

We've learned that what got us to this level will rarely get us to the next level, and that the toll-way to greatness is a very costly road.

We learned from Super Bowl winning coach, Chuck Knoll, "champions do ordinary things better than everyone else."

I told her, "Burn your wish list. I want to see your commitment list. I want to know what you are committed to doing with your 24 hours a day to close the gap between where you are and where you want to be. What are you willing to sacrifice inside your 86,400 seconds every day to become the person you want to be?!"

We don't have control over outcomes, but we do have control over how we use our time. Time is the only resource that is the same for everyone regardless of how much money you make, your race, or where you live. We only get 86,400 seconds every day.

"What do you do with all your time?"

The real problem was I didn't take myself seriously. When I started taking myself seriously I drastically changed how I used my time.

Make sure your willingness to sacrifice and how you use your 86,400 seconds every day are in direct proportion to the size of your dreams.

EVERYONE WANTS TO WIN. Very few are willing to do what it takes to win.

It is hard to get up day after day and put the work in when everyone else is having more fun, spending time with friends, making more money, and doing a hundred other things you would rather be doing in the moment.

Rather than focusing on arbitrary goals, we try to focus 100% of our energy on our commitments and controllables.

Here are some examples of controllables: -Self-talk -Routine - What we do with our 86,400 seconds every day -Perspective - Communication -Processes -Visualization -Attitude -Focus - Body Language -Gratefulness

By focusing on controllables we naturally close the gap between where we are and where we want to be. Focusing on outcome based goals that are outside of our control we increase pressure, decrease confidence, and make ourselves miserable in the process. The inner box are the things we can control, the outer box are examples of things outside of our control. Focusing our energy on the outer box is a recipe for insanity! If

We define True Mental Toughness as: Having a GREAT attitude
Giving your very, very best
Treating people really, really well
Having UNCONDITIONAL gratitude REGARDLESS of your circumstances.

If we focus on the goal, then we are setting people up for a life of, “What can I get for doing this?” rather than: “How can I learn and grow from this?” “How can I serve others?” “How can I make our team better?”

When we focus on the process, the results take care of themselves. As John Wooden said, “you may not like the results, but the results will probably be pretty close to what they should be.” By

But is that the message our society teaches? Hardly! Watch or listen to sport shows and count how many times they talk about someone’s identity and value according to their stats, accolades, or mistakes. Read popular magazines and see how often they talk about someone having “made it” because they are on TV or won an award.

What our society tells us is that our intrinsic value is attached to what we achieve or don’t achieve.

If we have praised them in the past for what they achieved, then we have conditioned them to understand that the value comes from the result, not the growth, and definitely not from enjoying the journey.

When they hit the inevitable plateaus on the Path to Mastery, those dry spots where nothing seems to get any better even with countless hours of deliberate practice, they will be more likely to relent or give up because they have been conditioned to believe the work is only worthwhile if the goal is achieved, and outcome attained.

If we get ahead of ourselves and are thinking about everything in the future, we detract from our ability to fully engage in the present moment.

If we focus on doing our very best in the present moment, the results will take care of themselves.

They internally say, “SEE! I KNEW IT! All that process crap.....the outcome is all that REALLY MATTERS!” It isn’t what you are saying, but it is what they are hearing. If this can happen to one of the best coaches in the country, then it is probably happening with your team or group.

We see this repeatedly in teams and individuals. When we focus on the goal and the ever-enlarging gap between our current place and the mark we set out to achieve, we tend to skim on the process, which is the only thing that will actually close that gap.

They say, “Why should I put in all this hard work without a prize at the end?!”

She is learning that you can control your commitments, true mental toughness, and paradoxically by letting go of the results you can actually play better.

Usually you hear them say the exact opposite, but we don’t attract what we want, we attract what we habitually do and what we believe.

If we believe life is hard, we have a vested interest in doing things to make our life harder. Therefore, we will subconsciously or consciously do things that attract more circumstances our beliefs are in line with.

Dr. Alan Goldberg suggests that, “players [and really all people] are limited most by what they believe is possible.”

I paused before I said, “So let me get this straight. You believe your left foot sucks. So you don’t use it. And because you don’t use it much, every time you do use it it sucks. And then you continue to believe it sucks. And if you continue to believe it sucks, then you don’t use it. Is that right?”

