

**'CHANGE YOUR GAME' SERIES**

# **THE GAME CHANGERS TEAM CULTURE PLAYBOOK**

The Ultimate Guide to Building  
Cohesion & Connection amongst  
your team one resource, activity  
and conversation at a time

**GAME**  **CHANGERS**  
MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACHING

# HEY COACH!

I'm so glad you're here!

You and I both know that team culture isn't just something "you have", **it's something you intentionally build every day.** It's the glue that holds your team together through the highs and the lows, shaping how your athletes show up, treat each other, and respond to challenges.



That's why I created this **Team Culture Workbook.**



This isn't a **"do it once and forget it"** resource. It's a collection of the exact activities, discussions, and strategies I've used with teams to **strengthen trust, connection, and shared purpose**, so your athletes don't just play together, they play for each other.

I know your time is limited, so I built this to fit seamlessly into your existing schedule. Whether you're kicking off the season, giving your group a mid season boost, or closing out strong, you can use these tools to keep your culture thriving all year long.

**It's here to work with you, not add to your to do list.**

Use it your way. Make it yours. And watch how the small, intentional things you do each day can completely **change the game** for you and your team.

I can't wait to see the ripple effect this creates in your program.

You ready? Me too. Let's do this.



**-Coach K**  
Kristyna Bertolone  
Owner, Founder





Kristyna Bertolone, M.Ed. Owner/Founder & Performance Consultant of Game Changers Mental Performance Coaching, where she partners with athletes, coaches, and teams to strengthen the three game changers that transform potential into performance: mindset, leadership, and team culture.

A former Division II college athlete with a Bachelor's in Exercise Science and a Master's in Education (Curriculum Development concentration), "Coach K" brings over 15 years of teaching and coaching experience to her work. She spent more than a decade developing K-12 curriculums and leading high school athletic programs in Connecticut before launching Game Changers in 2021 to make a deeper, wider impact in the world of sport.

Since then, she has worked with hundreds of teams and thousands of athletes and coaches nationwide delivering workshops, presentations, and virtual sessions that break down big mental and cultural concepts into practical, teachable moments. Her approach is deeply rooted in education, connection, and clarity with a signature ability to meet people where they are and move them forward with confidence.

Through every conversation, interaction, and resource, Kristyna's mission is clear: To educate, equip, and empower individuals to lead with confidence, perform with purpose, and change their game.

# HOW TO USE THE PLAYBOOK

This playbook is here to make your coaching life easier, your team stronger, and your culture more intentional. It's not a one time activity, it's a resource you can return to **all season long** to strengthen connection and buy in.

## **STEP 1: GET FAMILIAR**

- Skim the table of contents to see the variety of culture building tools available.
- Read the short intro for each activity to understand the “why” behind it.
- Highlight anything that instantly feels like a good fit for your team's current needs.

## **STEP 2: START SIMPLE**

- Pick 1–2 activities you can easily work into your existing practice or team meeting schedule.
- Layer these in without overhauling everything you already do.

## **STEP 3: BUILD IT INTO YOUR ROUTINE**

- Use quick connection builders at the start of practice.
- Save deeper team discussions for meetings, travel, or downtime.
- Rotate activities so your culture work stays fresh and engaging.

## **STEP 4: ADAPT & MAKE IT YOURS**

- Adjust language, timing, or examples so they feel authentic to your team.
- Involve athletes in leading or adapting activities for shared ownership.
- Keep track of what sparks the best results so you can repeat it next season.

## **STEP 5: KEEP THE MOMENTUM**

- Revisit activities regularly to reinforce the culture you're building.
- Celebrate “culture wins” out loud so they become part of your team's story.
- Remember: culture is built in the small moments between the big ones.

## **PRO TIP:**

Five minutes of intentional culture work done consistently will have a bigger impact than a single “culture talk” at the start of the season.

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Your cooperation helps me continue creating high quality, practical resources for coaches and athletes everywhere.

Thank you for respecting the work that went into creating The Game Changers Team Culture Playbook and for keeping it where it belongs, **with the people you purchased it for.**

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Kristyna Bertolone / [info@thementalgameisthegame.com/home](mailto:info@thementalgameisthegame.com/home)



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## QUESTION 01

### **WHAT IS THE ‘TEAM CULTURE PLAYBOOK’ AND WHO IS IT FOR?**

This playbook is a ready to use collection of activities, conversation starters, and resources designed to help coaches intentionally build the trust, connection and shared purpose that make teams stronger. It’s for coaches of all sports and levels who want to create a culture athletes buy into, without adding hours to their workload.

## QUESTION 02

### **HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TEAM BUILDING RESOURCES?**

The Team Culture Playbook focuses on everyday actions and conversations that shape how athletes show up for each other. These tools are designed to fit seamlessly in to your current practice, meeting and travel routines so culture isn’t just something you talk about, it’s something your team lives daily.

## QUESTION 03

### **HOW MUCH TIME WILL IT TAKE TO USE?**

You can implement most activities in 5-15 minutes during practice, team meetings or even bus rides to games. There are also deeper activities and discussions for times when you want to invest ore, such as a classroom session or a preseason retreat. The structure allows you to pick and choose what fits your schedule.

## QUESTION 04

### **DO I HAVE TO USE EVERY ACTIVITY, SECTION OR GO IN ORDER?**

No, No, and No. Think of the playbook as a menu, pick what your team needs most right now. You can work through it step by step, jump to the activities that address current challenges or help you reinforce your strongest values. Grab and go as you’d like!

## QUESTION 05

### **IS THERE A RIGHT TIME OR SECTION TO START WITH?**

There’s no wrong time to work on culture. You can begin pre season to set the tone, mid season to re-connect and re-energize or post season to reflect and reset for next year. My Advice? Start small. Introduce one activity, see how your athletes respond and build from there. Consistency over time creates the biggest impact.

**WANT HELP OR GUIDANCE? THAT’S WHAT I’M HERE FOR. [BOOK A CALL!](#)**





# A MESSAGE FROM **COACH K** TO THE **ATHLETES** USING THESE RESOURCES



Hey Kid -

This playbook isn't about being perfect, fitting a certain mold, or becoming someone you're not. It's about helping you figure out how you can make your team stronger just by being the best version of **yourself**.

Inside, you'll find activities, reflections, and conversations to help you understand your role, connect with teammates, and find your place in the bigger picture. **Some of it might challenge you, some of it might make you think, and some of it might just feel like fun,** but all of it is designed to **help you grow**.

**Remember: culture isn't built in one day.**

It's built in the small choices you and your teammates make every day. Showing up, listening, supporting, holding each other accountable, that's what makes a team go from good to **great**.

So take it one step at a time. One activity at a time. One conversation at a time. You don't have to do it all at once, and you don't have to do it alone.

You got this and I'm here to support you every step of the way.

**-Coach K**

Kristyna Bertolone  
Owner, Founder

# THE GLUE THAT HOLDS IT ALL TOGETHER

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# TEAM CULTURE

## The Glue That Holds It All Together

### Why it Matters

Culture is what your team lives and breathes every day. It determines how players show up, how they handle adversity, and how they treat each other on and off the field.

### What it Really Is

It's the habits, traditions, language, and energy your team carries, whether you shape it intentionally or let it happen by accident.

### How to Build It:

- Define It – Know your values, vision, and non-negotiables.
- Live It Daily – Reinforce it through actions, not just words.
- Protect It – Address issues quickly to keep the standard high.
- Celebrate It – Recognize moments when the culture shines.

### How to Use This Section

- Use these tools to strengthen trust, connection, and buy in.
- Mix short, in practice activities with deeper, off field conversations.
- Involve the whole team in shaping traditions and rituals.

**Coach's Corner:** Culture isn't built in a meeting, it's built in the moments in between. Start with connection before competition and revisit culture conversations often. Spotlight and celebrate culture wins publicly so they become part of your team's story.

# ADD TEAM CULTURE TO PRACTICE

## ✓ FOCUS OF THE DAY/WEEK

**Choose a focus and highlight it at the beginning of practice, check in throughout, and come back to it at the end.**

- Could be an action you're wanting your athletes to accomplish, a focus where you want their attention to go, a team value you're trying to reiterate.
- "accountability", "resilience", "communication" "trust" "grit"

**Reinforce it in drills, huddles and team debriefs, and ask questions allowing your athletes to reflect on it solo or amongst one another.**

**EXAMPLE:** "This week our focus is ENERGY; how we show up and how we lift each other up.

**EXTRA:** Can you create an award or shoutout to give out at the end of each day/week to someone who demonstrated the focus the best?

## ✓ COMMUNICATION PROMPTS

**Give athletes meaningful prompts to answer/think about/respond to at the beginning of practice.**

- Could connect to your focus or be something you want your athletes to take with them as they go through practice.
- Can also help create comfortable communication practices amongst a generation that has trouble communicating.

**EXAMPLE:** "What I appreciate most about my teammates is..."

"When I am in a funk please help me by..."  
"What's one way a teammate helped you today?"

**EXTRA:** Think of an overarching question to ask at the beginning of practice, something you want your athletes looking for or thinking about/using, and at the end of practice come back to it as a team discussion.

**These conversations can encourage self awareness, peer correction, constructive feedback, connection amongst teammates, and leadership development.**

## ✓ VISION TO MISSION BREAKDOWN

**Break down season VISIONS in to mini MISSIONS.**

- Big goals can often feel overwhelming or paralyzing, so by breaking them down in to smaller, actionable steps we tell our athletes exactly where we want their focus to be

**Our visions are often uncontrollable, but we can have massive influence over whether or not we move in the right direction of them by turning the attention to our missions, which are completely within our full control.**

**EXAMPLE:** If the VISION is to "win the championship" what is a daily/weekly/monthly mission we can physically do that will make "winning that championship" a little more realistic? If the VISION is to "improve communication" how will you put your athletes in positions daily to communicate?

**EXTRA:** Post your Visions and Missions somewhere we will be able to consistently see it, locker room, white board at practice. Revisit your missions daily, enter them in to your practice plan, set it as a daily focus.

# ADD TEAM CULTURE TO PRACTICE CONT.

## ✓ COACH TO ATHLETE FEEDBACK

### **Athletes thrive on specific, actionable feedback.**

- When feedback is too general like “good job” or “keep working hard” it doesn’t reinforce what they did well or provide guidance on how to improve.
- Specific feedback helps them understand their strengths and where they can grow.

**Try and set a goal to give at least one piece of specific feedback to a certain number of athletes per practice so eventually you have communicated with every one. Create a checklist to keep you and your staff organized.**

**EXAMPLE:** “I liked how you kept your eyes up and anticipated your teammate’s movement before making that pass”. “I saw how you hustled back on D after that tough play and that’s the kind of resilience we are looking for”.

**EXTRA:** Keep a piece of paper on your clipboard, a note on your phone or a post it handy to jot down some key things you want to say to specific people/positions.

## ✓ ATHLETE TO COACH COMMUNICATION

### **Empowering athletes to ask meaningful questions shifts their mindset from passive participation to active engagement!**

- This will help to build a strong coach-athlete relationship by fostering open communication and self awareness.

**When athletes ask better questions they take ownership of their development, which leads to more engaged, coachable and self motivated players..**

**EXAMPLE:** “What’s one thing you would like me to focus on this week?” “What area do I need to pay attention to a bit more in order to gain your trust in playing me there?” “Can you explain why we’re adjusting our defense this way?”

**EXTRA:** Dedicate specific time for athletes to ask questions, create a sign up list or schedule 1:1's. If some athletes are hesitant start with curiosity: “what’s one thing you’re unsure about from today’s practice?” Use a ‘question of the day’ board where athletes can write or post their questions.

## ✓ MINDSET DEVELOPMENT AND DAILY REFLECTION

**Teach your athletes how to manage pressure, engage in self talk and come up with perspective shifts on their own during drills so it can show up when in game play.**

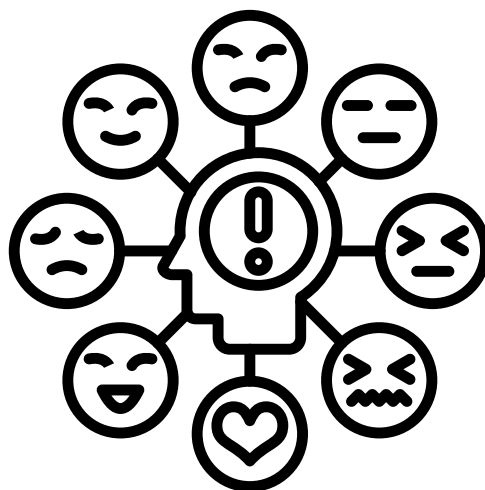
- We both know that what’s practiced in practice will show up in games, whether that’s skills, a play, and yes even their mindset- how they show up in pressure moments.

**Create a “practice” where we embrace our frustrations and mistakes and challenge how we see and feel them.**

**EXAMPLE:** End practice with reflection questions: “Who challenged you today? Where did you fail today? What will you do about it tomorrow? Where are you finding improvement? What is no longer difficult for you? What is still difficult for you? Who has been improving and deserves a shoutout?”

**EXTRA:** Can do this as a group, in 1:1's, utilize journals or google forms, have athletes fill something out and submit it, the more we talk about it the more we make it a part of our “norm”.

# COACHING TODAY'S ATHLETE



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# COACHING TODAY'S ATHLETE THE NEXT FEW GENERATIONS OF ATHLETES (AND YOUNG COACHES) COMING UP...

- Have grown up with technology/are highly adept at using it and are often able to learn new skills quickly.
- Are known for their excellent multitasking skills, creativity, and adaptability.
- Are easily distracted, have shorter attention spans, and crave instant gratification.
- Value purpose and want to understand the “why” behind drills, expectations, and team standards.
- Thrive with regular, specific feedback and recognition.
- Are more likely to value work-life/sport-life balance than previous generations.
- Are more likely to be open minded and accepting of diversity, often due to their exposure to a wide range of people and cultures through the internet and social media.
- Struggle with face-to-face communication skills due to their dependence on digital communication.
- Are the loneliest generation, with high rates of anxiety and depression, often impacted by social media, economic uncertainty, and political instability.
- Often face intense external pressure from parents, recruiting systems, and social media comparisons.
- Learn best through active, hands on experiences, visuals, and shorter bursts of teaching rather than long lectures.
- Rely on their team environment as a primary source of connection, belonging, and emotional safety.

# PRACTICAL WAYS TO COACH TODAY'S ATHLETE

1

## SET CLEAR GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

The clearer the better. The more specific the better. Don't hide anything, be honest and upfront!

2

## PROVIDE THEM WITH REGULAR AND CONSISTENT FEEDBACK

They "want to know" so LET THEM KNOW. Don't keep them in the dark and don't just tell them how to play better, SHOW them how they're growing as a teammate, leader or communicator too.

3

## RECOGNIZE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

Big AND small. Let them know you see them, you appreciate them, you notice something about them...

4

## INCORPORATE TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA INTO TRAINING

You'll be amazed at what you learn if you ask them questions about their technology and how they see themselves using it to their benefit. Use technology creatively but set boundaries so it doesn't become a distraction.

# PRACTICAL WAYS TO COACH TODAY'S ATHLETE

CONT...

# 5

## CREATE AN INCLUSIVE TEAM ENVIRONMENT

This includes engaging them in conversation, self reflection, peer reflection, small group conversations, and discussing what it is THEY want to get out of their experience just as much as discussing what YOU want them to get out of it all. An inclusive environment is also one where athletes feel safe to fail, try again and know mistakes won't define them.

# 6

## ENCOURAGE SELF REFLECTION

Journal entries. Post game prompts. Watch film and instead of focusing on the mistakes, ask them "what would you/could you do if you had another chance at this opportunity".

# 7

## EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK/TOGETHERNESS

They live in a very individualistic world, so teamwork is sometimes a difficult concept. Don't be afraid to ask the questions and get them to give you the responses. "WHY" do we need our teammates?? "WHY" are we better together vs as individuals?

# 8

## ENCOURAGE THEM TO FIND THEIR "WHY"

Why are they playing this sport? Why are they on this team? Why is working together important? Why are they here? And don't be afraid to tell them yours too! Once athletes know their why, help them set standards and hold themselves (and each other) accountable. Consistency builds trust.

## THIS GENERATION UNDERSTANDS...

### MENTAL HEALTH

For this generation, mental health is about “well being as a whole person”. It includes emotional balance, stress management, self awareness, and knowing when to seek support.

Athletes today are more open to discussing mental health and expect environments where they can be honest about struggles without fear of judgement or dismissal.

## OUR GENERATION UNDERSTOOD...

### MENTAL TOUGHNESS

For many coaches who grew up in past eras, mental toughness meant “pushing through no matter what”. It was about grit, perseverance and performing under pressure, often without openly addressing the emotional cost.

Vulnerability was rarely encouraged, asking for help could be seen as weakness and expressing feelings were often dismissed.

True peak performance happens when mental health and mental toughness **work together**. **Without mental health, mental toughness becomes burnout. Without mental toughness, mental health lacks resilience under pressure.**

When coaches teach athletes to **value both**, caring for their mind AND pushing their limits, they create competitors who are strong, self aware and sustainable in their performance.

# INSTEAD OF MENTAL HEALTH VS MENTAL TOUGHNESS, RETHINK IT AS **DIFFICULT VS DETRIMENTAL**

Difficult and detrimental are two words that are often used interchangeably, but they actually have completely different meanings and by discussing and defining them, we can help our athletes navigate adversity in a very realistic way

**Difficult** refers to something that is not easy to do, achieve or deal with. It implies that there are challenges or obstacles that need to be overcome in order to succeed. Often uncomfortable, scary and/or new...

**Detrimental** refers to something that is harmful, hurtful or damaging. It implies that there are negative consequences or effects associated with a particular action or behavior. Often considered unsafe, dangerous or a threat.

Not every tough moment is bad, and not every bad situation is worth enduring. **The key is knowing the difference!**

For example, **learning a new skill can be difficult**, and **not sleeping is detrimental to one's health**. While both words describe something that is not desirable, difficult refers to something that is challenging, while detrimental refers to something that is harmful.

When coaches and athletes can recognize the line between the two, they can lean in to healthy challenges while taking action to remove or change harmful conditions.

# COACHES CONVERSATION GUIDE

Use these prompts and real world examples to guide your team through meaningful discussions about balancing mental health with mental toughness and understanding the difference between difficult and detrimental situations.

## **MENTAL HEALTH VS MENTAL TOUGHNESS:**

1. WHEN HAVE YOU SEEN AN ATHLETE (OR YOURSELF) PERFORM BETTER BECAUSE THEY TOOK CARE OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH FIRST?
2. CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN “PUSHING THROUGH” HELPED? AND A TIME WHEN IT HURT? WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE?
3. HOW CAN WE CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT BUILDS BOTH MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS AT THE SAME TIME?

## **DIFFICULT VS DETRIMENTAL REAL WORLD EXAMPLES:**

1. HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN WE'RE PUSHING TO GROW VS PUSHING TOO FAR?
2. HOW SHOULD WE GIVE AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK SO IT CHALLENGES WITHOUT CAUSING HARM?
3. HOW CAN WE PREPARE SO HIGH PRESSURE MOMENTS FEEL CHALLENGING BUT NOT HARMFUL?

**If you want  
to give**

**You must first  
learn to**

## **TOUGH LOVE**



## **LOVE TOUGH**

setting strict boundaries and providing consequences for negative behavior to help the person improve and learn from their mistakes

showing unconditional love and support while also being firm and assertive when needed

The goal of **TOUGH LOVE** is to help the individual take responsibility for their actions and learn from them.

But people will **ALWAYS** receive coaching/direction more from people whom they believe are invested in them on a human/connected level of interest.

**LOVE TOUGH** can be helpful in building strong relationships and helping individuals feel supported and valued. It may involve setting boundaries and expectations while also providing encouragement and positive reinforcement.

People won't **care** how much you know,  
until they know how much you **care**.

# WHAT YOUR ATHLETE'S **EMOTIONS** ARE TRYING TO TELL YOU

## **FEAR**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

A perceived threat (real or imagined), uncertainty, lack of trust in self or environment.

### **EXAMPLE:**

They hesitate to speak up, won't try something new, remove themselves so they don't stand out...not because they don't know what to do or say but because they're really afraid of judgment.

