the blisters in life serve as your teacher.

Take Away

Wisdom is the reward of experience and must be shared.