- We constantly reinforce our beliefs through the fuel we put in our heart: -What we READ, WATCH, and Listen to. -Who we SURROUND OURSELVES with. -What we VISUALIZE. -How we TALK TO OURSELVES. -And what we HABITUALLY DO.

If you want to achieve your greatest potential, you must surround yourself with people who love you deeply, believe in you, encourage you, BUT who are also willing to challenge you to become the best you are capable of being.

Most importantly, I knew where you started didn’t determine where you finished. I also learned the amount of money in your bank account didn’t define you.

You can ONLY reach your fullest potential by choosing the toughest challenges over and over in life.

Everyone has BIG DREAMS, but the best indicator of whether or not you will have a shot, not a guarantee, but a shot at making your dreams come true is the truth about how much you are willing to suffer.

Anyone can dream a dream, but the real question is how much are you willing to suffer. How many times will you be willing to say NO to instant gratification in order to YES to your dreams that are so far off they feel like you will never reach them?

First they will ignore you. Then they will tell you you are crazy. Then they will tell you are stupid. Then they will try to sabotage you. And then finally they will try and borrow your money

If you want to achieve your fullest potential and tap into areas of strength, persistence, and courage you never knew existed, continue to take on the toughest challenges and know that your willingness to suffer through the toughest stuff is the greatest predictor of your future success.

Comparison usually leads to diminished or inflated worth and takes our focus and energy away from things we can control.
Comparison = Better Than Competing = Getting Better

What he had was an internal drive to get better everyday, a desire to be an influential part of the team, and a love for competing.

Anything that happens to me today is in my best interest. It's an opportunity to learn and grow.

All we are asking is that you believe it is in your best interest so that you direct your energy and focus in the most beneficial and constructive ways possible.

As a player, make sure you find your identity in something that can never be taken away from you.

Many players begin to question whether they are wasting their time with their sport when they have the realization they are most likely not going to play at the next level. This realization can lead to a dramatic shift in effort and care for developing their skills. This is where it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to connect the dots for them, BUT you have to know what their dream is.

You want to be a neurosurgeon? As a neurosurgeon you might be in surgery for up to 20 hours and need meticulous focus and precision WITH SOMEONE'S LIFE ON THE LINE. We are asking you to focus for around 3-5 hours for practice or competition, and no ones life is on the line. You want to be a mom and an executive? You are going to have to be able to juggle and compartmentalize a lot of things in life. Therefore, learning how to come to practice and focus, even when you have a test the next day, is preparing you for the next stages of your life. You want to be a C.E.O of a fortune 500 company? You are going to have to learn how to work with people you don't like. You may not like all of your teammates, but if you can serve them and help them be better everyday, you are training yourself to be a better C.E.O.

You want to be a surgeon? Sometimes you are going to be called in at 3 o'clock in the morning to do surgery on someone and their life might depend on you being at your best even though you haven't gotten a lot of sleep. So, I understand you were up all night studying for an exam, but doing these seemingly mundane drills right now is a great training exercise for you fulfilling your dream as a surgeon.

If they know we care about their dreams and are invested in helping them achieve them, they will tap into reservoirs of persistence, courage, and passion you never knew existed.

When we make the tragedies and awful things that happen in our lives THE story, we enslave ourselves to those circumstances. We keep ourselves in bondage to those events as we continually think about them and share them

Here are some of those road signs: • This is hard. • I don't feel like doing _____ today. • Everyone else has more time than me. • I don't feel like this is making a difference. • Almost no one else is doing this. Sound familiar?

So what are some of the path to mastery's instructions? • Talk to yourself instead of listening to yourself. • Ask the question, "What is one thing I can do to make the situation better?" Rather than, "why is this happening to me?" • Live by principles rather than feelings.

The path to mastery is marked with those as well. • Your choice creates your challenge • You are building your own house • Your choice creates a challenge for those on your team • You will reap what you sow • The grass is greener where you water it • The wise man finds the diamonds on his own land Even though the path to mastery is available to everyone, very few will choose to take it.

I don't have to know why things happen in my life. I don't have control over everything that happens to me. But I do have a choice over what I'm going to believe about it and what I'm going to do in THIS moment.

Remember, someone has had less and done more, and many people have had more and done less. It's not about what you have; it's about what you do with what you have.

