

Welcome to Coach Traub's Newsletter Mental Skills Tips #6!!!!

Mental Skills Training = Performance Enhancement and Personal Growth

My mission is to over-deliver value on goods and services designed to help you "win" the mental game. I always welcome your comments, questions, stories, or [MVP nominations](#).

This issue's theme: CONFIDENCE

If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.
-Thomas Edison

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Think Right: Confidence is an Attitude and Attitudes are a Choice

Thoughts Determine Attitudes, and a Confident Attitude Sets the Stage for a Peak Performance

Today's Mental Skills Tip – I call them “**green light**” indicators. They are the variables, mostly internal, that let an athlete know that he or she is likely to perform up to potential. The opposite “red light” indicators predict a poor performance. Awareness of these “green” and “red lights” enables athletes to keep going with the flow when they are likely to do well and stop to change something when they are not. Examples of "green lights" are relaxed, focused, and having fun. Common "red lights" include frustrated, thinking too much, and trying to do too much. The *MOST* common indicator, however, is confidence. From old to young, softball to football to ping-pong, boy to girl, and

professional to recreational, athletes know that they are more likely to play great when they are confident and are more likely to stink it up when they lack confidence.

Since confidence is so important for performing well, it is quite useful to know where it comes from. Performance-specific confidence comes from several things including global confidence (self-esteem) and preparation. These are critical, but will not change play-by-play. The next variable does, and athletes performances often fluctuate accordingly (which is why the negative snowball effect where one mistake leads to another is so common). Most athletes tell me that the biggest variable that affects their confidence is their outcomes. **They are wrong! It's not what happens that determines your confidence, it's the way you think about what happens.**

This distinction may seem subtle, but it's huge because one is controllable and the other is not. We simply cannot change the past, but we can learn to let go of mistakes and replay good performances in our self-talk. Remember the ultimate success formula for dealing effectively with adversity: (1) Learn from it. (2) Release it. Releasing the negative, by forgiving before forgetting if necessary, prevents that snowball effect that comes from a lack of confidence. Instead of emphasizing the mistake, we can think about past great performances, even if they were a long time ago. Normal behavior is to emphasize the most recent thing, but if your goal is not to be normal (and I know it is because you're reading this) then you need to make it a priority to learn the many ways that you can **emphasize positives and de-emphasize negatives**. This is exactly what the greatest athletes in the world do! Michael Jordan said, "If an opponent misses his first five shots, I can see fear in his eyes, but if I miss my first five, I think back to a game when I missed my first five and made my next ten, and I bring that confidence into this moment."

COACHING POINT - Your athletes thoughts determine their attitudes, and you often direct their thoughts (whether you want to or not) with your words. Therefore, choose your communications based on where you want your athlete to go, mentally. If you want them to focus on correcting a mistake at the expense of the quality of their current performance, then critique them. If you want them to perform the best they can right now despite their imperfections, then complement them. Both are appropriate at different times, and you are the judge, so don't be lazy and accept "just whatever," pick your spots so that you do your job to the best of your ability. And don't ever forget, your job is to help your athletes! Boosting their confidence, especially during games, may be the way you want to go.

"Overheard" from the Minds of some Great Athletes:

Poor Self-Talk can be transformed into
Fantastic Self-Talk

Counter: I stink. to
I don't stink, I'm good.

Reframe: We gotta score now. to
We want to score now, but could still win it later.



Change: I was horrible on that last play. to
That's just a one-time thing. The next one will be great.

Change: I'm not sure I have enough. to
I know that if I execute, it will work out.

Change: I did that, but I'm not sure I can do this. to
I did that, so I'll probably do this, too.

Counter: It's all my fault. to
It's really only partly my fault. or It's really not my fault.

Counter: I messed that up and will probably be bad here, too. to
Stop being ridiculous. That has nothing to do with this, and I'm GOOD at this.

Counter: I just need a little extra right here. to
I've got plenty. That's why I've been working out!

This newsletter is designed to help,
but if you really want to make an impact,
bring Coach Traub straight to your team!

Banquet Speaking. Practice Workshops. Peak Performance Camps. Performance Enhancement Seminars.

EXTRAordinary Confidence Quotes

Peter T. McIntyre, Confidence comes not from always being right, but from not fearing to be wrong."

Eleanor Roosevelt, "Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent."

Sally Field, "It took me a long time not to judge myself through somebody else's eyes."

Henry Ford, "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you are right."

Michael Jordan, "You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them."

Coach Wooden Quote-of-the-Month: *"Earn the right to be proud and confident."*

Coaches Reminder: "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Baseball/Softball Rules Tip-of-the-Day: Obstruction. There's a lot to this, so here's the short version: Obstruction is the act of a defensive player impeding the progress of a baserunner, unless the defender has the ball or is fielding a batted ball. In some leagues (including most softball and MLB, the act of receiving a throw is also a protected time for the fielder, although this does not include simply waiting for a throw). Obstruction can be intentional or unintentional. A delayed dead ball is called by the umpire by sticking out the left arm parallel to the ground and making a fist. Once obstruction is called, it's the umpire's judgment about what would have happened had the obstruction not occurred. In baseball, the runner gets at least one base from the obstruction, but this is not the case in softball, especially if the runner stops running after being obstructed. In softball, the runner, upon seeing the obstruction called, should always go for the next base.

For getting this far, I have warm wishes for you...

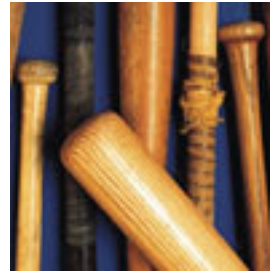
*May your hunt for excellence be fruitful and never-ending.
May you not only hold on to the dreams you've had, but also dream greater
dreams than before. May you not only enjoy this land and its wealth, but also
enjoy the wind at your back as you make it a better place to live
by giving and loving generously.*

God bless.

Coach Traub

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...to your colleagues, bosses, players, teammates, and friends.

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