**Fear is a teacher of courage.**

**What might they need to face head on??  
How can you help?**

## **ANGER**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

A boundary has been crossed, a deep value has been violated or a feeling of powerlessness.

### **EXAMPLE:**

They yell, storm off, throw things, snap, overreact or become emotional but it rarely has to do with what's actually happening and more about deep down they're feeling disrespected or unheard.

**Anger is a teacher of boundaries.**

**What of theirs needs to be protected, asserted or validated?**

## **FRUSTRATION**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

A desire for control, unmet expectations, lack of progress

### **EXAMPLE:**

They keep hitting a plateau in their training, messing up when they know what to do, rushing through things to get them done quick, feeling easily irritated, not because they're not talented but because they crave forward momentum and they aren't finding it easily

**Frustration is a teacher of patience and adaptability. What expectation might they (or you) need to shift?**

## **OVERWHELM**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

Too many responsibilities, lack of clarity, feeling unsupported

### **EXAMPLE:**

They procrastinate or avoid starting/working on/completing something not because they don't care but because they may not know where or how to start, how to progress/take next steps, whether they are "doing it right" or even how to finish it, especially if the outcome is different than what they had originally imagined.

**Overwhelm is a teacher of prioritization. What needs to be simplified, delegated, mapped out or brought back down to reality?**

# WHAT YOUR ATHLETE'S **EMOTIONS** ARE TRYING TO TELL YOU PART 2

## **SADNESS**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

Loss, unmet emotional needs and unprocessed grief

### **EXAMPLE:**

They feel more drained than usual, withdrawing from activities, going through the motions with little to not enjoyment not because they're ungrateful or they want to quit but maybe they're grieving an outcome that didn't go their way (could also experience this during a period of injury).

**Sadness is a teacher of healing.** What do they need to honor, release or make peace with before moving on?

## **DEPRESSION**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

Suppressed emotions, disconnection from purpose, prolonged stress

### **EXAMPLE:**

They act as if nothing excites them/is good enough anymore, they are negative in most situations, and can't express optimism not because they're incapable of joy, but because maybe they've been carrying too much for too long with no safe space to dump what they're holding.

**Depression is a teacher of self compassion.** Where do they need rest, support or reconnection? And where can they find it?

## **PASSIVE AGGRESSIVENESS**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

Unexpressed anger, fear of confrontation, suppressed emotions

### **EXAMPLE:**

They start showing up late to practice, putting in less effort, making sarcastic comments, rolling their eyes, making excuses not because "they're going through a phase" but instead they may feel they are getting overlooked or no chances at the opportunities they want.

**Passive aggression is a teacher of honesty.** Where do they need to express themselves more clearly instead of acting out indirectly? Do they have an outlet to do so?

## **ANXIETY**

### **ROOT CAUSE:**

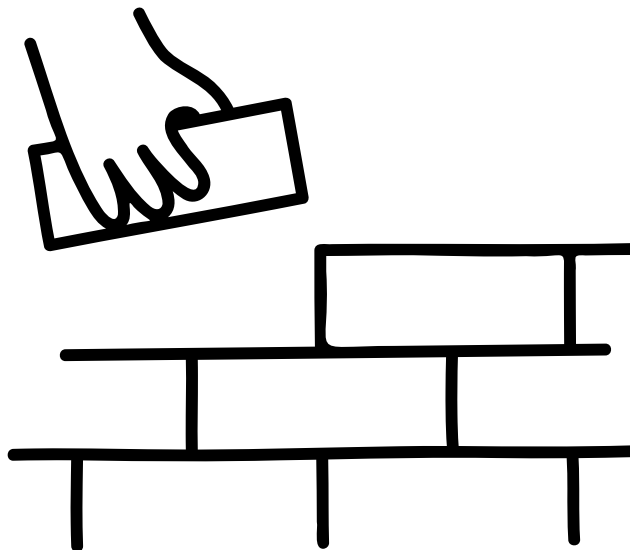
Fear of uncertainty, need for control, unresolved past experiences

### **EXAMPLE:**

They overanalyze every single decision, can't seem to set on a solution, always worried if they made the "right choice" not because they don't trust themselves but because they're afraid of the unknown.

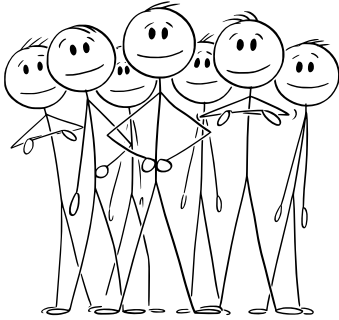
**Anxiety is a teacher of trust.** What do they need to release control over? What "uncontrollable" has it's hold on them?

# ATHLETE FOUNDATION

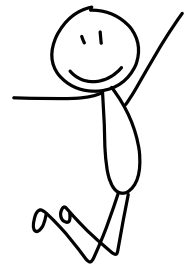


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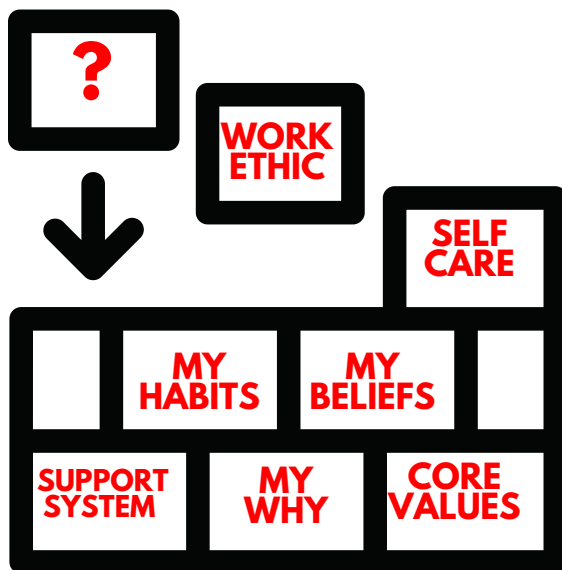
**OUR** TEAM FOUNDATION  
STARTS WITH



**YOU**



**Brick by brick** you will build your “house”, and as you grow always ask yourself: “is my house being built on **sturdy ground**”?



Your “**foundation**” is made up of your why, core values, beliefs, your habits, the little things that are of high importance to you, your work ethic, your non negotiables, your character...

TAKE CARE OF **YOU**  
SO WE CAN TAKE CARE OF **US**

# INDIVIDUAL FOUNDATION REFLECTIONS

Questions to ask yourself as you build your personal foundation!

What are some things I value as an individual?

What are some things I value from my teammates/coaches?

What are some of my personal non negotiables?

What are some of the things I simply do not allow?

When it comes to my work ethic, what makes me proud?

When it comes to my habits, which ones help?

Which habits do I need to let go of/replace?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **COMMUNICATE** WITH **THEMSELVES**

1. WHAT IS MY “WHY” IN RELATION TO CHOOSING TO DO THE THINGS I AM DOING?
2. HOW DO I DEFINE THE WORD SUCCESS? WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE/FEEL LIKE/SOUND LIKE TO ME?
3. HOW DO I FEEL THE MOST COMFORTABLE COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS WHEN I AM UPSET/FRUSTRATED?
4. WHAT ARE MY ATHLETE “CORE VALUES”? WHAT DO I HOLD TO A HIGH STANDARD? WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY?
5. WHAT ARE THE THINGS I ENJOY DOING OUTSIDE OF MY SPORT? WHAT ELSE BRINGS ME JOY/ WHAT ELSE DO I ENJOY DOING?
6. WHAT IS ONE THING I CAN DO EVERYDAY TO BETTER HELP MYSELF AS AN ATHLETE, THAT IS NOT SKILL/SPORT RELATED?
7. WHAT IS A MANTRA, SAYING, PHRASE OR AFFIRMATION I CAN SAY TO MYSELF WHEN FEELING STUCK/FRUSTRATED?
8. WHEN DO I FEEL THE MOST CONFIDENT IN MY SPORT, AND WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO THAT FEELING?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **COMMUNICATE** WITH **THEMSELVES** CONTINUED...

1. WHAT SELF TALK PATTERNS SHOW UP FOR ME WHEN I MAKE A MISTAKE? HOW CAN I REFRAME THEM?
2. WHAT DRAINS MY ENERGY THE MOST (PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, OR EMOTIONALLY) AND HOW CAN I MANAGE IT BETTER?
3. WHAT SITUATIONS MAKE ME FEEL ANXIOUS OR PRESSURED, AND HOW DO I TYPICALLY RESPOND?
4. WHAT DOES “MENTAL TOUGHNESS” MEAN TO ME, AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM TAKING CARE OF MY MENTAL HEALTH?
5. WHAT ROUTINES OR RITUALS HELP ME FEEL GROUNDED BEFORE COMPETITION OR PRACTICE?
6. IF I COULD DESCRIBE THE KIND OF TEAMMATE I WANT TO BE IN THREE WORDS, WHAT WOULD THEY BE?
7. WHAT PERSONAL HABITS OUTSIDE OF SPORTS (SLEEP, NUTRITION, ORGANIZATION, RELATIONSHIPS) AFFECT MY PERFORMANCE THE MOST?
8. HOW DO I WANT COACHES AND TEAMMATES TO DESCRIBE ME WHEN I’M NOT IN THE ROOM?
9. WHAT IS ONE LIMITING BELIEF I CARRY ABOUT MYSELF AS AN ATHLETE, AND WHAT IS THE OPPOSITE TRUTH I WANT TO REPLACE IT WITH?

# WHO AM I?!

**AT MY BEST...**

**WHEN DOES THIS VERSION  
OF ME SHOW UP?**

**HOW CAN I TAP INTO THIS  
VERSION OF ME MORE?**

**AT MY WORST...**

**WHEN DOES THIS VERSION  
OF ME SHOW UP?**

**HOW CAN I MINIMIZE THIS  
VERSION OF ME SHOWING UP?**

**LOOKS LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or description of what the subject looks like.

**SOUNDS LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or description of what the subject sounds like.

**ACTS LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or description of what the subject acts like.

**FEELS LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or description of what the subject feels like.

# **BUILDING YOUR FOUNDATION**

## **WHO WAS I/LAST YEAR ME/PAST ME**

- Last year & beyond
- Past accomplishments
- Past disappointments
- What did I learn? How did I grow?
- Who was that person?

## **WHO AM I/PRESENT ME**

- Current me/Current foundation
- My current Why - Vision - Mission - Mantra
- What am I focusing on now?
- How have I changed from last year?
- Where have I grown?
- Where have I improved?
- Looking back, am I proud of last year me? Or frustrated with that person? How will I move forward from here?

## **WHO I WANT TO BE/NEXT YEAR ME/FUTURE ME**

- The VISION I have for my future (this year or beyond)
- The legacy that I want to leave behind
- The accomplishments I want to achieve
- Looking back, will “future me” be proud of how “present me” helped get me to where I want to be? Or will I be frustrated with that version of me too?

# **BUILDING YOUR FOUNDATION**

**WHO WAS I/LAST YEAR ME/PAST ME**

**WHO AM I/PRESENT ME**

**WHO I WANT TO BE/NEXT YEAR ME/FUTURE ME**

## WHAT IS YOUR FLOOR MADE OF?

In each “brick” write down the different things that make up your personal athlete foundation! What are you standing on that makes you strong? Makes you feel ready? Makes you, you?!




# SET YOUR FOUNDATION FOCUS:

“Where your attention goes, energy flows”.

What you focus on, matters. It can either help you or hurt you. What will you choose to pay attention to??

**THIS YEAR'S FOCUS IS:**

**NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS COULD BE:**

**THE ME IN TWO YEARS WILL BE ABLE TO:**

# TEAM FOUNDATION



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# LET'S TALK TEAM CULTURE.

**Think of your team like a bunch of construction workers setting out to build something great...**

Coaching staff & team  
create the plan/the  
season goals



We all discuss  
importance of the goals  
& why we want to  
achieve them

The season starts and  
we start working on  
our building



But if the team doesn't lay  
a **STRONG FOUNDATION**  
to support the building...

As soon as **ADVERSITY**  
**HITS**, no matter how  
pretty or big the building  
may be...



## **IT COULD ALL COME CRUMBLING DOWN!**

Construction workers make sure to focus a lot on the ground level, the floor, "the foundation" of a building before working on the roof or the inside features. The ground level is what holds "us" up.

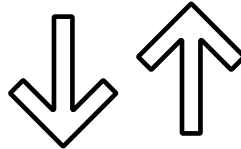
# TEAM CULTURE = FOUNDATION

Admin  
v  
Coaches  
v  
Captains  
v  
Upper  
Classmen  
v  
Under  
classmen



**TOP  
DOWN**

**"Talk the  
Talk"**



**BOTTOM  
UP**

**"Walk the  
Walk"**

Admin  
^  
Coaches  
^  
Captains  
^  
Upper  
Classmen  
^  
Under  
classmen

You can't just "tell" your team to have great culture, to battle til the very last second of the game together, to leave their hearts on the field and to love/respect one another.

You can't "tell" them to work in the off season or to come to practice excited to learn and appreciate being pushed when they are tired.

You can't "tell" them to be supportive, to be positive, to trust you and cause less drama.

**YOU MUST BUILD THIS.**

You must work to build a culture that allows all this to form. You must create and nourish an environment where greatness thrives.

"ALL IN" starts at the TOP and trickles down,  
but is built-lived-breathed from the BOTTOM up.

# BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Think of it like this: if a building is built upon a faulty foundation, no matter how pretty or tall the structure is, eventually the building will crack, crumble and break the minute adversity hits.

## LET'S AVOID THIS!

How? By building a program from the bottom up. Leave no room for doubt!

Instead of "rules" and "regulations" build expectations for you and your team. Involve all voices in this process so everyone can feel seen, valued, and heard.

"This is what we do here..."

"What makes us different is..."

"Our core values are..."

Start the conversation (with yourself or your athletes) with the following sentence starters...

1. We are building...
2. We believe in...
3. We believe the role of sport is to...
4. At the end of the season we want our experience to be...
5. We believe the following traits are MOST IMPORTANT...
6. We believe the role of parents is...
7. We believe the role of coach is...
8. We believe the role of players is...
9. We are on a mission to...
10. We want to be known as...
11. We want to be remembered as...
12. We want to look back and...
13. We want others to think of us and say...
14. Because of our efforts, future teams will be able to...

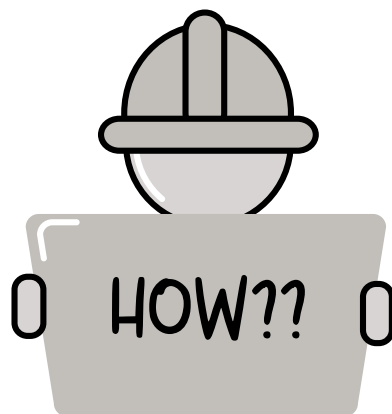


**"A building is only as tall as the foundation is strong enough to build on".**

# WHAT IS YOUR **TEAM** FOUNDATION?

- What you value
- Your Team Why
- Your Vision/Mission
- What you allow
- What you don't allow
- How you treat each other
- How you treat your opponents
- How you take care of things
- How you show up
- The words/phrases you use

**ARE YOU A TEAM THAT...**  
**"TALKS THE TALK" OR "WALKS THE WALK"**



# TEAM FOUNDATION REFLECTIONS

What are some things we value on this team?

What are some things we value from our teammates?

What are some of our team non negotiables?

What are some of the things we do not allow?

Where is an area of our sport or team that we are strong in?

Where is an area of our sport/team that we could improve in'?

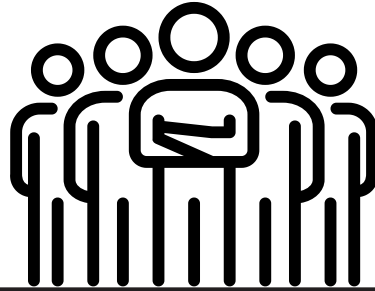
What would we like to/wish to do better?

What area(s) of our team need more attention right now?

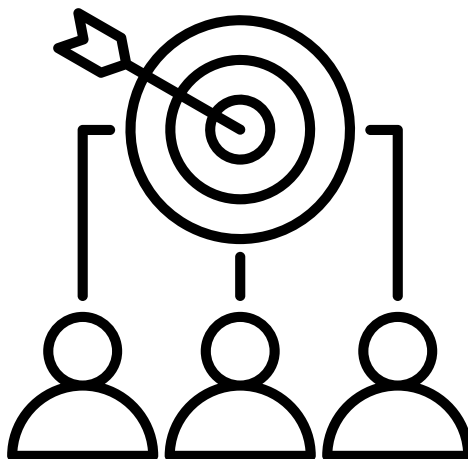
# GAME CHANGERS

MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACHING

## WHAT IS **OUR** FLOOR MADE OF?




# TEAM GOAL SETTING



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# WHY

"What is your WHY?"  
aka your purpose

What is the reasoning behind  
what it is you do?

What does it mean to you?

Why is it important?

Your "WHY" is a direct connection to the  
amount of effort you put in to  
the things you do.

You don't become burned out because of  
what you do, you burn out because you  
forget WHY you do it...

# VISION

BIG PICTURE

"Vision Board"

Often UNCONTROLLABLE  
You only have INFLUENCE over it

Your \*North Star\* guiding you  
"talking the talk"

Your vision is what you want to  
accomplish, to achieve or where you  
want to be in the future.

Think BIG, dream BIG!  
You are capable of whatever it is you  
put your mind to!

# MISSION

Think "007" James Bond  
VERY CONTROLLABLE  
You can start TODAY  
"walking the walk"

- What work do you have to do/commit to in order to make the vision happen?
- Think about what you need to accomplish on a daily basis, as well as what do you need to no longer do
- What actions do you need to do daily? What habits will help you get there? What habits do you need to let go of? What does the person in your vision look like? Act like? Sound like?

# MANTRA

Your "MANTRA" can be a word,  
phrase or quote that you can  
say to keep you moving forward, keep  
you motivated and inspired when  
things get tough (because they WILL  
get tough...)

For Example:

"BREATHE" - "ALL IN"  
"FOCUS" - "WIN THE DAY"  
"FAMILY" - "HEAD, HEART, HUSTLE"

But remember, words without  
meaning is just NOISE.

# OUR WHY

WHY ARE WE HERE? WHAT IS OUR SHARED PURPOSE THAT CONNECTS US?

WHAT LEGACY DO WE WANT TO LEAVE BEHIND?

WHY IS “OUR WHY” IMPORTANT TO US?

WHERE CAN WE POST/DISPLAY OUR WHY SO WE CONSTANTLY HAVE IT AS A VISUAL REMINDER?

# OUR VISION

WHERE DO WE EVENTUALLY WANT TO END UP?  
WHAT IS OUR “END GOAL”?

WHY DO WE WANT THIS?

WHAT OBSTACLES MAY GET IN OUR WAY/COME UP?

HOW CAN WE BE READY AND PREPARED TO RESPOND TO  
ANY OBSTACLES WE MAY ENCOUNTER?

# OUR MISSION

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO MORE CONSISTENTLY  
TO GO TOWARDS OUR VISION?

WHAT NEW HABITS/ROUTINES DO WE NEED TO DEVELOP?

WHAT OLD HABITS/ROUTINES DO WE NEED TO STOP/REPLACE?

WHY DO OUR MISSIONS MATTER?

# OUR MANTRA

WHAT WORDS/PHRASES/MOTTOS/AFFIRMATIONS/QUOTES  
DO WE USE OR WANT TO USE TO STAY ON TRACK WHEN  
THINGS GET DIFFICULT?

WHAT DO THESE WORDS MEAN TO US?  
WHY HAVE WE CHOSEN THEM?

WHERE CAN WE POST/DISPLAY THIS MANTRA(S)  
SO WE CONSTANTLY HAVE IT AS A VISUAL REMINDER?

WHY DOES ANY OF THIS ACTUALLY MATTER TO US AND OUR TEAM?