“At the end of your feelings is nothing. But at the end of every principle is a promise.” –Eric

When we make the choice to live by a certain set of principles it will not only protect us from our feelings, it will allow us to step into our greatest potential.

When we make the choice to live by a certain set of principles it will not only protect us from our feelings, it will allow us to step into our greatest potential. Many days we aren't going to feel like working out and honing our craft. Many days we aren't going to feel like treating people really really well. Many days we aren't going to feel like being unconditionally grateful. Many days we aren't going to feel like giving our very best. But the principle says you are going to reap what you sow. The principle says those who are diligent workers are going to serve kings instead of mere men. The principle says to turn the other cheek. The principle says to seek wise counsel. The principle says to speak life and not death. At the end of our principles there is life, freedom, hope, joy, and peace. At the end of our feelings is destruction. Seek out the principles from ancient wisdom that have been tried and tested through the ages. When you switch from living by your feelings to living by principles, you will start to see very different fruit in your life. It isn't easy and sometimes we will slip up and make choices based off of our feelings. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and get back on the road to living by your principles rather than your feelings. It's

This transformation happened when I started asking myself this simple question: In five years, will this even matter?

When LeBron James was interviewed after he won his first championship, he said something along these lines, “Last year I played to prove everyone wrong, this year I just worked as hard as I could, gave it my very best, and knew I could walk away with my head held high”. What voice do you think was louder for him? The voice of his critics or the voice of his supporters?

What most of us really want is for those we love and respect to believe in our dreams, our passions, and our success. And when they do, success is that much sweeter. Because at the end of the day, it feels so much better to say, “See! You were RIGHT!” instead of, “See! You were WRONG.”

As German Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke infamously said, “No plan survives first contact with the enemy.” But all is not lost!

While our plans are often outside of our control, preparation always lies within.

Every single thing that has ever happened in your life has prepared you for the present moment. Every context you are in today CAN prepare you for something in the future.

If we are just working to get a grade, we’re just playing the game.

You're no longer just doing what coach tells you to do; you're honing your listening skills and improving your athletic IQ. You're not just listening to some teacher speak; you're sharpening your ability to focus when you're bored.

Stop complaining; Start training.

Don't just show up; Come ready to grow up. Don't wait for your turn; Use the opportunity to learn. Stop planning; Start preparing.

Resources have a habit of following: Passion Persistence
Patience

Lesson 1- Use what you have

If we believe someone else is controlling us, then we are most likely going to comply. Compliance sucks. Compliance is going through the motions, and going through the motions never created something of exceptional value. The other thing about compliance is it tends to shift the responsibility from our shoulders to the controlling party's. When we realize we have a choice,

You decide what you are going to do and who you are going to be everyday. Even choosing to do nothing is still making a choice.

Make sure you don't ever miss an opportunity to give a specific and sincere compliment.

He said he did not like most of them, and he would prefer to be called, "The Servant....I just like to serve everybody, my teammates, the ushers at the game, fans."

Here is the problem, happiness and fulfillment are oftentimes in direct opposition to one another. Happiness is more about instant gratification. It is a feeling that seemingly comes and goes. Someone or something can make you happy for a little while, but that feeling can fade and you'll need something new to make you happy once again. For some people their pursuit of happiness might come from the purchasing of new clothes, shoes, or cars. For others it might be in having lots of cool friends or the most beautiful significant other. A prevalent characteristic of happiness talk is a strong degree of selfishness. Happiness is all about me. How I feel. Another predominant characteristic of happiness is that it is easy. If I have to work really hard for something and put in a lot of blood, sweat, and tears, then I will be sacrificing a lot of short-term happiness, so that is unacceptable. Happiness is supposed to be easy. The two predominant views of happiness I see coming from people is that it must come easy and it is me focused.

Here is the ironic twist. Fulfillment is often in direct opposition to happiness. Fulfillment is others-focused rather than me-focused, and it comes through going through the tough stuff.

Fulfillment is a much deeper and abiding feeling than short-lived happiness. I fear many people are missing out on fulfillment in the pursuit of happiness. I think we could all learn from Kevin Durant and seek out opportunities to serve others. If we did so, I think we would experience a lot more fulfillment even though we might sacrifice some happiness.

“What did you set out to deliberately do today to become that person?” Silence.

You see a lot of us are out for the quick fix. Coaches often complain their players want a quick fix. However, coaches want the quick fix as well, and they show the same frustration as their players in many different scenarios with their players.

By train I am talking about deliberate, consistent and intentional training of your mind, heart and body. It's

writing down 2 ways you will get better regardless of what happens in practice and writing out 2 people who will make sure have a great day.

It's not breaking it down with the team and showering up. It's breaking it down, taking game shots from game spots at game speed, and writing out 15 specific things that went well, 2 areas for growth, 3 things you learned and the vision for your life. That is training. It's deliberate. It's consistent. It's intentional.

Check Yourself If you want to play point guard exceptionally well, spend less time posting selfies in your new snap-back on twitter and start using that phone to video your movements so you can study how to be quicker and more agile. If you want to excel in school, stop watching television and criticizing all the people on The Voice who are pursuing their dreams and start reading and learning from people who know and have done more than you have. If you want to play at an elite level athletically, stop telling yourself and others what you want to

achieve and start doing the things to close the gap between where you are and where you want to be. Study those who were great at what they did: Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, Kevin Durant, LeBron James, Jerry Rice. You'll find that they were the first in, last out. If you really care about who you are becoming and if you really care about stretching towards your dreams, then don't come into the locker room and complain about having to do the same drills over and over. Don't sit down in the coaches' office at after a game and talk about someone else's mistakes. Don't sit down with your friends or by yourself at night and list out all the reasons why other people or outside influences are to blame for your lack of growth. Don't complain to other CEO's about the new generation of workers. Don't complain to other coaches about this generation of entitled athletes.

We don't just become who we want to be. We become the person we trained to be.

Now here is the key. You need to write out specifically how this will play out in your daily activities. Most of us have a pretty good idea of the context we will be in and the people we will be around in our day. Though we don't know all of the specifics, we can work with what we think will happen. So here is how mine worked one day:

I sat in the car before practice and wrote down that I was going to make someone's day great.

When we become intentional about what we believe, how we think, and what we do, we become the types of people who can start tidal waves of influence around the world.

Have you ever noticed that some of us are comfortable being miserable? We are comfortable doing average work.

We are more comfortable complaining instead of taking action. We are comfortable not pursuing excellence. We are comfortable enough to be inactive. Comfortable is easy. Comfortable never stretches you to grow. Comfortable is rarely grateful. Comfortable is complacent. Comfortable is the enemy that wars against your greatest potential.

There is a big difference between comfortable and content. Contentment is peace and joy where you are now. Contentment is gratitude for what you do have. Contentment will help you attract more resources and people to help make you better. Learn to be content in all circumstances. Avoid being comfortable. He was miserable because he subconsciously wanted to be miserable.

We are always doing what we want to do. There is always a choice, so we are always doing what we want to do.

“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny”. But no one WANTS hardships, no one is seeking them out!

If you believe in falling in love with the process of becoming great rather than focusing on outcomes in games, are you willing to get fired for living that out?

The reason we love and admire people like MLK, Ghandi, and Abraham Lincoln is not because they are extraordinary men with God-like qualities. We love them because they were ordinary people who were willing to die for living out extraordinary principles.

The ironic part of blame is that while it might temporarily make us feel better, it does absolutely nothing towards creating a better tomorrow.

Anyone can blame, very few have the courage to take responsibility.

Remember, blame is about the past. Responsibility is about the present and future.

It's easy to blame. It's hard to take responsibility. Especially when it's not our fault.

If you learn to give credit, and take responsibility at every opportunity you will be on the fast track to becoming a great leader who is able to mobilize people to accomplish amazing feats.

“Our greatest fear should not be of failure but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter.” - Francis Chan

Steve Jobs put it this way; “Remembering that I’ll be dead soon is the most important tool I’ve ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important.”

Encourage what you want. Stop bitching. Stop begging.

asked all the students to describe the most humble person they knew. One characteristic of these humble people stood out: They had a high level of self-esteem. They knew who they were and they felt good about who they were. We also decided that humility was defined not by self-deprecating behavior or attitudes but by the esteem with which you regard others. Good behavior flows naturally from that kind of humility.” True humility is believing you can do anything you set your mind to and being willing to confidently take steps towards your dreams knowing that you were meticulously created for a purpose. It is being confident in who you are and whose you are, so you can help others see who they were created to be.