# OUR TEAM

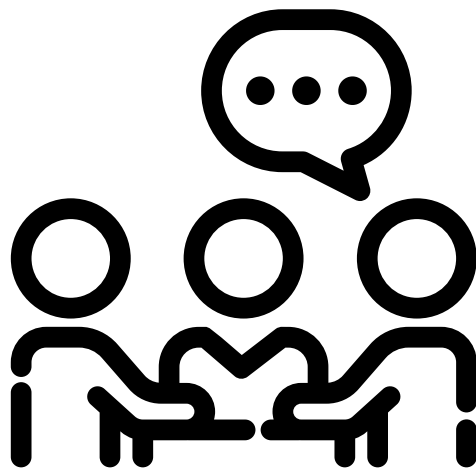
**WHY**

**VISION**

**MISSION**

**MANTRA**

# DEFINE AND REDEFINE YOUR TEAM



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# YOUR WORDS MATTER

The language we choose shapes the way we think, act, and perform. For teams, words are not just communication tools, they are the **foundation** of culture, mindset, and connection. Whether they're said aloud in a huddle or repeated silently in an athlete's mind, words influence confidence, focus, and resilience.



## YOUR WORDS ARE IMPORTANT

**Creates Identity** – The words we repeat become part of who we are.

**Sets the Tone** – Language influences energy, attitude, and focus.

**Drives Behavior** – Optimistic & intentional words inspire action; negative or careless words can drain motivation.



## DISSECT AND DISCUSS!

**Define Your Language** – Choose words or phrases that reflect your team's values.

**Dissect Their Meaning** – Don't just pick a word, break it down. Discuss what it means, why it matters, and how it shows up in actions.

**Make It Consistent** – Use your chosen words daily; in practice huddles, on the bench, in team meetings, and in communication with each other.

### Example:

If your mantra is “All In”, what does that look like, sound like, feel like for you and your team? In practice? In competition? In the classroom or community?

**When everyone has the same definition, there's no room for confusion, only clarity, connection, and shared accountability.**

# YOUR WORDS MATTER 'TEAM ACTIVITIES'

## ACTIVITY 1: DEFINE IT, OWN IT

**Purpose:** Create a shared definition of your team's core word or mantra.

- Choose a word or phrase (e.g., 'Relentless', 'Rise Together', 'All In').
- Break into small groups and answer: What does this word mean to us?
- How will it show up in practice, competition, and off the field/court?
- Come together as a team and merge responses into one unified definition.
- Post the definition where the team can see it daily.

## ACTIVITY 2: POWER WORDS JAR

**Purpose:** Encourage consistent, positive language throughout the season.

- Place a jar and slips of paper in your locker room or meeting space.
- Anytime a teammate hears someone use a strong, positive, or motivating word/phrase, they write it down and add it to the jar.
- Once a week, pull a few slips from the jar and highlight those moments, connecting them to team values.
- Challenge players to intentionally use these words in practice and games.

## ACTIVITY 3: WORDS IN ACTION

**Purpose:** Move from words to consistent behaviors.

- Select your team mantra or value word for the week.
- As a group, brainstorm 3–5 specific actions that represent that word in action (e.g., 'Discipline' might mean being early, doing extra reps, staying locked in during meetings).
- Post the list where everyone can see it.
- At the end of the week, reflect: How often did we live it out? Where can we improve

**OUR TEAM MANTRA:**  
**WHAT DOES IT...**

**LOOK LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or visual representation of the team's appearance.

**SOUND LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or visual representation of the team's sound.

**MEAN TO ME**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or visual representation of the team's meaning to the individual.

**MEAN TO US**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing or visual representation of the team's meaning to the group.

**TEAM VALUE/  
STANDARD:**

**WHAT DOES THIS...**

**LOOK LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or writing a visual representation of the team value or standard.

**SOUND LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing or writing an auditory representation of the team value or standard.

**MEAN TO ME**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a personal interpretation or meaning of the team value or standard.

**MEAN TO US**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a collective interpretation or meaning of the team value or standard.

# CORE VALUES

1. Achievement
2. Adventure
3. Altruism
4. Appreciation
5. Assertiveness
6. Authenticity
7. Awareness
8. Balance
9. Beauty
10. Boldness
11. Bravery
12. Brotherhood/  
Sisterhood
13. Calmness
14. Challenge
15. Charity
16. Collaboration
17. Community
18. Compassion
19. Competence
20. Confidence
21. Consistency
22. Contribution
23. Courage
24. Creativity
25. Curiosity
26. Dependability
27. Determination
28. Diplomacy
29. Diligence
30. Diversity
31. Empathy
32. Excellence
33. Fairness
34. Faith
35. Family
36. Flexibility
37. Freedom
38. Friendships
39. Fun
40. Generosity
41. Gratitude
42. Growth
43. Happiness
44. Health
45. Honesty
46. Humor
47. Independence
48. Integrity
49. Innovation
50. Justice
51. Kindness
52. Knowledge
53. Leadership
54. Learning
55. Love
56. Loyalty
57. Open mindedness
58. Optimism
59. Patience
60. Peace
61. Perseverance
62. Productivity
63. Respect
64. Responsibility
65. Security
66. Self-Discipline
67. Service
68. Spirituality
69. Stability
70. Success
71. Teamwork
72. Trustworthiness
73. Understanding
74. Vision
75. Wisdom

**How to start?** Pick out the words that you resonate with the most. It might help to put similar words together in to “buckets”. Then from your buckets pick the 1-2 words that represent that bucket, and from there you can find your true core values.

**My advice?** No more than 5. Life is complicated already, make your focus simple to start. Use the next page to collect and define your core values.

# TEAM CORE VALUES

**OUR CORE  
VALUES**

**WHAT IT  
MEANS TO US**

**WHY IT'S  
IMPORTANT**

IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL WE NEED OUR TEAM TO...

**LOOK LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes or drawings related to the 'LOOK LIKE' category.

**SOUND LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes or drawings related to the 'SOUND LIKE' category.

**ACT LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes or drawings related to the 'ACT LIKE' category.

**FEEL LIKE**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes or drawings related to the 'FEEL LIKE' category.

# REDEFINE YOUR TEAM VOCABULARY

WHAT DO THESE WORDS MEAN TO **US??**

**“SUCCESS”**

**“FAILURE”**

**“MISTAKE”**

**“LOSS”**

**“LEADER”**

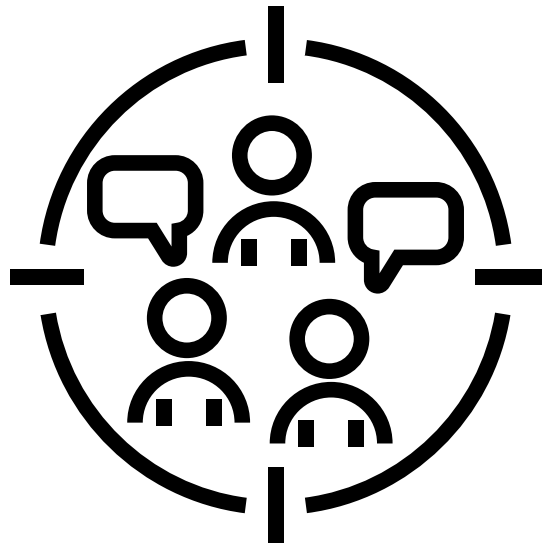
**“CAPTAIN”**

**“PERFECT”**

**“ACCOUNTABILITY”**

**WHAT OTHER WORDS DO “WE” USE AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?  
COACH: WHAT WORDS DO “YOU” USE, AND DOES YOUR TEAM  
KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN WHEN YOU USE THEM?!**

# TEAM FOCUS



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## **PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE “US”**

Use to reflect with your team and set some goals!

### **WHO WERE WE/LAST YEAR US/PAST US**

- Last year & beyond
- Past accomplishments
- Past disappointments
- What did we learn?
- How did we grow?

### **WHO ARE WE/PRESENT DAY US**

- Current us/Current foundation
- Our Goals AKA Why - Vision - Mission - Mantra
- What are we focusing on now?
- Where have we improved
- How are we better than who we used to be?
- Looking back, are we proud of last year us? Or frustrated with those people/that team?

### **WHO DO WE WANT TO BE/FUTURE US NEXT YEAR/NEXT SEASON US**

- The VISION we have for our future (this year or beyond)
- The legacy that we want to leave behind
- The accomplishments we want to achieve
- Looking back, will future us be proud of how “present us” acted/behaved/worked? Or will we be frustrated with that version of ourselves?



# **PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE “US”**

Use to reflect with your team and set some goals!

**WHO WERE WE/LAST YEAR US/PAST US**

**WHO ARE WE/PRESENT DAY US**

**WHO DO WE WANT TO BE/FUTURE US  
NEXT YEAR/NEXT SEASON US**

# “WHERE YOUR ATTENTION GOES, YOUR ENERGY FLOWS”

What you focus on matters. Are you and your teammates focusing on things that are helping you? Or hurting you? Are you focusing on the right things? Or unnecessary things?

## **WHAT DESERVES OUR CONTINUED ATTENTION?**

- What has been working?
- Where have we been successful?
- What is helping us?

## **WHAT NEEDS OUR ATTENTION?**

- Where are we still not finding success?
- What happened that we didn't see coming?
- What came up that surprised us?
- What's something new we want to do?

## **WHAT NO LONGER GETS OUR ATTENTION?**

- What is hurting us?
- What can we let go of?
- What do we need to let go of?
- What needs to be changed?

**“WHERE YOUR ATTENTION GOES,  
YOUR ENERGY FLOWS”**

**WHAT DESERVES OUR CONTINUED ATTENTION?**

**WHAT NEEDS OUR ATTENTION?**

**WHAT NO LONGER GETS OUR ATTENTION?**



# SET YOUR SEASON FOCUS

**THIS YEAR'S FOCUS IS:**

**NEXT YEAR'S FOCUS COULD BE:**

**IN TWO YEARS WE WILL BE ABLE TO:**

# OUR SEASON TEAM FOCUS:

NOW BREAK IT DOWN IN TO...

**PRE SEASON:**

**IN SEASON:**

**CONFERENCE PLAY:**

**POST SEASON:**

# MONTHLY FOCUS:

NOW BREAK IT DOWN IN TO...

**WEEK 1**

**WEEK 2**

**WEEK 3**

**WEEK 4**

# WEEKLY FOCUS:

NOW BREAK IT DOWN IN TO...

**POSITION/GROUP:**

# COMMON TEAM TRAPS



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Success in sports, and in life, isn't just about talent or desire. It's about understanding what it really takes to achieve your goals, and then having the discipline to show up and do the work, **even when it's hard.**

## TWO COMMON TRAPS ATHLETES FALL IN TO:

### 1- EXPECTATIONS VS REALITY:

You “think” the path to success will look a certain way (smooth, exciting, filled with wins). But the reality? It's often messy, challenging, and full of setbacks. If you don't recognize this, frustration and disappointment can derail your progress. Learning to manage your expectations is KEY to staying motivated and resilient when things get tough.

### 2- TALKING THE TALK VS WALKING THE WALK:

It's easy to “say” you want to be a great teammate, leader or athlete, but what REALLY matters is what you DO when no one is watching. Actions always speak louder than words so consistently showing up, giving effort and living out your values builds trust respect and true leadership.

**These next two resources are designed to help you reflect on both of these concepts:**

- To align your expectations with reality so you can better handle the ups and downs of your journey
- To hold yourself accountable, not just for what you say but for how you show up day after day.

When you focus and work on these two areas, you'll not only grow as an athlete, but as a person, teammate, leader and friend.

**SEASON/PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS**

**REALITY**

**WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT IT**

**What you HOPE happens this season...**

Want to make the conference tournament

Go undefeated!

**What is the reality of the season?**

That's very uncontrollable

Haven't been to the tourn yet

Currently sitting in the middle of the standings

Team is in a rebuilding year

That's very uncontrollable

There are some teams we have never beat before

Don't know the growth of other teams'

**What can you control about your reality?**

Focus on the things we can control and deserve more of our attention

Show up on the field more consistently (starts with practice/ playing vs teams more consistently)

Take care of each other off the field, so we can perform together on the field

Focus on one game at a time

What do we need to do in order to influence success on our end?

What is something from our past that can show us where we need to improve to help make this happen?

**SEASON/PERSONAL  
EXPECTATIONS**

**REALITY**

**WHAT I CAN  
DO ABOUT IT**

## **TALK THE TALK**

**VS**

## **WALK THE WALK**

**WHAT DO WE  
“WANT TO DO”??**

**WHAT DO WE OFTEN  
TALK ABOUT?**

**WHAT DO WE EXPECT  
OF OURSELVES?**

**WHERE DO WE TALK  
TOO MUCH? AND  
ABOUT WHAT?**

**HOW WILL WE GO  
ABOUT DOING IT??**

**HOW ARE WE  
TAKING ACTION?**

**ARE WE DOING WHAT  
NEEDS TO BE DONE?**

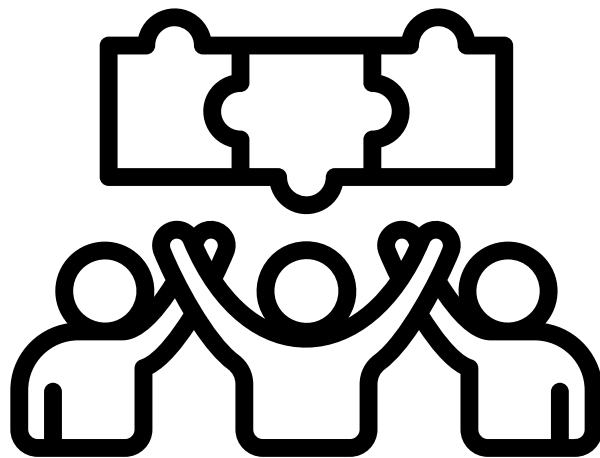
**WHAT COULD BE MORE  
PROACTIVE TO DO  
INSTEAD?**

**TALK  
THE TALK**

**VS**

**WALK  
THE WALK**

# CREATING TEAM DYNAMIC

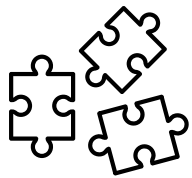


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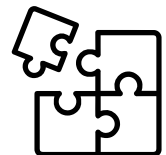
# HELP BUILD A **STRONG** TEAM CULTURE **DEFINE ROLES EARLY ON!!**

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU "FIT" ON YOUR TEAM?

WHAT SPECIAL SKILLS OR TALENTS DO YOU  
AND ONLY YOU HAVE THAT ARE SPECIAL?



WHAT "ROLE" DO YOU SERVE?



## **TYPES OF ROLES**

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF ROLES: GIVEN & TAKEN

**GIVEN = A ROLE ASSIGNED TO YOU BY SOMEONE**

**\*UNCONTROLLABLE**

(CAPTAIN, STARTER, SPECIFIC POSITION,  
DEVELOPMENTAL PLAYER, PRACTICE PLAYER, ETC...)

**TAKEN = A ROLE AN ATHLETE FEELS COMPELLED TO DO**

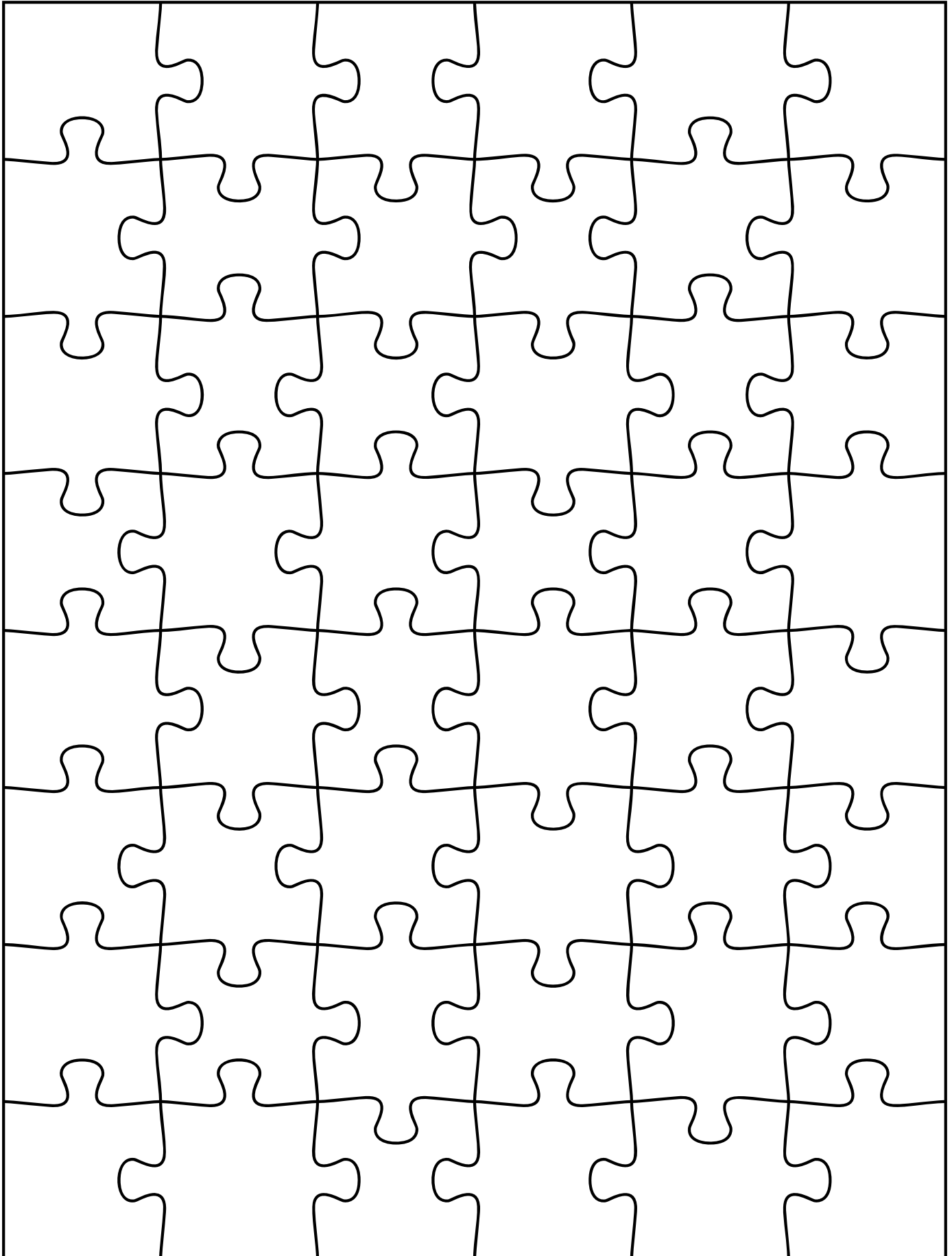
**\*CONTROLLABLE**

(ENCOURAGER, MOTIVATOR, ORGANIZER, LEADER, ETC...)

**WHAT "ROLES" ARE THERE ON YOUR TEAM?? →**

**ROLES ON  
OUR TEAM:**

WHAT "ROLES" (GIVEN AND TAKEN)  
ARE THERE ON YOUR TEAM??



# HELP BUILD A **STRONG** TEAM CULTURE

## **ROLE VS VALUE**

DO YOU CONFUSE WHAT YOU DO WITH WHO YOU ARE?

DO OTHERS? PARENTS? COACHES? TEACHERS? PEERS?

**IS YOUR VALUE CONTROLLED BY YOUR ROLE?**

OR DO YOU SHOW UP CONSISTENTLY,  
REGARDLESS OF THE ROLE YOU ARE SERVING?

**\*ROLES = WHAT YOU DO**

**\*VALUE = WHO YOU ARE**

### **ROLE:**

Different hats you wear...

Position on team...

Captain...Starter...  
Specific position...

### **VALUE:**

The person wearing  
the hat...

What you bring to  
the team...