The list could go on and on. The trouble is, if you are waiting on your moment, when the moment arrives you won’t be prepared. While you were waiting, many others were training.

It’s so easy to say, “When this or that happens, THEN I will change.” But the greatest indicator of our future behavior is our past behavior. It’s not that your future is dictated by your past. We can all change and grow. But if you don’t change now, it will be twice as hard then.

“How would I use my 86,400 seconds today if I knew I was going to get the opportunity of my dreams?!”

If you want to achieve your greatest potential, you must fall in love with the process of becoming great, especially when your dreams are so far away you can barely catch a glimpse of them.

We tend to forget the things that we do well and focus on and blow up the mistakes that we make. And usually, we buy into the idea that mistakes = identity.

Your choice creates your challenge!

you think this is hard work, well tell that to the 9 year-old I train whom after practice wrote out 32 things he did well. It only took him 42 minutes. That's commitment!

This training tool has elicited more growth in people, teams, and organizations than almost anything else we do. Our memories are not formed from our experience, our memories are formed from the retelling of events.

“Everyone thinks that greatness is sexy, it's not. It is dirty hard work.” -Ben

The reality is, that it is a commitment to doing the dirty hard work that is going to get you where you want to go. It's not complex or fancy. It is a commitment to doing the dirty work that is going to help you mold and shape your character into the person you want to become. It's

simple stuff, but simple isn't easy.

Ultimately, true mental toughness is a higher standard than winning. So why are we afraid of making that the standard?! If our focus is true mental toughness and doing our best to grow from every experience, the results will ultimately be better than if we are focused on winning.

It is true we are all born with different attributes, but where we start doesn't determine where we finish. Most people who have the characteristics we admire refined those over a long period of time through deliberate and intentional choices day after day after day.

Most people will give their very best in training every now and then.

Most people will be intentional in how they treat people every now

If you want to fulfill your greatest potential you must be committed to a certain type of lifestyle. That doesn't mean you won't miss days or slip up at times; but it means you are willing to say yes to the toughest stuff the majority of the time.

However, when you study the tops of their fields, a very different picture presents itself. The people who achieve sustained excellence tend to have relentless work ethic and a willingness to delay satisfaction for long periods of time. They have fallen in love with the process, and are constantly seeking out better strategies to continue to get better. In essence you find they have a strong belief in constant and never-ending improvement.

Success always looks easy to those who weren't around while all the training happened.

- Watch "Success is not an accident" video about Stephen Curry by @alanstein

The question we have to ask ourselves is: What are those ropes in our life that have been holding us back?

What are the beliefs that we are clinging to that are keeping us stuck?

We can believe there is nothing we can do and that we are just a victim of circumstance and just stay tied to that tree.

We can adopt a growth mindset and believe no matter what happens to me, it is in my best interest and an opportunity to learn and grow. We can ask, "What is one thing I can do to make this better?"

Imagine walking into an interview and being asked "Can you please tell me a time when you took initiative and solved a problem?"

When you are faithful with little, you will be made faithful with much."

- Read Power Questions.

Interesting isn't it? We are not willing, the majority of the time, to tear someone else down but we have no problem thrashing ourselves to bits!

We have this false humility that is prevalent in our culture where we suppress the wonderful things that people say to us. The flip side is that we often ruminate on and amplify the negative things people say about us!

- Here are some examples of beneficial and constructive self-talk statements: -Next play. -The next opportunity I will _____ . -Breathe, and get the next one. -Play present. -Relax, keep your head down, and make a solid swing. -Fake a pass to make a pass.

Stevens had this to say about goals: "I know it sounds strange, but I don't really have goals. I focus on getting better every single day."

According to studies done by Harvard, the greatest predictor of future success is the ability to delay gratification. Put another way, the greatest predictor of future success is the ability to traverse the desert.

Some think you become great on the big stage under the bright lights, but the bright lights only reveal our work in the desert. Churchill was right, "those destined for greatness must first walk alone in the desert."

You have to offer discounts and do all sorts of fancy marketing if you have an inferior product, but excellence sells itself.

Show me what you do with your time and I'll show you how bad you want it.