Leadership, helpful,  
kindness, work ethic

**REMINDER: WHAT YOU “DO”  
IS NOT WHO YOU “ARE”**

# WHAT IS MY **ROLE**

\*GIVEN, ALWAYS CHANGING, UNCONTROLLABLE

\*TAKEN, MINE TO CONTROL, FEEL COMPELLED TO SHOW UP

**PRACTICE**

**GAME/SIDELINE**

**LOCKER ROOM**

**OUTSIDE OF  
PRX/GAMES**

**WITH TEAMMATES**

**WITH COACHES**

**WITH GRADE LEVEL**

**WITH POSITION**

# WHAT **VALUE** DO I BRING?

BELONGS TO ME, COMPLETELY MINE, CONTROLLABLE BY ME  
WHAT I BRING TO THE SPACES I WALK IN TO

**PRACTICE**

**GAME/SIDELINE**

**LOCKER ROOM**

**OUTSIDE OF  
PRX/GAMES**

**WITH TEAMMATES**

**WITH COACHES**

**WITH GRADE LEVEL**

**WITH POSITION**

# ROLE VS VALUE

## ADDITIONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

**WHAT WAS MY ROLE  
LAST YEAR?**

**WHAT VALUE DID I BRING  
TO MY TEAM LAST YEAR?**

**WHAT ROLES HAVE  
I SERVED IN THE PAST?**

**WHAT VALUE OF MINE HAVE I  
CELEBRATED IN THE PAST?**

**WHAT IS A ROLE I  
WANT TO PLAY?**

**WHAT VALUE DO I  
WANT TO ADD/SHARE?**

**WHAT ROLE DO I WANT  
TO STEP IN TO NEXT YEAR?**

**WHAT VALUE DO I WANT TO BE  
ABLE TO ADD/SHARE NEXT YEAR?**

**IS THERE A ROLE YOU'VE BEEN NEGLECTING  
THAT YOU THINK YOU COULD STEP IN TO?**

**WHERE ELSE DO YOU/  
COULD YOU ADD VALUE?!**

# INTERNAL **VS** EXTERNAL MOTIVATION

Motivation is the driving force that helps individuals to achieve their goals. There are two types of motivation: **internal and external**.

## **INTERNAL MOTIVATION (INSPIRATION)**

Internal motivation is when a person is driven by their own personal desires and goals. It's crucial for long-term success as it comes from within and is not dependent on external factors. Athletes who are internally motivated are more likely to persevere through challenges and setbacks and are less likely to give up when faced with obstacles. They are also more likely to set and achieve their own personal goals, rather than relying on external rewards or accolades.

## **EXTERNAL MOTIVATION (VALIDATION)**

External motivation is when a person is motivated by external factors such as rewards, recognition, or approval from others. It can be beneficial for athletes, especially in the short term. It can provide a quick boost of energy and enthusiasm, helping athletes to push themselves harder and achieve more in a shorter amount of time. For example, the promise of a prize or recognition for winning a competition can motivate an athlete to train harder and perform better.

## **BOTH:**

Are important and have their benefits for athletes. Internal motivation is better for long term success, while external motivation can provide short term gains. Ultimately, the best type of motivation for athletes is a combination of both, where internal motivation serves as the foundation and external motivation provides an added boost when needed.

# INTERNAL **VS** EXTERNAL WHAT DRIVES YOU MOST?

**INTERNAL  
MOTIVATION/  
INSPIRATION = YOUR  
VALUE**

**EXTERNAL  
MOTIVATION/  
VALIDATION = YOUR  
ROLE**

**LIST OUT YOUR VALUE THAT YOU CELEBRATE  
OR GETS CELEBRATED BY OTHERS...**

**LIST OUT YOUR ROLES THAT YOU CELEBRATE  
OR GETS CELEBRATED BY OTHERS...**

WHICH DO YOU LEAN ON MORE?

WHY DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY?

IS THIS FORM OF MOTIVATION HELPING OR HURTING YOU?

MOVING FORWARD, ARE THERE ANY CHANGES YOU WANT TO MAKE?

# WHAT KIND OF TEAMMATE ARE YOU?

There are 6 types of teammates. Use these descriptions to help you answer the questions below.

## RESISTANT

- resist being led
- often complain
- not "with" team

## EXISTENT

- "just there"
- go through motions
- give very little

## COMMITTED

- go the extra mile
- self motivated
- take initiative

## RELUCTANT

- hesitant
- minimal effort
- "whats in it for me"

## COMPLIANT

- do what is expected of them
- lack initiative

## COMPELLED

- no matter what they will find a way
- competitors
- self accountability

In what category would you put yourself in and why?

In what category do you think your teammates would put you in and why do you think that?

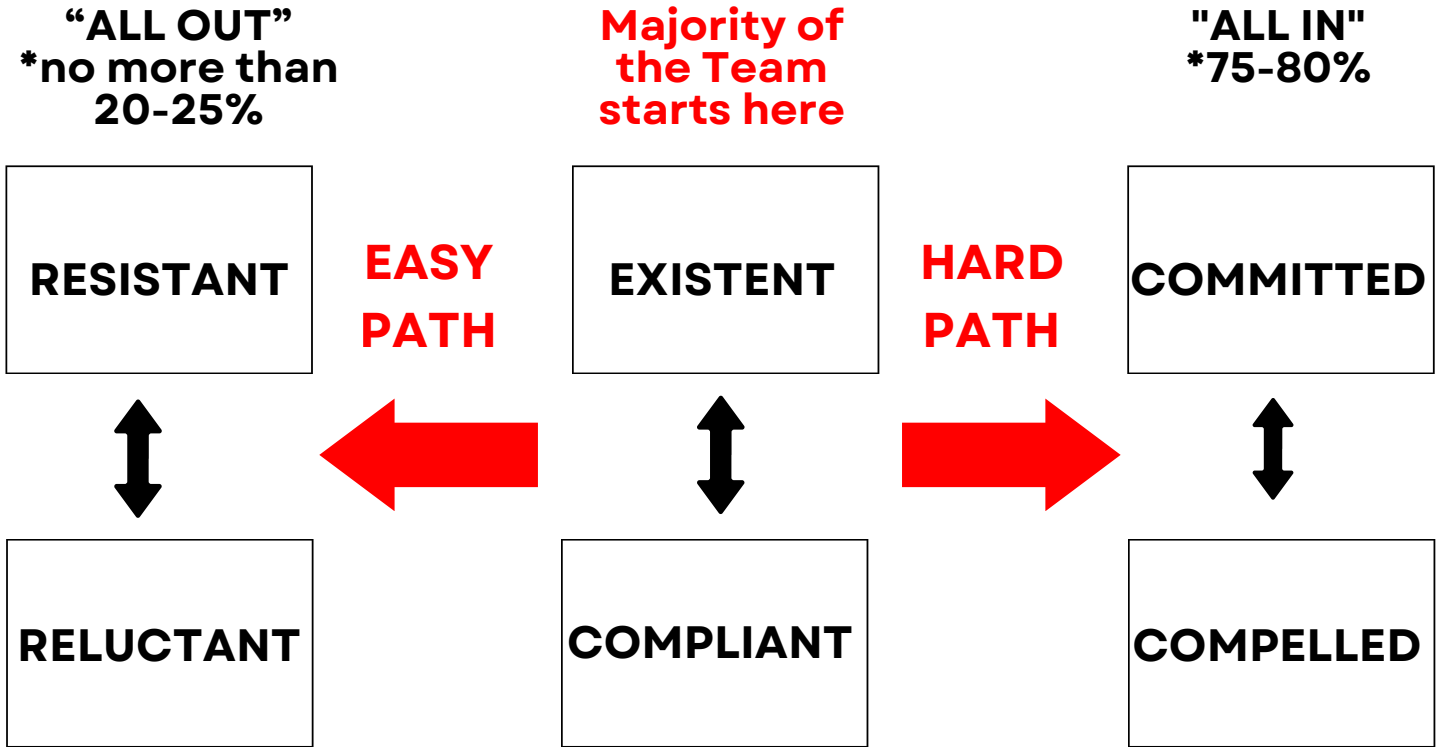
In what category do you think your coaches would put you in and why?

Can you recall a time where you have been in every single category? Looking back, how do you feel about those situations? How do you feel about that version of you?

Which type of teammate do you hope to be this season?

# WHAT KIND OF TEAM ARE WE?

Great teams focus on going down the hard path together. Weak teams focus solely on those choosing the easy path. Who and what will you focus on? In what direction do you all want to move in and why??



**HOW can you encourage yourself to focus on the “hard path”?**  
**KNOW YOUR WHY. REALISTIC GOALS. VISUALS.**

**HOW can you encourage teammates to go down “hard path”?**  
**1:1 CONNECTIONS & COMMUNICATION. SHARED GOALS.**

**HOW can you hold yourself AND your teammates accountable?**  
**TEAM STANDARDS, CORE VALUES, SHARED GOALS.**  
**“CALL UP, NOT OUT”**

**HOW do you stay focused on those moving in the right direction and not focus on negativity?**  
**“WHERE YOUR ATTENTION GOES, ENERGY FLOWS”**  
**You decide WHO and WHAT you focus on.**

# TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES



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# TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

**A strong team isn't built by accident, it's built with intention.**



Team building activities are more than just “ice breakers” or ways to pass time. When done with **purpose**, they create opportunities for athletes to connect, communicate, build trust, and foster a sense of unity that translates directly to performance as a group.

Too often, teams focus solely on the physical side of preparation, the skills, drills, and conditioning. But the truth is, a team's culture, relationships, and collective mindset are just as critical to success.



**How well do your athletes trust each other?**

**How well do they problem solve together under pressure?**

**How do they respond to adversity as a group?**

**These are built off the field just as much as on it.**

You don't need hours of free time or big budgets to do this well, consistency and purposeful moments go a long way. Whether you sprinkle these activities into practice, use them on team retreats, or integrate them into classroom sessions, you'll be giving your athletes the tools to show up stronger, for themselves and for each other.

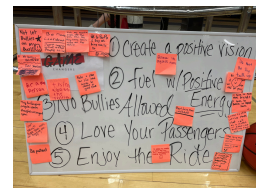
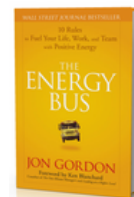


**Strong culture. Strong connections. Stronger teams.**



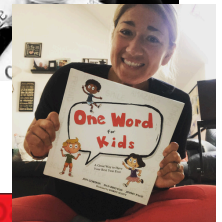
### GET ON THE BUS

A lot of leaders have their teams read *The Energy Bus* to create unity and a common dialogue. This winter I read this book with a college lacrosse team, at the end of the book I split the team up in to 10 different groups and each group had to present one of the rules to the rest of the team. We made posters for each rule and the coach went out and purchased "bus pins" that the girls were able to give out to one another over the course of the season. There is also a children's version of this book with 5 rules which I LOVE for teams as well!! Visit Jon Gordon's [Energy Bus](http://www.getonthebus.com) website for more info!



### ONE WORD

Have each team member choose one word that will help drive them to be their best and bring out the best in others. You may choose a word such as: focus, commit, faith, strong, positive, etc...Each person should choose a word that is the right fit for them. Once you choose your words you can make a team poster, sign or image that features all the words of the team. You may even want to pick "one word" for the team as a focus for the season. There is a children's picture book version of this book and makes for a great team read. Visit [www.GetOneWord.com](http://www.GetOneWord.com) for more ideas.



### THE HARD HAT

As a team, discuss and identify the characteristics of a great team member. What does it mean to be a great team member? Write all the characteristics down. Have each person choose the one that resonates most with them. I've had teams in the past purchase a "hard hat" and give it out at the end of the week to an athlete who displayed (enter your characteristics here)...Visit [www.HardHat21.com](http://www.HardHat21.com) for 21 ways to be a great teammate. I also HIGHLY encourage reading the book (adult version is a quick read, but there is a children's picture book version that I often read with teams too).



### IF YOU REALLY KNEW ME

If you really knew me you would know this about me\_\_\_\_\_.

A great activity that often starts out very basic. In order to get the athletes to dig deep and provide vulnerable characteristics, you as the coach should challenge them or model what it is you are looking for. The hope is your athletes feel comfortable enough to share meaningful stories and feelings that connect the team in a deep and powerful way. Thanks to author Mike Robbins for the idea.

### DEFINING MOMENTS

When a leader and each team member share a defining moment in their life you learn things you never knew before. Immediately you know your team members a whole lot better and feel more connected to them. I like to have each person in the room simply stand up and share a defining moment in their life. It's amazing how simple and powerful this exercise is.

### HERO HARDSHIP HIGHLIGHT

Be prepared, this one can make kids emotional...

With this exercise each person shares who their hero is and why they are their hero. Then they share a hardship that they have had to overcome in their life and end it with a positive highlight from their sport career. This is supposed to show athletes that we all carry baggage and that we are actually a lot similar then originally believed.

\*Can also add a ball of yarn to this activity. Have the first person wrap the yarn around their wrist 3x then go in to their responses. Once they're done, they toss the ball of yarn to the next person and that person repeats. The yarn will start to make a web, connecting each of the athletes. When everyone is done, have athletes cut the yarn and tie it on each others wrists as a bracelet (or if you don't want bracelets athletes can take their string and tie on shoe laces, on backpacks, on equipment...)

### TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Have all student athletes (coaches too) come up with two truths and one lie about themselves. Then go around the room saying your 3 things and people have to guess which is the lie. This could also be done on teams and you could involve points and group discussions.

# WHAT KIND OF TEAM CULTURE ARE WE BUILDING?!

Questions to engage your team in...

**“ARE WE A TEAM OF...”**

## **ENERGY TAKERS OR ENERGY GIVERS**

What kind of energy are you bringing in to the spaces you walk in to? Are you lifting others up? Or breaking them down? Communicating to each other? Or talking behind teammates' backs?

## **“WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?” OR “WHAT’S IN IT FOR US?”**

Are you ONLY thinking about YOUR success? Are you focused on the team vision & mission? Are you selfish? Are you selfless? Are your wants and needs more important than what WE want or what WE need?

## **VICTIMS OR HEROS**

Do you find yourself blaming others or feeling like everything is always going wrong? Are you helping to find solutions and working hard on controlling your controllables? Do you see obstacles as opportunities? Or are your insecurities allowing you to self sabotage?

## **WHY???** OR **WHY!!!**

Do you know "WHY" you do the things you do? Are you connected to what it is you are doing? Or are you just going through the motions? Does your individual why get you up in the morning? Help you push through doing hard things? Does your team why inspire you to be better?

# WHAT KIND OF TEAM CULTURE ARE WE BUILDING?!

**CONTINUED...**

## **EXCLUSIVES OR INCLUSIVES**

Do you make sure that everyone feels included? Like they belong? They matter? They have value? Or are you sticking with only your friend group, isolating others, and causing a divide amongst YOUR team?

## **ALL INS OR ALL OUTS**

Are you determined to do what it takes? Are you committed and compelled to do the little things? Are you dedicated to the people surrounding you? Are you resistant to change? Reluctant to make a difference? Only want to do "more" if there's something in it for you?

## **ME BEFORE WE OR WE BEFORE ME**

Are you more focused on individual or team stats?  
Is it more important for "YOU or US" to get the job done?

**At the end of the day, you are on a TEAM,  
and sometimes that means sacrificing what  
YOU want, for what WE want.**

**Take care of YOU, so we can take care of US.  
What does that mean?**



It means sometimes you are the STAR, sometimes you help the STAR.

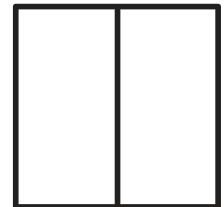
**Sometimes you'll start, and sometimes you won't.**

Sometimes you'll "be in a good mood", SOMETIMES YOU WILL NOT.

## And that is all OK.

But what's NOT ok is consistently showing up as the least awesome version of who you could be. **So how can you build a culture worth being proud of and a part of??**

**TAKE A PIECE OF PAPER AND SPLIT IT DOWN THE MIDDLE**



On one side  
write down  
"who are we  
at our  
WORST"

On the other side  
write down "who  
are we at our BEST"

In order for change to occur you must first recognize the things you do that HURT YOU (or those around you) and then find ways to change it so you do things that HELP YOU (and those around you!)

For example...

disorganized  
reactive  
overwhelmed  
insecure  
negative

organized  
responsive  
calm  
confident  
optimistic



# GAME CHANGERS

MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACHING

Identifying who you are as your best and worst will help give you specifics to work towards and lock in on in order to achieve awesome things together.

**Now flip the paper and continue the conversation by adding...**

What causes/  
contributes to  
us being at our  
worst?

What do we  
need to do  
more of in  
order to be at  
our best?

**And last, end with how you want to move forward as a team!**

What do we  
want to do  
when this  
version of us  
shows up?

How do we  
want to remind  
ourselves of  
this version?

**YOU'LL NEVER BE ON THE SAME PAGE WITH YOUR TEAM,  
IF YOU DON'T GET ON THE SAME PIECE OF PAPER.**

Don't be afraid of honest conversations, that's where the magic happens!

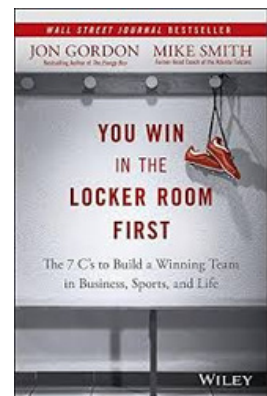
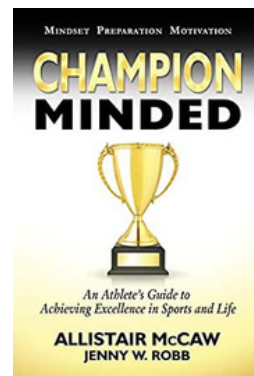
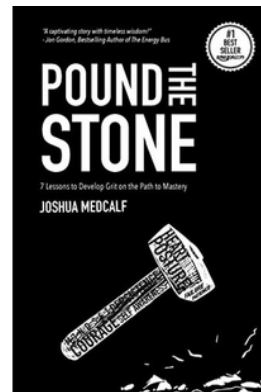
**AND NEVER FORGET HOW  
CAPABLE AND STRONGER  
YOU ARE **TOGETHER.****

# STORY THEMES:

Ever find yourself searching for a motivational story to share with your athletes? Look no further. In addition to the stories from the activity list, here are a few more that may help you and your athletes find that motto/mantra/theme for the season...

- \*Stick Together - by Jon Gordon/Kate Leavell
- \*You Win in the Locker Room First- by Jon Gordon
- Chop Wood, Carry Water - Joshua Medcalf
- \*Pound the Stone - Joshua Medcalf
- \*The Coffee Bean - by Jon Gordon (See next page)
- \*The Energy Bus - by Jon Gordon
- My Team is a Wolf Pack - See next page
- My Team is an Iceberg - See next page
- The WE Gear - Lance Loya
- Champion Minded - Allistair McCaw

**\*= books come with activity workbooks for sale by author**



# STORY THEMES:



My team is an iceberg.

The world may look at the surface and see a small mountain of ice peeking up through the sea, but what we are building is below the surface; a foundation so strong and so massive that all future teams that build upon it will have the opportunity to reach new heights.

A team built around one or two talented players has no foundation. When the peak melts, or when those players leave the program or get injured, there is nothing left to hold that team afloat. Building from the bottom up is the only way to sustain a program. We have an entire program of players that could, at this very moment, turn around and teach this game inside out because they learned it, studied it, and they know how to sustain, adapt and build upon it.

We all want to hold up the trophy at the end, get the ring, hang the banner, but that comes from building the foundation first- it's what we do that no one can see that propels up into success later. It's the work we do in the dark that one day will shine in the light and will look like an overnight success.

How will you measure this season? What did you build? What will be left next year if your graduating class is large? How would you measure your work in the dark and what will be revealed in the light of the future?

My team is an iceberg. You better put up a lookout.

# STORY THEMES:



My team is a wolf pack.

Each individual brings something incredibly important, different perspectives, strengths, personalities, each adding a dimension to the team. Each player brings strengths & faults, strengths we can build on, faults we can love and learn from. The pieces may not always appear to fit together, but when this team is on a mission, every part of this pack starts heading in the same direction with a fire in their soul and a mission in their heart & suddenly this team becomes one incredible force.

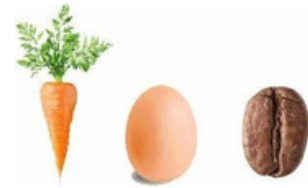
My team is a wolf pack. Every player has something in their heart that drives them forward. Even as they play to win, play to become their best, they still reach out to bring their teammates with them to the top. They stop to pull up the fallen ones and push to drive on the ones out in front, while cheering them on.

One or two players can be strong, they can lead and try to do it on their own. Other teams have strong players and they may go very far relying on them. But there is no stopping a pack. There is no bringing down a team that has the momentum of a mission driving them on. How can you stop a pack that can withstand falling only to rise stronger, faster, better and more determined each time? There is no breaking an unbreakable bond, a resolve to keep this team moving forward in one piece to the end of the season.

There is no limit to where a wolf pack goes because there are no barriers that can hold them and no doubts that can drown out their drive to persevere through any situation.

My team is a wolf pack and we've only just begun.

# STORY THEME:



The Story of The Carrot, The Egg, and The Coffee Bean

A young girl went to her grandmother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed that, as one problem was solved, a new one arose.

Her grandmother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In the first, she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil, without saying a word.

In about twenty minutes, she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl. Turning to her granddaughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?"

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," the young girl replied. The grandmother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. She then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. The granddaughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma.

The granddaughter then asked, "What does it mean, grandmother?" Her grandmother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity - boiling water - but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened! The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" the grandmother asked her granddaughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong but, with pain and adversity, do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit but, after a death, a breakup, or a financial hardship, does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor.

If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, do you get better and change the situation around you. When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate to another level?

## OTHER “THEMES” TO CONSIDER:

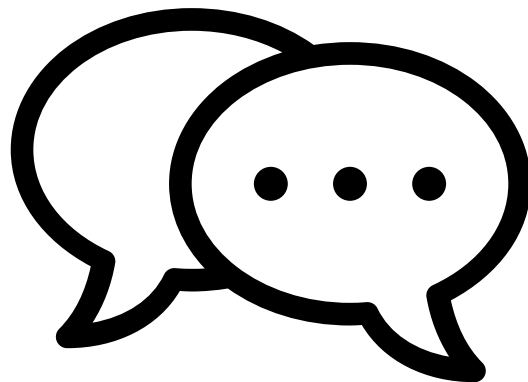
- Daily/Weekly/Monthly practice themes
- Season themes (in/out/pre/post)  
(fall/winter/spring/summer)
- Offensive/defensive theme for the season/year
- Team theme/focus for the year

By providing athletes/team with a “theme/ focus” you are giving meaning to what it is they are doing and why it is they are doing it/being asked to do it. Give your athletes **PURPOSE** behind the what and the why...

## “WHERE YOUR ATTENTION GOES, ENERGY FLOWS”

YOU GET TO DECIDE WHO AND WHAT GETS YOUR ATTENTION  
GET SERIOUS ABOUT WHY YOU DO THE THINGS YOU DO

# TEAM COMMUNICATION



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# HELP YOUR 'TEAM TALK'

## Building **connection** through **conversation**

Meaningful communication doesn't just happen on a team.

**It has to be encouraged, modeled, and practiced.**

When athletes learn how to have real conversations; with honesty, clarity, and respect, it transforms everything. Trust goes up.

Accountability becomes a team wide standard.



**And your team culture starts to take care of itself.**



This isn't about forcing uncomfortable conversations or fixing your whole team in one session. It's about giving them the tools, space, and language to communicate in a way that builds the kind of team culture you actually want.

Communication is for your entire team, not just the loud voices or your captains. Every athlete can grow in how they show up, speak up, and support each other.

**Use the following pages to help your athletes navigate their personal areas of communication and then bring it together to discuss team communication styles and standards!**

**Ready to create a stronger foundation of trust, connection, and clarity within your program?**

Me too. Let's do this!

# ‘TEAM TALK’

## Personal reflection page - “How I show up”

Before we talk to others, let’s check in with ourselves.  
Use this space to reflect on how you show up as a teammate,  
communicator, and leader. There’s no right or wrong,  
just honest self awareness.

WHEN I’M AT MY BEST I BRING THE  
FOLLOWING TO MY TEAM/TEAMMATES:

WHEN I’M STRUGGLING, I TEND TO:

SOMETHING I WANT MY TEAMMATES TO KNOW ABOUT ME IS:

WHAT I APPRECIATE THE MOST  
FROM THOSE WHO SUPPORT ME:

# ‘TEAM TALK’

Personal reflection page- **“My communication style”**

I FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE SPEAKING UP WHEN:

I FIND IT HARDEST TO SPEAK UP WHEN:

ONE WAY I COULD BE A BETTER LISTENER IS:

A STRENGTH I BRING TO CONVERSATIONS IS:

ONE WAY I TEND TO SHUT DOWN IN CONVERSATIONS IS:

# ‘TEAM TALK’

**Personal reflection page- “How I handle conflict”**

WHEN SOMETHING IS BOTHERING ME, I USUALLY:

SOMETHING I WANT TO GET BETTER AT  
WHEN IT COMES TO CONFLICT IS:

A HARD CONVERSATION I’VE HAD IN THE PAST THAT WENT WELL WAS:

A HARD CONVERSATION I’VE HAD IN THE  
PAST THAT I WISH I HAD HANDLED DIFFERENTLY:

# ‘TEAM TALK’

**Personal reflection page- “Team communication goals”**

ONE AREA OF COMMUNICATION I WANT TO GROW IS IN:

A CONVERSATION I’VE BEEN AVOIDING, BUT KNOW I NEED TO HAVE/WANT TO RESOLVE:

ONE THING I CAN DO TO BE A MORE COMMUNICATIVE TEAMMATE THIS SEASON:

A COMMUNICATION HABIT I WANT TO BREAK OR CHANGE:

A LEADERSHIP TRAIT I WANT TO PRACTICE THROUGH HOW I COMMUNICATE THIS SEASON IS:

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **BETTER COMMUNICATE** WITH THEIR TEAMMATES

Can also be used for coaches to communicate to and with their staff

Use these as journal prompts or conversation starters amongst athletes for 1:1s, small group, positionally or team wide discussions.

1. I APPRECIATE WHEN TEAMMATES...
2. I DISLIKE WHEN TEAMMATES...
3. WHEN I FEEL STRESSED AT PRACTICE, WHAT I NEED MOST FROM OTHERS IS...
4. TO FEEL BALANCED AT PRACTICE, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO...
5. WHEN THERE IS AN ISSUE I PREFER TO COMMUNICATE... (IN PERSON/PHONE/WRITING)
6. I BEST PROCESS A LOT OF INFORMATION BY...  
(READING/WATCHING/ASKING/WRITING)
7. IN ORDER FOR ME TO PERFORM AT MY BEST I NEED OTHERS TO KNOW...
8. IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT PLEASE HELP GET ME REFOCUSED BY...
9. WHEN I NEED TO BE REMINDED OF SOMETHING/HELD ACCOUNTABLE PLEASE...

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **BETTER COMMUNICATE** WITH THEIR TEAMMATES **Part 2**

Can also be used for coaches to communicate to and with their staff

Use these as journal prompts or conversation starters amongst athletes for 1:1s, small group, positionally or team wide discussions.

1. WHEN I MAKE A MISTAKE, THE BEST WAY FOR A TEAMMATE TO SUPPORT ME IS...
2. I FEEL MOST CONNECTED TO MY TEAM WHEN WE...
3. IF I SEEM FRUSTRATED DURING A GAME OR PRACTICE THE BEST WAY TO CHECK IN WITH ME IS...
4. ONE THING THAT HELPS ME STAY MOTIVATED AND ENGAGED DURING PRACTICE IS...
5. WHEN GIVING ME FEEDBACK, I APPRECIATE WHEN TEAMMATES/COACHES...
6. A TEAM CULTURE WHEN I FEEL VALUED LOOKS LIKE...
7. THE BEST WAY TO APPROACH ME IF THERE'S A CONFLICT OR TENSION IS...
8. I FEEL MOST CONFIDENT IN MY ROLE ON THE TEAM WHEN...
9. SOMETHING I'M WORKING ON IMPROVING AS A TEAMMATE IS...
10. ONE THING I ADMIRE ABOUT MY TEAMMATES IS...

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **BETTER COMMUNICATE** WITH THEIR TEAMMATES **Part 3**

Can also be used for coaches to communicate to and with their staff

Use these as journal prompts or conversation starters amongst athletes for 1:1s, small group, positionally or team wide discussions.

1. WHEN I AM UNDER STRESS I TYPICALLY (REACT OR RESPOND) BY DOING...
2. TO KEEP MYSELF COMPOSED IN HIGH PRESSURE SITUATIONS I TRY TO...
3. TO KEEP ME FOCUSED UNDER PRESSURE I USUALLY SAY OR THINK TO MYSELF...
4. WHEN I NEED SUPPORT I TEND TO TURN TO...
5. ONE THING I TRY TO REMIND MYSELF OF WHEN THINGS AREN'T GOING MY WAY IS...
6. ONE MOMENT WHERE I OVERCAME ADVERSITY IN MY LIFE WAS...
7. ONE MOMENT WHERE I WAS SUPER PROUD OF MYSELF WAS...
8. I REALLY WANT MY TEAMMATES TO KNOW...
9. THE BEST WAY TO REMIND ME TO STAY ON TASK IS...
10. ONE THING I HAVE LEARNED ABOUT MYSELF THROUGH SPORT IS...

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **BETTER COMMUNICATE** WITH THEIR TEAMMATES **Part 4**

Can also be used for coaches to communicate to and with their staff

Use these as journal prompts or conversation starters amongst athletes for 1:1s, small group, positionally or team wide discussions.

1. HOW CAN WE REMIND EACH OTHER TO STAY PRESENT AND FOCUSED THE NEXT TIME WE ARE STRUGGLING/FRUSTRATED?
2. WHAT DOES STAYING COMPOSED LOOK LIKE FOR US?
3. WHAT'S OUR AGREED UPON "RESET" ACTION OR WORD TO GET US BACK ON THE SAME PAGE?
4. HOW CAN WE ENSURE NO ONE FEELS ALONE WHEN FACING ADVERSITY?
5. WHAT'S ONE HABIT WE CAN BUILD TO HELP EACH OTHER BE MENTALLY TOUGH?
6. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT OURSELVES SO FAR THIS SEASON?
7. WHAT HAS WORKED WELL FOR US IN THE PAST WHEN FACING ADVERSITY?
8. WHAT IS SOMETHING WE ARE PROUD OF OURSELVES FOR?
9. SHARE ONE TEAMMATE MOMENT THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOU WHEN YOU WERE STRUGGLING.
10. WHAT DO YOU HOPE OTHER TEAMS SAY ABOUT US?

## **QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR COACHES**

1. WHAT DO I DO WELL IN PRACTICE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME CONTINUE TO DO MORE OF?
2. IN YOUR OPINION; WHAT SKILL OR DRILL NEEDS MORE OF MY ATTENTION?
3. WHEN IS IT OK FOR ME TO TRY OR PRACTICE NEW SKILLS/TAKE RISKS IN PRACTICE?
4. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO SEE MORE FROM ME IN ORDER TO GAIN TRUST IN MY PLAYING ABILITY?
5. WHAT COULD I BE DOING MORE OF TO SHOW YOU I'M READY FOR GAME PLAY?
6. WHERE DO YOU SEE ME CONTRIBUTING THE MOST THIS SEASON?
7. WHAT WAS IT ABOUT ME OR MY PLAYING ABILITY THAT INFLUENCED YOU TO CHOOSE ME FOR YOUR TEAM?

# HOW TO ASK ABOUT PLAYING TIME WITHOUT ACTUALLY ASKING ABOUT PLAYING TIME

## UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE!!

YOU NEED TO KNOW WHAT IT IS YOUR COACH IS LOOKING FOR BEFORE YOU GO IN TO HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT PLAYING TIME. OBSERVING WHAT THEY LIKE/DON'T LIKE, UNDERSTANDING THE PLAYS, AND PICKING UP ON WHAT OTHERS MAY BE DOING BETTER THAN YOU ARE ALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO GATHER FIRST.

## PLAYING TIME IS DETERMINED AT PRACTICE

BEFORE YOU GO IN AND ASK WHAT YOU CAN BE DOING BETTER, YOU NEED TO PRACTICE SOME SELF REFLECTION ON WHAT IT IS YOU ARE CURRENTLY DOING. DOES YOUR COACH OFTEN REPEAT THE SAME CUES TO YOU? OR TO THE PERSON PLAYING IN THE POSITION YOU WANT? ARE YOU TAKING RISKS AT PRACTICE? LEARNING FROM YOUR MISTAKES AND CAPITALIZING ON YOUR STRENGTHS?

## NEVER ASK ABOUT "PLAYING TIME"

AT THE END OF THE DAY "PLAYING TIME" COMES DOWN TO TRUST. DOES YOUR COACH TRUST YOU, YOUR ATHLETIC ABILITY, YOUR SKILLS AND YOUR DECISION MAKING? BEFORE ASKING FOR MORE PLAYING TIME, I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO ASK WHAT IS IT THAT YOU DO THAT YOUR COACH TRUSTS, OR WHAT CAN YOU BE DOING MORE OF IN ORDER TO EARN THAT TRUST?

## BE PREPARED TO ANSWER YOUR OWN QUESTIONS

IF YOU DO ASK "WHAT CAN I BE DOING BETTER" OR "HOW DO I GET MORE PLAYING TIME" BE FULLY PREPARED TO ANSWER YOUR OWN QUESTION. COACHES DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO GIVE YOU ALL THE ANSWERS ALL THE TIME, RATHER THEY MAY WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS YOU THINK THEY WANT TO SEE. HAVE A FEW RESPONSES READY TO GO JUST INCASE!

## OWN YOUR ROLE

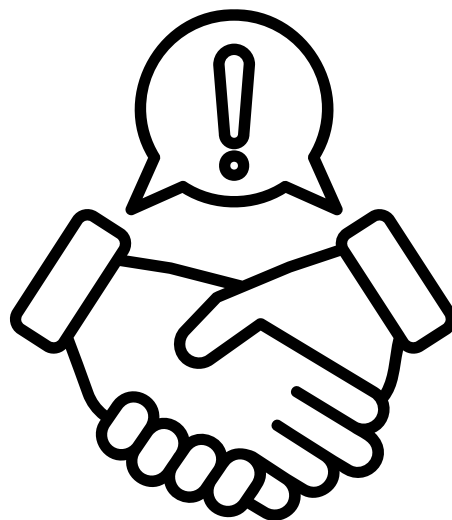
WHETHER YOU START OR NOT, EVERY ATHLETE SERVES A PURPOSE AND HAS A "ROLE" ON THEIR TEAM. IT IS NOT UP TO YOUR COACH TO DEFINE YOUR ROLE. THAT'S ON YOU KID. WHETHER YOU'RE GIVEN A ROLE OR YOU TAKE ONE, IT'S ALL ON YOU. YOUR ATTITUDE, EFFORT, ENERGY, MINDSET AND OVERALL APPROACH TO WHAT YOU DO ON A DAILY BASIS IS WHAT SHAPES YOUR EXPERIENCE.

# PLAYING TIME = TRUST

**USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHEN SPEAKING WITH YOUR COACHING STAFF SURROUNDING THE TOPIC OF “PLAYING TIME”**

1. WHAT CAN I DO TO BUILD MORE TRUST WITH YOU AND THE TEAM?
2. ARE THERE SPECIFIC SKILLS OR HABITS YOU’D LIKE ME TO IMPROVE THAT WOULD HELP THE TEAM?
3. WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT ATHLETES YOU TRUST MOST IN HIGH PRESSURE MOMENTS, WHAT DO THEY CONSISTENTLY DO?
4. AM I SHOWING YOU ENOUGH IN PRACTICE TO PROVE I’M READY FOR GAME SITUATIONS?
5. ARE THERE SMALL DETAILS IN MY GAME, TECHNIQUE, COMMUNICATION, EFFORT, THAT I’M OVERLOOKING?
6. HOW CAN I BETTER SUPPORT MY TEAMMATES IN MY ROLE RIGHT NOW?
7. WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE ATHLETE(S) CURRENTLY IN MY POSITION THAT MAKES THEM STAND OUT?
8. IF YOU COULD GIVE ME ONE PIECE OF FEEDBACK TO APPLY IMMEDIATELY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
9. ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE OF PLAYING TIME (LEADERSHIP, PREPARATION, ENERGY) WHERE I CAN ADD MORE VALUE?
10. WHAT WOULD YOU NEED TO SEE FROM ME CONSISTENTLY TO FEEL CONFIDENT PUTTING ME IN MORE OFTEN?

# TEAM CONFLICT RESOLUTION



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# HELPING ATHLETES NAVIGATE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS TOGETHER



## WHY THIS MATTERS

Tough conversations are part of every team's journey, but how your team handles them is what sets you apart.

Too often, athletes avoid talking through issues because they fear conflict, confrontation, or saying the wrong thing. Others jump straight into blame or defensiveness, and the real issue gets lost. Either way, trust breaks down, and team culture suffers.

This following guide is designed to help your team shift their mindset: It's not about player vs. player. **It's about all of us vs. the problem.**

**Taking the time to sit down together as a team to build your own formula for navigating hard conversations does a few powerful things:**

- It sets a standard for how your team communicates.
- It gives your athletes tools and shared language to handle disagreements productively.
- It builds trust, accountability, and cohesion that will carry over into every aspect of how your team operates, on and off the field.

## HOW TO USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCE:

- Set aside 30-45 minutes for a team meeting.
- Go through each section together.
- Encourage discussion, not just answers.
- Let your athletes help shape the language and approach so they feel ownership and accountable to uphold this standard.
- Create a visible team agreement or "conversation code" they can refer back to; hang in locker room, put in team binders, send home.



This is more than just a worksheet, it's a culture builder. Because championship level teams don't avoid hard conversations. They lean in, stay respectful, and solve problems together. Let's help them do exactly that.

# HELPING ATHLETES NAVIGATE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS TOGETHER

## **1. SETTING THE MINDSET BEFORE THE CONVO - Approach the problems as teammates, not opponents**

- a. What is the actual issue we are trying to solve together?
- b. What do we want to achieve in this conversation?
- c. How can we make sure this stays about the problem and not about attacking each other?
- d. What's one way we can show respect to each other even when we disagree?

## **2. ACKNOWLEDGE PERSPECTIVES & FEELINGS - Listening doesn't mean agreeing, it means understanding**

- a. Can you help me understand where you're coming from?
- b. What's been frustrating for you about this situation?
- c. What impact do you feel this issue is having on the team?
- d. How do you think I might be experiencing this situation?

## **3. IDENTIFY THE CORE ISSUE - When you define the real problem, it's easier to solve**

- a. What's the real problem here?
- b. What's something we both agree on?
- c. If we removed personal feelings for a second, what would we say is the root issue?
- d. What's one thing we both want for this team?

## **4. PROBLEM SOLVE TOGETHER - Find solutions, not just more frustrations**

- a. What's one step we can take to fix this?
- b. What do you need from me to help this situation?
- c. How can we make sure this doesn't happen again?
- d. What's a compromise that would work for us both?

## **5. END ON A POSITIVE NOTE - Growth happens when conversations end with clarity, not conflict**

- a. What's something we can appreciate about each other in how we handled this?
- b. How can we check in on this later to make sure we're good?
- c. What's one thing we can do today to move forward as a team?

# HELPING ATHLETES NAVIGATE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS TOGETHER

note taking sheet

## SETTING THE MINDSET BEFORE THE CONVO

Approach the problems as teammates, not opponents

## ACKNOWLEDGE PERSPECTIVES & FEELINGS

Listening doesn't mean agreeing, it means understanding

## IDENTIFY THE CORE ISSUE

When you define the real problem, it's easier to solve

## PROBLEM SOLVE TOGETHER

Find solutions, not just more frustrations

## END ON A POSITIVE NOTE

Growth happens when conversations end with clarity, not conflict

# STRUGGLE WITH APOLOGIES?

**Vulnerability doesn't come easy to everyone, and sometimes saying "I'm sorry" is really hard. Try these to get the conversation going...**

- "I regret how my actions impacted you".
- "I see now that what I did hurt you and that wasn't my intention".
- "I take responsibility for what happened and I want to make it right".
- "I realize now that I should have handled that differently".
- "I value our relationship and I don't want my actions to cause harm".
- "That wasn't fair to you and I want to own up to it".
- "I understand why you're upset and I want to do better moving forward".
- "I recognize I made a mistake and I want to learn from it".
- "I appreciate your patience with me as I work on this".
- "I hear you and I acknowledge where I went wrong".

# DON'T THINK YOU WERE WRONG?

**BUT WANT TO MOVE THROUGH THE PROBLEM? TRY THESE:**

- "I can see this was important to you and I want to find a way forward".
- "I may not fully understand but I do respect you and your feelings and I want to make this right".
- "I hear where you're coming from and I don't want this to create distance or animosity between us".
- "I acknowledge that this affected you and I want to work through it together".
- "Let's find a way to move past this in a way that works for us both".
- "I don't want this to cause tension between us so let's talk about what we both need".
- "I get that we see this differently but I still value our relationship and I want to resolve it".
- "I'm willing to meet you halfway on this so we can move forward".
- "I respect your perspective and I want to make sure we're both good moving forward".
- "This situation isn't ideal, but I want to focus on a solution rather than staying stuck on the problem".

## COMMUNICATE BETTER, TOGETHER, USING THE SYMPATHY - SUPPORT - SOLUTION METHOD

“What do you need from this conversation?”

### ➔ SYMPATHY AKA JUST LISTEN

Sometimes people just want to be heard, want their feelings validated, or they need a safe space to vent and get things off their chest. Think of this like “catching someone’s word vomit”. No advice offered, no suggestions, just listen. You can ask questions like “tell me more”, “why do you think you feel that way” or “I’m ready to listen when you need me to”. When they’re done, take the vomit that you just caught and THROW IT AWAY, don’t throw it back at them, and absolutely do not spread it around to others. When someone wants sympathy, that’s all they’re capable of handling or receiving in the moment. Honor that and honor them.

\*Just because someone wants sympathy, doesn’t mean they should always get it. If all someone is doing is venting/word vomiting you have every right to draw a boundary and let them know you are not available for sympathy, but when they’re ready to move forward, you’re there to help them.

### ➔ SUPPORT EXACTLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE

Once you have offered sympathy and "listened", you can offer up your support; in the form of a hug, thanking them/your appreciation, reminding them you’re there for them, or maybe asking more questions that will help create a way to work through their problem/ frustration. If they’re having a problem you can assist with or be by their side for, then do so if you feel comfortable. Please do not offer advice unless they are ready to receive it. Think about all the ways you like to be supported, or wish someone would support you and offer suggestions until you find the right fit.

### ➔ SOLUTION GREEN LIGHT FOR ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS, GO!

The more you “listen”, the more you create a safe and non judgmental space for others to go to when they need help, and eventually they will start asking for your advice or "how would you handle this situation?" By starting with sympathy and support first, others will feel more heard, valued, seen and ultimately more comfortable coming to you for solutions in the long run. When a person’s judgement is clouded, solution based thinking isn’t always accessible to the human brain. Allow humans to be human, and problem solve when they’re ready to do so.

# VENTING VS COMPLAINING DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

## HOW YOU SAY IT MATTERS

Every athlete needs to let things out sometimes. Frustration builds. Emotions run high. And when handled the right way, talking it out can actually make you stronger, closer, and more focused as a team.

## BUT HERE'S THE CATCH:

This generation often confuses venting with complaining, but the difference between the two can either bring a team closer or slowly break it apart.

### VENTING IS INTENTIONAL.

It's about expressing emotions so you can move forward.



### COMPLAINING IS REPETITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

It focuses only on what's wrong, without wanting to fix it.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Because on a team, your words affect more than just you. Complaining drains energy, spreads negativity, and can damage trust in the locker room, on the field, and off it.

The following resource is designed to help you and your teammates better understand the difference, reflect on your own communication habits, and start learning how to talk about the hard stuff without hurting the people around you.

This isn't about being perfect, it's about being mindful, intentional, and committed to growth.

Because real teams don't ignore problems. They learn how to talk through them, with honesty and respect.

# VENTING VS COMPLAINING

**ONE BUILDS TRUST. THE OTHER BREAKS IT.**

## VENTING =

- Emotion with intention.
- Seeking sympathy, support or a solution.
- Getting things off your chest so you can move forward.
- Solution minded, emotionally honest, and can strengthen trust when done in the right space, with the right person.
- A moment of release that helps you reset, not spiral.

## COMPLAINING =

- Emotion with NO direction.
- Rehashing problems with no desire to solve it.
- Breeds negativity, fractures trust and slowly chips away at cohesion.
- Focus is only on what's wrong or the negative.
- Creates tension, drama and mistrust within a team.

**Venting to a trusted teammate, coach or parent with the goal of clarity or support? That's healthy!**

**Complaining in the locker room, group chats or behind people's backs? That's toxic!**

## EXAMPLE:

### VENTING:

- “Practice felt off today and I’m frustrated, can we talk about what didn’t click?”
- “I need to get this out of my head, but I’m stuck, got a second so I can talk it out loud?”

### COMPLAINING:

- “Ugh this team is a mess, no one knows what they’re doing”
- “Why do we even bother? Nothing ever changes”

# VENTING VS COMPLAINING

**Venting in the right space can build trust.  
Complaining in the wrong space can break it.**

## COACH:

- **Set the tone** - normalize venting as a healthy tool and define what complaining is and looks like.
- **Create safe spaces** - let athletes know when/where it's ok to express and process emotions.
- **Redirect with intention** - "I hear you, what do you want to do about it?"
- **Model it** - when you process frustration, do it in a way that reflects leadership and calm.

## ATHLETES:

- "Can I vent for a minute? I'm not looking to complain, I just need to get this out"
- "I'm trying to work through something, can we talk it through without judgement?"
- "I don't want this to come off as negative, I'm trying to understand and move forward".
- "You seem frustrated, do you need my sympathy, support or want a solution based conversation?"

## PARENTS:

- **Listen first.** Validate emotions without jumping to fix or adding more fuel to the fire.
- **Ask second.** "Do you want to vent or are you looking for advice?" "Can I offer you sympathy, support or are you ready for a solution?"
- **Guide.** "That sounds frustrating, how do you want to handle it?" "Is there someone on the team you trust to walk through this with?"
- **Reinforce.** Venting can be powerful, complaining keeps you stuck. How do you want to move forward?

# AM I VENTING OR COMPLAINING?

Read each statement and fill in the blanks to reflect on  
how you usually communicate in tough moments.

WHEN I'M FRUSTRATED, THE FIRST PERSON I USUALLY TALK TO IS: \_\_\_\_\_  
I CHOOSE THIS PERSON BECAUSE:

I USUALLY TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED BECAUSE I WANT TO:  
(FEEL BETTER, BE HEARD, FIX THE SITUATION, JUST SAY WHAT'S ON MY MIND)

WHEN I FINISH VENTING, I USUALLY FEEL:

ONE TIME I VENTED IN A WAY THAT HELPED ME WAS:  
WHY IT HELPED:

ONE TIME I COMPLAINED AND IT MADE THINGS WORSE WAS:

WHAT I LEARNED FROM THAT:

MOVING FORWARD, I WANT TO WORK ON:

- Talking to people who will help me \_\_\_\_\_
- Being more \_\_\_\_\_ when I express frustration
- Checking in with myself before I speak so I don't \_\_\_\_\_

# INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM REFLECTION



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# JOURNALING & SELF REFLECTION

Journaling isn't just "writing things down." It's one of the simplest, most effective tools for building self awareness, processing experiences, and tracking growth over time. For athletes, it creates a private space to work through challenges, celebrate progress, and identify patterns that impact performance, both positive and negative.

When athletes take time to reflect, they begin to notice what truly helps them perform at their best and what holds them back. This awareness is the foundation for making intentional changes and sustaining confidence.

## TIPS TO GET STARTED

- Keep It Simple – Start with just 2–5 minutes a day. Don't worry about writing a perfect essay; bullet points or short sentences work just fine.
- Don't like to write? Use voice notes, record yourself or use an app
- Create a Cue – Link journaling to an existing routine (before bed, after practice, during morning coffee) so it becomes automatic.
- Use Prompts – Questions or themes can spark reflection when you're not sure what to write. (You'll find prompts and guided pages in this section of The Game Plan.)

## HOW TO STAY CONSISTENT

- Set a Small Goal – Commit to just a few lines each time. Success builds momentum.
- Track Your Streak – Use a calendar, app, or the worksheets in this playbook to see your progress visually.
- Don't Skip After "Bad" Days – Reflecting during challenges is often when the biggest insights happen.
- Mix It Up – Switch between gratitude lists, game day recaps, and mindset prompts to keep it fresh.

# INDIVIDUAL FOCUSES AFFIRMATIONS/MANTRAS DAILY INTENTIONS

I am \_\_\_\_\_

I will \_\_\_\_\_

I achieve \_\_\_\_\_

I focus \_\_\_\_\_

I grow \_\_\_\_\_

I own \_\_\_\_\_

I have \_\_\_\_\_

I live \_\_\_\_\_

I work \_\_\_\_\_

I fuel \_\_\_\_\_

I do \_\_\_\_\_

I make \_\_\_\_\_

**TEAM FOCUSES  
AFFIRMATIONS/MANTRAS  
DAILY INTENTIONS**

**We are** \_\_\_\_\_

**We will** \_\_\_\_\_

**We achieve** \_\_\_\_\_

**We focus** \_\_\_\_\_

**We grow** \_\_\_\_\_

**We own** \_\_\_\_\_

**We have** \_\_\_\_\_

**We live** \_\_\_\_\_

**We work** \_\_\_\_\_

**We fuel** \_\_\_\_\_

**We do** \_\_\_\_\_

**We make** \_\_\_\_\_

# GAME CHANGER PLEDGE

Pick a few  
to commit to!

## THIS SEASON...

1. I PROMISE TO...
2. I WILL COMMIT TO...
3. I WANT TO WORK ON...
4. I WILL HOLD MYSELF ACCOUNTABLE BY...
5. I WILL ASK FOR HELP WHEN...
6. I BELIEVE I CAN...
7. I BELIEVE WE WILL...
8. I HAVE THE ABILITY TO...
9. I AM GOING TO...
10. I WANT TO...
11. I WANT US TO...
12. WHEN I NEED TO COMMUNICATE I WILL...
13. WHEN I'M HAVING A TOUGH TIME I WILL...
14. WHEN I AM CONFUSED OR UNSURE I...
15. I WILL DEFINE SUCCESS AS...
16. I WILL RESPOND TO FAILURE BY...

**I WILL BE MY OWN GAME CHANGER.**

### DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

Every day try to start with an uplifting, optimistic, future thinking affirmation. Setting yourself an "intention" for the day ahead helps you stay focused on the kind of energy and mindset you'd like to move forward with. Try starting your sentence with "I am", "I will", "I believe", or "I have".

### DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

It's important for us to recognize the good in each day, ESPECIALLY on days where we came in to contact with adversity and struggle. List at least 3 highlights, something good, happy, or joyous, or even something that made you proud!

### DAILY GRATITUDE

Start your day reflecting on the things you are grateful for or the things in your life that bring you joy. Try stating at least 3 things.

EX: "I am grateful for a good night's sleep, my dog, and the day ahead".

### WHAT DID I LEARN TODAY?

There are lessons in EVERY day, as long as we are open to learning them. Choose to see your obstacles as opportunities, and applaud yourself for being able to take something away from each experience you have during the day.

EX: "I learned I am capable to receive criticism without judging myself"

### WHAT WILL MAKE TODAY GREAT?

What can YOU control that would make the day ahead a great day? Place emphasis on things only YOU can control.

EX: "Great playlist for today's drive, getting a coffee before class, going up in weight during lift".

### WHAT AM I LOOKING FORWARD TO TOMORROW?

Before you close your eyes and lay your head on your pillow, think about one thing that you are excited for in the day ahead. Use this to help you get out of bed and start your day. Take it one step further and rename your alarm to what is it you are looking forward to for an extra boost of good vibes in the morning.

# DAILY JOURNAL

**AM**

**PM**

**DAILY AFFIRMATION**

**3 HIGHLIGHTS  
FROM THE DAY**

**3 THINGS I AM  
GRATEFUL FOR TODAY**

**WHAT DID I  
LEARN TODAY?**

**3 THINGS THAT WILL  
MAKE TODAY GREAT**

**2 THINGS I AM LOOKING  
FORWARD TO  
TOMORROW**

# PRE GAME ROUTINES

A pre game routine can help athletes mentally, physically and emotionally prepare for competition.

It can help them get into a focused mindset, calm any nerves or anxiety, and increase confidence.

Having a consistent pre game routine can create a sense of familiarity and comfort in an otherwise unfamiliar and potentially stressful environment.

A pre game routine can give athletes an edge in performance and help them feel more prepared, confident and ready to compete.

Use the next few resources to reflect on the different ways you can add a pre game routine to what it is you do.

# PRE GAME ROUTINES

## NIGHT BEFORE

Lay out and/or pack all that you will need for the next day.

Spend time visualizing/journaling.

Schedule a session with Coach K

Eat a nutritious meal.

Get to bed early.

## MORNING/DAY OF

Breakfast.

Self care routine.

Meditation/visualization.

Favorite drink.

Affirmations.

Journal.

## TRAVEL TO/ LOCKER ROOM

Meditation/visualization.

Music/Dance Party.

Favorite movie.

Review Team game plan.

Review personal goals.

Journal.

## BEFORE GAME START

Positive self talk.

Sharpie time (iykyk)

Visualization while warming up body/skills/brain.

Personal Rituals/routines.

Check in with teammates.

# PRE GAME ROUTINES

**NIGHT BEFORE**

**MORNING/DAY OF**

**TRAVEL TO/  
LOCKER ROOM**

**BEFORE GAME START**

# PRE PRACTICE/PRE GAME FOCUS PROMPTS/DAILY INTENTIONS

## **TODAY I AM...**

...capable of handling whatever the day throws at me".

...prepared to do my best according to my standards".

...not going to dwell on my mistakes rather learn from them quick and move forward".

## **TODAY I WILL...**

...use positive self talk"

...respond to adversity and not react in a negative way".

...NOT allow anyone to define me by my mistakes".

## **TODAY I HAVE...**

...prepared myself properly".

...the ability to make myself proud".

...an opportunity to do great things".

## **TODAY I BELIEVE...**

..in myself and my abilities".

...I am capable of performing at my highest level".

...I am prepared".

## **TODAY WHEN...**

...adversity strikes..."

...I feel a negative emotion or thought coming on..."

...I do something right..."

...something happens that shakes me..."

## **EXTRA:**

"Someone I will look to/turn to for positive energy is..."

"Something I can do to snap out of my own thoughts is..."

"When I feel myself become frustrated I can..."

# PRE PRACTICE/PRE GAME FOCUS PROMPTS/DAILY INTENTIONS

**TODAY I AM...**

**TODAY I BELIEVE...**

**TODAY I HAVE...**

**TODAY WHEN...**

**TODAY I WILL...**

**PERSONAL GOAL**

# PRE GAME PROMPTS INDIVIDUAL/TEAM

**3 INDIVIDUAL/POSITIONAL GOALS:**

**THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

**3 TEAM GOALS:**

**HOW WILL I/WE RESPOND TO ANY  
UNCONTROLLABLES THAT COME OUR WAY?**

**INDIVIDUAL/TEAM  
AFFIRMATION/MANTRA:**

**HOW ARE WE/AM I FEELING RIGHT NOW**



# POST PRACTICE/POST GAME REFLECTION PROMPTS

## **FAVORITE MOMENT FROM TODAY?**

Reflect on what moment from practice, your game or competition you enjoyed the most. A friendly reminder that fun at the center of all we do internally drives the human experience!

## **SOMETHING I/ WE LEARNED... SOMETHING BROUGHT TO MY/ OUR ATTENTION...**

What did you learn today? What did you realize? What was an “ah-ha” moment for you, your team, your teammates?

## **WHERE WAS I/ WERE WE EXPOSED? WHERE DID I/ WE MAKE ANY MISTAKES?**

If you're not making mistakes and taking chances, you aren't learning. Your exposures help you to figure out what skills or areas of sport still need your attention.



## **WHAT CAN I DO/ WE DO ABOUT BEING EXPOSED IN THE FUTURE?**

Are you learning from your mistakes? Being open to reflecting on them and changing your actions/behavior? Or are you ignoring them, avoiding them, or pretending they aren't happening?

## **DID I/WE TAKE ANY RISKS TODAY? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

If you want to learn, you need to put yourself in new situations, even if you are scared! Take the risk. Push yourself. Do something new. Be scared and do it anyway!

## **WHO DESERVES A SHOUTOUT?**

Who can you give a shoutout to? A teammate? Coach? Friend? Family member? Yourself??

# POST GAME REFLECTION INDIVIDUAL/TEAM

**TOP 3 MOMENTS FROM THE GAME  
(WIN OR LOSE!):**

**DID I/WE TAKE ANY RISKS  
TODAY? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

**WHAT MADE ME/US PROUD TODAY?**

**WHAT DID I/WE LEARN TODAY?**

**WHAT NEEDS MY/OUR ATTENTION THIS WEEK AT PRACTICE  
(BEFORE NEXT GAME):**

**WHO DESERVES A SHOUTOUT:**

**OVERALL GAME DAY EXPERIENCE**



# WEEKLY CHECK IN

**TOP 3 THINGS I/WE DID THIS WEEK:**

**MOST REWARDING MOMENTS  
FROM THIS WEEK:**

**3 THINGS I/ WE LEARNED THIS WEEK:**

**THINGS I/WE GOT DONE THIS WEEK:**

**NEXT WEEK I/WE WANT TO:**

**THINGS STILL ON MY/OUR TO DO LIST:**

**HOW MANY STARS DOES THIS WEEK GET?**



# MONTHLY CHECK IN

**TOP 3 MOMENTS THIS MONTH:**

**MOST REWARDING MOMENTS  
FROM THIS MONTH:**

**TOP 3 LESSONS LEARNED:**

**NEXT MONTH I AM/WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO:**

**THINGS THAT MADE ME/US SMILE:**

**THINGS THAT MADE ME/US PROUD:**

**HOW MANY STARS DOES THIS MONTH GET?**



# FILL UP YOUR CONFIDENCE CUP

**Build your  
confidence  
one drop at a time**

**WHAT HAVE YOU ALREADY  
ACCOMPLISHED THAT HAS  
MADE YOU PROUD?**

**WHERE HAVE YOU  
SUCCEEDED?**

**WHAT FAILURES HAVE  
MADE YOU STRONGER  
OR SMARTER?**

**ADD IT TO THE CUP...**

**\*Keep this as a  
running list &  
constantly add to it**

# THE CONFIDENCE CUP CHALLENGE

## CONFIDENCE IS CREATED ONE DROP AT A TIME...

Follow along with these "cup filling tasks" as you work on building your confidence from the inside out! The more we do, the more our cup fills up. There is no right or wrong here... **IT ALL GOES IN THE CUP!**

### 1. WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU DO, THAT BRINGS YOU JOY?

When we do things that bring us joy and make us happy, our confidence is increasing without us even thinking about it or paying attention.

### 2. WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU RECENTLY LEARNED? EITHER AFTER TRYING SOMETHING AND FAILING, OR DOING SOMETHING AND SUCCEEDING...

Not all failure = failing. Sometimes we must learn what NOT to do, in order to figure out what to do instead!

### 3. WHAT SKILLS DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR?

Practicing gratitude helps us acknowledge things we are proud of/happy about, improves our mood and allows us to see things a bit clearer.

### 4. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WERE PROUD OF YOURSELF?

When we are seeking to build confidence, we must use our past experiences as stepping stones to get there.

### 5. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAID "THANK YOU" TO YOUR BRAIN & BODY FOR ALL IT ALREADY CAN DO?

Look in the mirror and practice this today!

### 6. THINK BACK TO "LAST YEAR YOU". WHAT IS SOMETHING "PRESENT YOU" CAN DO, THAT PAST YOU COULDN'T?

We grow SO much over time, sometimes we need to stop and remember that...

### 7. WHAT WOULD YOU WANT "FUTURE YOU" TO SAY ABOUT YOU AND YOUR CONFIDENCE JOURNEY?

Future you, looking back, are they proud?

# THE CONFIDENCE CUP CHALLENGE

**CONFIDENCE IS CREATED ONE DROP AT A TIME...**

**Additional questions to continue building your confidence!**

1. WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU DO REALLY WELL THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SPORT?

2. WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL POWERFUL?

3. WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD ON?

4. WHAT OTHER HOBBIES DO YOU DO THAT BRING YOU JOY?

5. WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT COMES NATURALLY TO YOU?

6. WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU GAVE YOURSELF A COMPLIMENT?

7. WHAT WAS THE LAST “LESSON” YOU LEARNED?

# FILL UP YOUR CONFIDENCE CUP



# JOURNAL PROMPTS & QUESTIONS TO BOOST CONFIDENCE

1. HOW CAN YOU BE MORE ACCEPTING OF THE LESS-THAN-PERFECT PARTS OF YOURSELF?
2. HOW WOULD YOU WANT THE MOST ENCOURAGING PERSON IN YOUR LIFE, “YOUR BIGGEST SUPPORTER”, TO DESCRIBE YOU?
3. WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF AND WHY?
4. IF YOU HAD TO GIVE YOURSELF A PEP TALK RIGHT NOW, WHAT WOULD IT SOUND LIKE?
5. WHAT IS THE MISSING PIECE TO YOUR TEAMS PUZZLE AND HOW CAN YOU FILL IT?
6. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF WHEN YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF WHEN YOU AREN'T LOOKING IN THE MIRROR?
7. HOW DO YOU TALK TO YOURSELF WHEN YOU'VE HAD A BAD DAY? WHAT DOES THAT VOICE SOUND LIKE? IS IT JUDGMENTAL OR HARSH? IF IT IS, HOW CAN YOU CHANGE THAT?

# **JOURNAL PROMPTS & QUESTIONS TO BOOST CONFIDENCE CONT...**

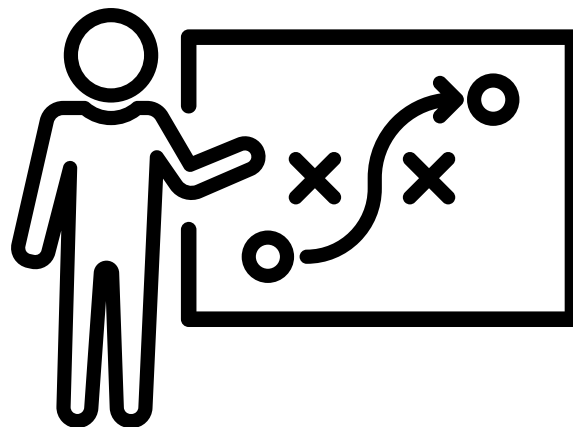
1. WHAT DOES STRENGTH MEAN TO YOU? WHEN HAVE YOU FELT THE STRONGEST?
2. CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU WERE DISAPPOINTED IN YOURSELF BUT MOVED PAST THAT FEELING?
3. WHAT ARE A FEW OF YOUR VALUES? WHY ARE THESE IMPORTANT TO YOU?
4. DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU OVERCAME A BIG CHALLENGE.
5. WHAT WAS THE LAST COMPLIMENT YOU RECEIVED THAT MEANT THE MOST TO YOU? WHY DID IT HIT SO HARD?
6. WRITE ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU COULDN'T STOP SMILING.
7. ARE THERE ANY GOALS THAT YOU'RE CLOSE TO ACHIEVING RIGHT NOW? ARE THERE ANY NEW ONES YOU REALLY WANT TO FOCUS ON? WHY THESE?

# **JOURNAL PROMPT QUESTIONS TO GET BACK ON TRACK & FOCUSED!**

**We all get off track from time to time. Instead of spiraling out of control and digging yourself in to a hole, use the below questions to reflect, refocus and get back to feeling good!**

1. WHAT DOES “PERFORMING WELL” TRULY MEAN TO ME BEYOND JUST WINNING OR ACHIEVING A SPECIFIC RESULT?
2. IF I COMPETED WITHOUT PRESSURE OR EXPECTATIONS, HOW WOULD I FEEL AND PERFORM DIFFERENTLY?
3. WHAT ARE THE TOP 3 REASONS I LOVE MY SPORT AND HOW CAN I RECONNECT WITH THEM DURING MY NEXT COMPETITION?
4. WHAT PAST PERFORMANCES OR TRAINING SESSIONS PROVE THAT I AM CAPABLE, STRONG AND PREPARED?
5. IF MY BEST FRIEND OR TEAMMATE WERE STRUGGLING WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE, WHAT WOULD I TELL THEM? HOW CAN I GIVE MYSELF THAT SAME GRACE AND SUPPORT?
6. WHAT LIMITING BELIEFS AM I HOLDING ONTO ABOUT MYSELF AS AN ATHLETE AND HOW CAN I REFRAME THEM IN TO SOMETHING MORE EMPOWERING?
7. WHAT ARE THREE CONTROLLABLE THINGS I CAN FOCUS ON DURING MY NEXT COMPETITION THAT WILL HELP ME PERFORM AT MY BEST?
8. WHAT IS ONE SMALL ACTION I CAN TAKE BEFORE OR DURING MY PERFORMANCE TO STAY PRESENT AND ENJOY THE MOMENT?
9. AFTER MY NEXT COMPETITION, WHAT DO I WANT TO BE PROUD OF REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME?

# COACH THE GAME, NOT THE DRAMA



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# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA**

Let's be real, coaching a team full of athletes who don't get along can feel like you're juggling fire while trying to draw up a game winning play. You're not just managing strategy; you're managing personalities, emotions, and conflict that have nothing to do with Xs and Os.



**But here's the truth:**

You can't force chemistry.

And honestly, you shouldn't try to.

What you can do is create an environment where respect, communication, and accountability are the norm. A space where athletes don't have to be best friends, but they do have to show up for each other, compete together, and commit to the standards that drive your team forward.

The following resource was built to help you shift the focus back to where it belongs: The game. The team. The mission.

**Not the drama.**



The following will provide you with practical strategies to help your team work together, even when personalities clash. You'll learn how to lead with clarity, hold your athletes to the standard, and model the behaviors you want to see.

Because strong team culture doesn't require everyone to like each other.

It requires everyone to respect the jersey  
respect the work, and respect the team.

**Let's get to it.**

# **COACH THE GAME, NOT THE DRAMA** **COACH REFLECTION PAGE**

Before diving into the following tools, take a moment to reflect honestly on where your team stands and what you want to reinforce moving forward.

- 1. WHAT BEHAVIORS ARE CURRENTLY HURTING THE TEAM DYNAMIC?**
- 2. WHEN CONFLICT OR DRAMA COMES UP, HOW DO I TYPICALLY RESPOND AS A COACH?**
- 3. WHAT MESSAGES, VERBALLY OR THROUGH MY ACTIONS, AM I SENDING ABOUT HOW WE HANDLE CONFLICT?**
- 4. WHAT ARE THREE STANDARDS I WANT MY ATHLETES TO BE HELD TO, NO MATTER WHAT?**
- 5. HOW CAN I MODEL THESE STANDARDS DURING PRACTICES AND GAMES?**
- 6. WHAT IS ONE SPECIFIC AREA WHERE I NEED TO “COACH THE GAME, NOT THE DRAMA” MORE CONSISTENTLY?**

# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA**

## COACH CHECKLIST

Use this to remind yourself of the key behaviors and strategies that keep your team grounded in respect, clarity, and execution, even when tensions are high.

### BEFORE PRACTICE

- set the tone, remind athletes of team standards
- assign practice partners/groups with intention
- have a plan for how you'll respond to disengagement or drama

### DURING PRACTICE

- stay neutral, coach behaviors not personalities
- reinforce effort, communication and execution
- pause practice when needed to realign with team value

### LOCKER ROOM/OUTSIDE OF PRACTICE

- shut down gossip and side chatter early
- reinforce direct communication and “talk to, not about”
- acknowledge and celebrate positive interactions publicly

### IN MOMENTS OF CONFLICT

- focus on the issue, not the people
- use language like “how can we solve this” or “what’s the standard here”
- encourage a quick reset and return to the task at hand

### CONSISTENTLY OVER TIME...

- hold athletes accountable every time
- praise the behaviors you want repeated
- stay consistent in your own energy and response

# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA** COACH CHECKLIST

## BEFORE PRACTICE

- 
- 
- 

## DURING PRACTICE

- 
- 
- 

## LOCKER ROOM/OUTSIDE OF PRACTICE

- 
- 
- 

## IN MOMENTS OF CONFLICT

- 
- 
- 

## CONSISTENTLY OVER TIME...

- 
- 
-

# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA**

## **SET CLEAR TEAM STANDARDS** **\*NOT JUST TEAM RULES**

Instead of expecting everyone to be best friends, establish **non-negotiable team behaviors** based on respect, effort and accountability.

Put the focus on the things we **CAN** control.

**Discuss what deserves your attention, what needs your attention, and what no longer gets access to your attention.**

**Collaborate with the team to create “HOW WE WORK TOGETHER” guidelines. Have athletes get specific with what we want our team to LOOK LIKE, SOUND LIKE, FEEL LIKE, ACT LIKE.**

**Post your standards** in the locker room, on a bulletin board, create something for your field, send it home, hang in lockers or from their bags so athlete’s be reminded and see this information **DAILY**.

## **STRUCTURED SMALL GROUP INTERACTIONS**

Forced, awkward team bonding **won’t fix things** (*neither will hiring a mental performance coach to come in once*) but **purposeful**, low stakes interactions can help!

**Use rotating partners in warm ups, drills, prompt discussions and team talks to encourage new interactions without pressure.**

You can also have your team talk and work in small groups based on their age, grade level, position, birthday month, etc..

**Keep track of these groups (pre made them) so you can keep tabs on interaction and make sure everyone gets to work with everyone, OR keep certain kids apart.**

The idea here is to mix up your team away from their friend group/comfort group and **push them to grow**.

## **DEFINE A SHARED PURPOSE** **\*BASED ON FACTS NOT FEELINGS**

A team **doesn’t** have to like each other to work towards the same goal. Let’s **foster** communication that supports this type of mindset.

**Engage your athletes in a team vision setting session where players need to answer questions about the direction they would like to see the season go in.**

**“What do we want to accomplish this season?”**  
**“What kind of team do we want to be known as?”**  
**“What behaviors will help us get there?”**  
**“What is the legacy we want to leave?”**

Keep this **VISION VISIBLE** (similar to team standards) and come back to it periodically throughout the season.

# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA**

## PART 2

### **ACCOUNTABILITY \*WITHOUT POINTING FINGERS**

Players **don't** have to like each other, but they **do** have to hold each other (and themselves) **accountable**.

Create a **"CALL UP, NOT CALL OUT"** system!

**"Call your teammates UP to the standards..."**  
**"Call your teammates UP to our PURPOSE..."**  
**"Call your teammates UP to our VISION..."**  
**"Call yourself UP to the standard of being GREAT!"**

Instead of **"You're not working hard"** use a solution orientated approach **"Hey we need your effort here"**.

**\*Coach** - you will HAVE to model this **DAILY**, as an individual and as a staff, if you truly want your athletes to follow your lead. Athletes mirror what they see, **not necessarily what they're told to do**.

### **INTENTIONAL ATHLETE COMMUNICATION EXERCISES**

Many conflicts happen **because of** assumptions, misinterpretations, rumination or lack of communication.

**At least once a day during practice engage your team in a "communication drill" amongst their regular practice drills.**

**Pair your players up and take 30 seconds each to share: "one thing I need from you as a teammate..."**

Do this with different partners and different questions.

This type of activity **forces** players to see teammates **beyond** surface level assumptions and **connect** safely on a deeper level.

### **INCORPORATE MINDSET IN TO DAILY PRACTICE**

Help your athletes **focus** more on what they **CAN** control (attitude effort energy and mindset) and less on what they **CAN'T** (feelings, people, situations).

**Do you have a "team reset phrase" or what I like to call a "mantra" to say when you need everyone to get refocused? When negativity creeps in what can you say or what can they say to snap outta it and divert their attention back to where it is needed?**

**"Compete first, feelings later" (and then make sure to address feelings later...)**

**"Clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose"**

**"focus" "breathe" "reset" "one clap"**

**"win the day" "brick by brick"**

**"Where your attention goes, energy flows!"**

# COACH THE GAME, **NOT THE DRAMA**

**PART 3**

## **RECOGNIZE & REINFORCE POSITIVE INTERACTIONS**

What gets **rewarded**, gets **repeated**.

**What are you doing** to acknowledge, appreciate and award those on your team that are trying to get along? Those who are showing up and doing what they gotta do? **Are you only paying attention to the negative?**

Small acknowledgments shift the focus from negative to what's working and what we want more of.

**After each practice highlight at least one example of good team behavior, someone actively trying to do what the team has set out to do, anyone showing a hint of improvement or positive change.**

Don't **alienate** the athletes who are showing up and getting the job done.

Sometimes as adults we forget it's not "all negative".

## **USE COMPETITION TO BUILD CONNECTION**

**Players might not like each other, but they can still compete together.**

As the coach, stop letting your athletes "choose their partners". That's a luxury your athletes should earn. In the beginning stages of a team, strategically partner up your athletes with many different team members.

This concept "forces" cooperation without forced bonding.

**You can think about implementing "pairs challenges" where two players must work together to succeed.**

**Change partners often/place specific athletes with one another who you see needs to connect more.**

**EX: Pairs need to make certain number of passes in a row before moving to the next drill...**

## **COACH THE GAME \*NOT THE DRAMA**

**Stay consistent and fair in your coaching.**

When coaching a team with personal conflicts, your role is to keep the focus on performance, development and team standards, not person disputes or drama.

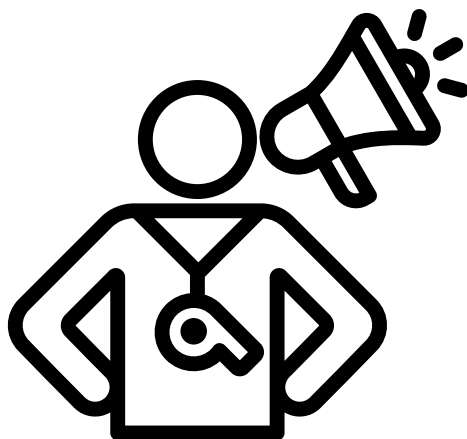
**Practice not letting personal conflicts interfere with your decisions.** Make it a point to reward effort, attitude, performance, mental resiliency, NOT team politics.

**Keep your bench culture game STRONG!**

What can we do to set standards for those who aren't immediately in the action? A quiet bench, a negative bench, a sulking bench is a losing team, no matter the talent in the game.

**Stay neutral.** Acknowledge conflicts exist but emphasize that the team comes first in all decision making.

# COACH COMMUNICATION RESOURCES



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# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP **COACHES** COMMUNICATE WITH THEMSELVES

If you're asking your athletes to stop and reflect, I urge you to do the same. Carve out some time to reflect on you, what it is you are doing and whether or not your actions are matching your words and vice versa!

1. WHAT KIND OF COACH DO I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED AS, AND AM I CURRENTLY LIVING THAT OUT DAILY?
2. WHEN MY ATHLETES WALK AWAY FROM A PRACTICE OR A GAME, HOW DO I WANT THEM TO FEEL?
3. WHAT MOMENTS IN COACHING LIGHT ME UP AND WHAT MOMENTS TEND TO DRAIN ME?
4. HOW DO I DEFINE SUCCESS BEYOND WINS AND LOSSES?
5. WHAT VALUES MATTER MOST TO BE AND HOW ARE THEY SHOWING UP IN THE WAY I LEAD?
6. WHAT AREAS OF MY COACHING AM I MOST CONFIDENT IN AND WHERE DO I FEEL MYSELF GROWING?
7. HOW DO I HANDLE MISTAKES; BOTH MIND AND MY ATHLETES'?
8. HOW DO I WANT TO HANDLE PRESSURE, SETBACKS AND ADVERSITY THIS SEASON?
9. IN WHAT WAYS AM I MODELING THE BEHAVIOR, MINDSET AND LEADERSHIP I ASK FROM MY TEAM?
10. WHAT'S ONE SMALL SHIFT I COULD MAKE THAT WOULD CREATE A BIG IMPACT ON MY COACHING AND MY TEAM CULTURE?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP **COACHES** COMMUNICATE WITH THEMSELVES **PART 2**

1. WHAT'S ONE HABIT I HAVE AS A COACH. THAT SUPPORTS MY TEAM WELL AND ONE THAT MIGHT BE WORTH ADJUSTING?
2. HOW DO I CREATE SPACE FOR CONNECTION AND NOT JUST CORRECTION?
3. WHAT DO I WANT MY ATHLETES TO SAY ABOUT ME WHEN I'M NOT IN THE ROOM?
4. HOW DO I STAY GROUNDED AND PRESENT ESPECIALLY WHEN THINGS GET CHAOTIC AND OUT OF MY CONTROL?
5. WHAT'S SOMETHING I USED TO BELIEVE ABOUT COACHING THAT I'VE SINCE OUTGROWN?
6. HOW DO I RESPOND WHEN I FEEL CHALLENGED OR QUESTIONED BY MY ATHLETES? BY MY STAFF? BY ANOTHER COACH? BY A PARENT?
7. WHAT DOES LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE TO ME ON AND OFF THE...?
8. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I TRULY LISTENED, WITH NO AGENDA?
9. WHAT AM I LEARNING ABOUT MYSELF THROUGH THIS SEASON?
10. HOW AM I GROWING THE PERSON BEHIND THE TITLE "COACH"?

# COACH YOUR OWN KID? READ AND REFLECT

**As a product of a parent coach myself, I can tell you first hand how important these reflection questions can be for the relationship you have with your kid not just right now, but more for when they are older and looking back.**

**My suggestion? On the field, coach hat ON. Off the field, TAKE IT OFF and communicate together on when that hat can go back on outside of designated sport time.**

1. WHEN I'M WITH MY CHILD OUTSIDE OF SPORT, DO THEY FEEL LIKE MY KID OR JUST MY ATHLETE?
2. HOW DO I MAKE SURE THEY KNOW I LOVE THEM, REGARDLESS OF HOW THEY PLAY?
3. AM I GIVING THEM ENOUGH SPACE TO JUST BE A KID, NOT A PROJECT TO IMPROVE?
4. WHEN I GIVE FEEDBACK, IS IT COMING FROM A PLACE OF CONNECTION OR CORRECTION?
5. DO I KNOW WHEN THEY NEED A COACH AND WHEN THEY JUST NEED A PARENT WHO LISTENS?
6. HAVE I CREATED A SAFE SPACE AT HOME WHERE SPORT ISN'T THE CENTER OF EVERY CONVERSATION?
7. WHAT DOES MY CHILD NEED MORE OF FROM ME RIGHT NOW? SUPPORT, SPACE OR SEPARATION BETWEEN ROLES?
8. WOULD MY ATHLETE FEEL COMFORTABLE TELLING ME THEY NEED LESS COACHING AND MORE PARENTING?
9. AM I PROUD OF HOW I REPRESENT BOTH ROLES WHEN OTHERS ARE WATCHING, ESPECIALLY MY CHILD?
10. HOW CAN I BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CHILD BEYOND THE SPORT WE SHARE?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP **COACHES COMMUNICATE** WITH PARENTS/ATHLETES' FAMILIES

**Do you have standards and policies in place when it comes to speaking with your teams' parents/guardians/families? Something to think about when it comes to establishing your wants and don't wants of in season communication.**

1. WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNICATING WITH YOU ABOUT YOUR CHILD, WOULD YOU PREFER A... PROVIDE OPTIONS THAT WOULD BEST FIT YOU AND YOUR COACHING COMMUNICATION STYLE.
2. THIS SEASON WE ARE PLACING A STRONG FOCUS ON.... AND THIS IS HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US IN OUR MISSION...
3. WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU THINK I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD PRIOR TO COACHING THEM?
4. IF AND WHEN THERE IS AN ISSUE, I PREFER YOU COMMUNICATE WITH ME BY... PROVIDE OPTIONS THAT WOULD BEST FIT YOU AND YOUR COACHING COMMUNICATION STYLE.
5. DO YOU HAVE ANY SKILLS/TALENTS THAT YOU COULD OFFER US THIS SEASON ON A NON PRACTICE DAY?
6. ON THIS TEAM, THIS IS HOW WE DEFINE AND DESCRIBE SUCCESS... DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ANYTHING TO ADD?
7. WHAT IS A QUESTION YOU HAVE ABOUT OUR SPORT/THIS GAME THAT WILL MAKE WATCHING IT LESS CONFUSING FOR YOU?
8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF WATCHING YOUR KID PLAY THIS SPORT?
9. HOW CAN WE BEST SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AND ENJOYMENT OF THE SPORT?
10. DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS OR FEEDBACK ABOUT THE TEAM DYNAMICS OR OUR COACHING APPROACH THAT YOU'D LIKE TO DISCUSS?"

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP **COACHES COMMUNICATE** WITH PARENTS/ATHLETES' FAMILIES

## PART 2

1. WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES OR GOALS FOR YOUR CHILD THIS SEASON, BOTH ON AND OFF THE FIELD/COURT?
2. ARE THERE ANY PREVIOUS SPORT EXPERIENCES (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE) YOUR CHILD HAS HAD THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR ME TO KNOW?
3. IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIFIC THAT TENDS TO MOTIVATE OR ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD DURING PRACTICES OR GAMES?
4. ARE THERE ANY PERSONAL OR FAMILY VALUES YOU'D LIKE US TO BE MINDFUL OF WHILE COACHING YOUR CHILD?
5. HOW DOES YOUR CHILD TYPICALLY RESPOND TO FEEDBACK OR CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM?
6. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR US TO WORK TOGETHER IF YOUR CHILD IS STRUGGLING WITH CONFIDENCE OR PERFORMANCE?
7. ARE THERE ANY FAMILY EVENTS OR SCHEDULING CONFLICTS WE SHOULD BE AWARE OF IN ADVANCE?
8. WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR CHILD TO GAIN OR LEARN FROM BEING PART OF THIS TEAM?
9. IS THERE ANY ADDITIONAL SUPPORT YOUR FAMILY MIGHT NEED TO ENSURE YOUR CHILD CAN FULLY PARTICIPATE THIS SEASON (TRANSPORTATION, EQUIPMENT, ETC.)?
10. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INCLUDED OR INVOLVED IN TEAM EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, OR CELEBRATIONS?

# **QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP PARENTS/GUARDIANS COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR ATHLETES**

**As adults, sometimes we forget that our athletes are out here navigating their own life, their own world, and have their own wants, needs and opinions too. Use these as a great way to get the conversation started and seek out what's going on inside your athlete's head and heart, so together we can make sure their experience is a positive one.**

1. WHEN WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR US TO TALK AFTER PRACTICE/GAMES ABOUT YOUR PERFORMANCES/ EXPERIENCES?
2. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE FOR ME TO SUPPORT YOU WHEN YOU ARE ON THE FIELD?
3. WHEN YOU ARE STRUGGLING, HOW DO YOU PLAN TO COMMUNICATE THAT TO ME?
4. WHEN YOU ARE STRUGGLING, HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE SUPPORTED IN THE MOMENT?
5. HOW DO YOU WANT US TO CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS TOGETHER?
6. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK IN THE MOMENT, HOW WILL YOU LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU ARE READY TO TALK?
7. IF TALKING FACE TO FACE IS DIFFICULT FOR YOU, IN WHAT OTHER WAY(S) WOULD YOU LIKE TO START THE CONVERSATION?
8. WHAT IS SOMETHING I DO THAT HELPS YOU?
9. WHAT IS SOMETHING I DO THAT FRUSTRATES YOU?

## QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP ATHLETES **COMMUNICATE** WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Communicating with the adults in their lives can be tricky, these serve as great conversation starters to open the door up to meaningful conversations with their parents, guardians and care givers.

1. WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT WATCHING ME PLAY?
2. IF I AM STRUGGLING AND WHEN I NEED HELP, I WILL COMMUNICATE TO YOU BY...
3. MY FAVORITE WAY TO CELEBRATE A WIN WITH YOU IS...
4. THE BEST THING AFTER A TOUGH LOSS FOR US TO DO OR NOT TO DO WOULD BE...
5. I FEEL THE MOST SUPPORTED WHEN YOU...
6. SOMETIMES ON MY DAYS OFF FROM SPORTS CAN WE...
7. CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT MAKES YOU PROUD OF ME?
8. I REALLY APPRECIATE WHEN YOU...
9. IT MAKES ME FEEL GOOD WHEN WE...
10. I FEEL SUPPORTED WHEN...

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP **COACHES COMMUNICATE** WITH THEIR ATHLETES

The **NUMBER ONE** request I get from coaches is **HOW** to effectively start conversations with their athletes that **WON'T** result in one word responses. Use these starters to engage in meaningful conversations, get to know your athletes and what's going on in their head and heart, and begin to create that healthy and happy coach to athlete relationship we all strive to have.

1. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF WHAT WE GET TO DO TOGETHER?
2. HOW WOULD YOU/ DO YOU DESCRIBE THE WORD SUCCESS?
3. HOW WOULD YOU/ DO YOU DESCRIBE THE WORD FAILURE?
4. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GET IN THE WAY OF YOU PERFORMING AT YOUR BEST THIS SEASON?
5. WHAT IS THE THING YOU VALUE MOST WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNICATION?
6. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO SUPPORT YOU THIS SEASON?
7. HOW DO YOU BEST RESPOND TO BEING COACHED UNDER PRESSURE?
8. HOW DO YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE COMMUNICATING WITH ME?
9. WHAT IS THE LEGACY YOU HOPE TO LEAVE BEHIND?
10. WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU WHEN IT COMES TO THIS SPORT/YOUR ATHLETIC JOURNEY?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP COACHES COMMUNICATE WITH ATHLETES ABOUT COMPETITION

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1. WHAT DO WE DO IN PRACTICE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE US CONTINUE TO DO MORE OF?
2. HOW DO YOU MENTALLY PREPARE YOURSELF/ GET READY FOR PRACTICE AND GAMES?
3. WHAT IS A NEW SKILL YOU ARE WORKING ON THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TRY IN PRACTICE?
4. WHAT IS A WEAKNESS YOU WOULD LIKE ME/THE STAFF/YOUR TEAM TO HELP YOU WITH?
5. WHAT STRENGTH DO YOU HOPE TO PASS ON TO OTHERS AROUND YOU?
6. WHEN FRUSTRATED, HOW DO YOU PLAN ON COMMUNICATING THAT TO ME AND YOUR TEAMMATES?
7. WHERE DO YOU FEEL MOST CONFIDENT ON THE FIELD?  
WHERE DO YOU FEEL MOST CONFIDENT OFF THE FIELD?
8. WHEN YOU FEEL STUCK/CONFUSED/LOST/FRUSTRATED, HOW WILL YOU HELP YOURSELF TO GET THROUGH IT?
9. WHEN YOU MAKE MISTAKES, HOW DO YOU PLAN ON REFLECTING ON IT IN ORDER TO CHANGE FUTURE OUTCOMES?
10. WHEN YOU'RE HAVING AN OFF DAY, HOW CAN I BEST COACH YOU IN THE MOMENT?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP COACHES ADDRESS STUDENT ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

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1. I LOVE THAT YOU HAVE BIG GOALS, LET'S BREAK THEM DOWN- WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS DO YOU THINK YOU NEED TO REACH THAT LEVEL? HOW CAN WE MEASURE WHERE YOU ARE NOW?
2. TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE AS YOUR STRENGTHS RIGHT NOW. WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR TEAMMATES OR I WOULD SAY? LET'S COMPARE AND FIND WAYS TO CLOSE THE GAP.
3. IF THERE WAS A COLLEGE/PRO SCOUT WATCHING YOU TODAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY WOULD SAY ABOUT YOUR PERFORMANCE? WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY WOULD THEY BE LOOKING FOR? LET'S ALIGN THAT WITH WHERE YOU CURRENTLY ARE AND WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU.
4. YOU'RE SAYING YOU WANT (X ROLE/GOAL) BUT YOUR ACTIONS AND HABITS ARE SHOWING ME (Y). HOW DO YOU THINK WE CAN BRING THOSE TWO THINGS IN TO ALIGNMENT?
5. WHAT'S ONE AREA OF YOUR GAME THAT FRUSTRATES YOU THE MOST? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING IT?
6. WHAT DOES YOUR IDEAL PERFORMANCE LOOK LIKE? WHAT STEPS ARE YOU TAKING DAILY TO MAKE THAT A REALITY?
7. WHEN YOU SAY YOU "DESERVE" (X) WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT MEANS? WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO TRULY EARN IT? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO EARN IT?
8. IMAGINE I ASK YOUR TEAMMATES ABOUT YOUR IMPACT ON THE TEAM, WHAT WOULD THEY SAY? HOW DOES THAT COMPARE TO HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF?
9. LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMEONE WHO IS WHERE YOU WANT TO BE. WHAT ARE THEY DOING DIFFERENTLY THAN YOU? HOW CAN WE START BRIDGING THAT GAP?
10. I WANT TO HELP YOU GET WHERE YOU WANT TO GO BUT HONESTY IS KEY. ARE YOU OPEN TO HEARING REAL FEEDBACK ON WHAT'S STANDING IN YOUR WAY?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP COACHES ADDRESS STUDENT ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS **PART 2**

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1. WHAT DO YOU THINK SEPARATES GOOD ATHLETES FROM GREAT ONES? WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF ON THAT SCALE AND WHAT'S ONE THING YOU CAN DO TO MOVE UP?
2. I SEE YOUR POTENTIAL BUT I ALSO SEE SOME GAPS. WHAT DO YOU THINK THOSE GAPS ARE? HOW CAN WE START CLOSING THEM TOGETHER?
3. LET'S IMAGINE YOU GET THE ROLE/POSITION YOU WANT TODAY. WHAT WOULD YOU NEED TO DO EVERY SINGLE DAY TO PROVE YOU BELONG THERE?
4. WHAT'S ONE AREA OF YOUR GAME WHERE YOU'RE BETTER THAN YOU THINK? WHAT'S ONE AREA WHERE YOU MIGHT NOT BE AS STRONG AS YOU BELIEVE?
5. TELL ME ABOUT A TIME YOU FELT OVERLOOKED OR UNDERRATED. WHAT DID YOU DO ABOUT IT? WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY NOW?
6. YOU WANT TO BE A LEADER OR A TOP PERFORMER, HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR HABITS AND ATTITUDE COMPARE TO THE BEST ATHLETES YOU KNOW?
7. IF I TOLD YOU TODAY THAT YOU AREN'T QUITE READY FOR THE NEXT LEVEL, HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND? WOULD YOU USE THAT AS FUEL OR AS FRUSTRATION?
8. WHAT'S A PART OF YOUR GAME THAT YOU TEND TO AVOID WORKING ON? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS? HOW COULD I HELP YOU HERE?
9. IF YOUR SPOT ON THIS TEAM WAS BASED ONLY ON EFFORT AND ATTITUDE, NOT SKILL, WHERE WOULD YOU RANK YOURSELF?
10. I WANT TO SEE YOU SUCCEED, BUT FOR THAT TO HAPPEN WE HAVE TO BE HONEST WITH EACH OTHER. ARE YOU WILLING TO HEAR AND ACT ON REAL FEEDBACK?

# QUESTIONS/PROMPTS TO HELP COACHES ADDRESS STUDENT ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS \*role/value conversations

1. LET'S TALK ABOUT IMPACT. WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES SOMEONE TRULY VALUABLE TO A TEAM? IS IT ONLY STATS OR ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE AT A HIGH LEVEL?
2. IF YOUR ROLE RIGHT NOW ISN'T EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT, HOW CAN YOU USE IT AS A STEPPING STONE? WHAT CAN YOU MASTER IN THIS ROLE THAT CAN PREPARE YOU FOR THE NEXT ONE?
3. EVERY CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM HAS PLAYERS WHO DON'T GET THE SPOTLIGHT BUT ARE STILL CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS. WHAT'S ONE WAY YOU CAN BE THAT KIND OF DIFFERENCE MAKER RIGHT NOW?
4. IMAGINE FOR SECOND THAT WE DIDN'T KEEP SCORE. HOW WOULD YOU MEASURE YOUR IMPACT ON THIS TEAM?
5. GREAT TEAMS ARE BUILT ON PREPARATION. DO YOU REALIZE THAT PUSHING YOUR TEAMMATES IN PRACTICE MIGHT BE JUST AS IMPORTANT AS SCORING IN A GAME? HOW DO YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THAT CONCEPT?
6. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF EVERYONE ON THIS TEAM ONLY CARED ABOUT PLAYING TIME? HOW WOULD THAT AFFECT OUR ABILITY TO WIN?
7. THINK ABOUT THE BEST TEAMMATE YOU'VE EVER HAD. WHAT MADE THEM GREAT? HOW CAN YOU BE THAT PERSON FOR SOMEONE ELSE?
8. YOUR PLAYING TIME ISN'T A MEASURE OF YOUR WORTH. WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU'VE LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE THAT WILL HELP YOU IN THE LONG RUN?
9. WHAT'S ONE AREA OF YOUR GAME THAT IF YOU MASTERED IT, WOULD MAKE YOU IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE? HOW CAN WE BUILD TOWARD THAT STARTING TODAY?
10. IF YOU HAD TO EXPLAIN YOUR ROLE ON THIS TEAM TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER SEEN YOU PLAY, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY? WHAT DO YOU WANT THAT ANSWER TO BE ONE YEAR FROM NOW?

# END OF SEASON REFLECTION



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# END OF SEASON QUESTIONS

**As the season comes to a close, use these questions for 1:1 conversations for athlete to athlete, athlete to coach and coach to athlete. Asking questions like these can provide valuable information to help with next season's foundation.**

1. WHAT'S ONE THING YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF THIS SEASON?
2. WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THIS SEASON?
3. HOW DID THIS TEAM HELP (OR CHALLENGE) YOU TO GROW?
4. WHAT HABITS, MINDSETS, OR ACTIONS HELPED YOU SUCCEED AND WHICH HELD YOU BACK?
5. WHAT MOMENT (GOOD OR BAD) DEFINED THE SEASON FOR YOU, AND WHY?
6. IF YOU WERE TO GIVE ADVICE TO A NEW PLAYER JOINING THIS TEAM NEXT SEASON, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
7. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE OUR TEAM CULTURE NOW AND HOW DO YOU WANT IT TO EVOLVE?
8. WHO IMPACTED YOU THE MOST ON THIS TEAM AND HAVE YOU TOLD THEM?
9. WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WISH WE DID MORE OF (OR DIFFERENTLY) AS A TEAM?
10. IF YOU COULD CARRY ONE LESSON FROM THIS SEASON INTO LIFE BEYOND THE SPORT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

# END OF SEASON QUESTIONS

**As the season comes to a close, use these questions for 1:1 conversations for athlete to athlete, athlete to coach and coach to athlete. Asking questions like these can provide valuable information to help with next season's foundation.**

1. WHEN THINGS GOT HARD THIS SEASON, WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOUR ABILITY TO HANDLE ADVERSITY?
2. WHAT FEAR, INSECURITY, OR DOUBT SHOWED UP FOR YOU THIS SEASON AND HOW DID YOU RESPOND TO IT?
3. IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU SHOW UP FOR YOUR TEAMMATES WHEN IT MATTERED MOST?
4. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY ON THIS TEAM, SPOKEN OR UNSPOKEN, AND HOW DID THAT FEEL?
5. WAS THERE A MOMENT YOU DIDN'T FEEL SEEN, HEARD, OR VALUED? WHAT WOULD'VE HELPED?
6. WHAT DID YOU AVOID THIS SEASON THAT YOU KNOW YOU NEED TO FACE MOVING FORWARD?
7. HOW DID YOU HANDLE FEEDBACK THIS SEASON FROM COACHES, TEAMMATES, OR YOURSELF?
8. WHAT STORY DID YOU TELL YOURSELF THIS SEASON AND DID IT HELP OR HURT YOUR PERFORMANCE?
9. HOW HAVE YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS AND LEADERSHIP EVOLVED BECAUSE OF THIS SEASON?
10. IF YOU COULD REWRITE ONE MOMENT OR DECISION THIS SEASON, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

# END OF SEASON ATHLETE REFLECTION

WHAT MADE ME PROUD OF MYSELF THIS SEASON:

WHAT MADE ME PROUD OF MY TEAM THIS SEASON?

SOMETHING I LEARNED:

WHAT NEEDS MY ATTENTION MOVING FORWARD:

WHAT RISKS DID I TAKE THIS SEASON?

WHAT DID I LEARN FROM TAKING IT?

HOW MANY STARS WOULD I GIVE MYSELF THIS SEASON?



# END OF SEASON **COACH** **REFLECTION** QUESTIONS

Your turn coach...

1. WHAT AM I MOST PROUD OF AS A COACH THIS SEASON?
2. WHERE DID I GROW THE MOST AND WHERE DO I STILL NEED TO GROW?
3. WHAT MOMENTS CHALLENGED ME THE MOST, AND HOW DID I RESPOND?
4. DID I MODEL THE VALUES AND BEHAVIORS I EXPECTED FROM MY TEAM?
5. HOW DID I HANDLE ADVERSITY, CONFLICT, OR DISAPPOINTMENT THIS SEASON?
6. WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT MY LEADERSHIP STYLE THROUGH THIS GROUP OF ATHLETES?
7. WERE MY PRIORITIES ALIGNED WITH WHAT MY TEAM TRULY NEEDED?
8. WHAT FEEDBACK (VERBAL OR NONVERBAL) DID I RECEIVE FROM MY ATHLETES AND HOW DID I PROCESS IT?
9. HOW DID I CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEAM'S CULTURE, CONNECTION, AND CONFIDENCE?
10. IF I COULD COACH THIS SEASON OVER AGAIN, WHAT WOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY AND WHAT WOULD I REPEAT?

# END OF SEASON **COACH** **REFLECTION** QUESTIONS

**CONTINUED**

1. WHO WAS I BEING THIS SEASON, NOT JUST WHAT WAS I DOING?
2. DID I COACH FROM A PLACE OF EGO OR IMPACT AND HOW CAN I TELL THE DIFFERENCE?
3. WHERE DID I FEEL MOST ALIGNED AND WHERE DID I FEEL OUT OF SYNC WITH MYSELF?
4. WHAT EMOTIONS DID I SUPPRESS OR IGNORE THIS SEASON THAT DESERVE MY ATTENTION NOW?
5. DID I SHOW MYSELF THE SAME GRACE, PATIENCE, AND COMPASSION I TRY TO GIVE OTHERS?
6. HOW DID MY ENERGY AFFECT THE ROOM, WHETHER IN PRACTICES, GAMES, OR MEETINGS?
7. WHAT DID I AVOID ADDRESSING, AND WHY? WHAT DO I FEAR MOST AS A LEADER?
8. WHAT AM I HOLDING ON TO THAT NO LONGER SERVES MY GROWTH AS A COACH OR PERSON?
9. IN WHAT WAYS DID I GROW OUTSIDE THE GAME AND HOW DID THAT IMPACT HOW I SHOWED UP INSIDE IT?
10. IF THE SEASON HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH WINS OR STATS, WHAT WOULD I SAY IT WAS REALLY ABOUT?

# GAME CHANGERS

MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACHING

# THANK YOU!

Thank you for trusting me and The Team Culture Playbook to be part of your coaching journey. This playbook was created to give you practical, ready to use tools that build clarity, connection, and confidence in your athletes and your program.

Whether you used this as a pre season foundation, an mid season reset, or a postseason reflection, I hope you found ideas you can make your own and carry in to every season.

**Remember, the impact of this work grows over time.**

The more consistently you use these concepts, the more they become part of your team's identity.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Review & Reflect – Take a few minutes to note what worked well and what you want to try next season.
- Keep It Alive – Revisit sections throughout the year to keep your approach fresh and aligned with your team's needs.
- Reach Out – I'd love to hear how you've used The Game Plan and the impact it's had. Share your feedback, success stories, or questions as they help me create even better resources for you.

## WANT MORE?

If you enjoyed this workbook, you may also love:

- [The Game Changers Mindset Playbook](#)
- [The Game Changers Leadership Playbook](#)
- [The Game Plan Playbook](#) – a full, all in one resource with mindset, leadership, and team culture tools in one place (available with a consultation).

**Email me for details or to set up a call to explore which option is the best fit for your program.**

## STAY CONNECTED

- Email: [info@thementalgameisthegame.com](mailto:info@thementalgameisthegame.com)
- Website: [www.thementalgameisthegame.com/home](http://www.thementalgameisthegame.com/home)
- Social: [@gamechangers](#)

You are shaping more than athletes, you are shaping people. The work you put into your team culture will outlast any season, score, or record. Keep showing up, keep leading, and keep **changing the game.**



## -COACH K

**THE MENTAL GAME**  
*is the game*

