

# Welcome to CoachTraub's Newsletter #7!!!!

## *Mental Skills Training = Performance Enhancement and Personal Growth*

Thank you in advance for a couple of your minutes... minutes that can help you  
**WIN the Mental Side of the Game.**

My goal is to add value to your sporting efforts and inform you of events, services, and products that I provide that can further that effort. I always welcome your comments, questions, stories, or MVP nominations.

### **Today's Mental Skills Tip – It'll be hard to FOCUS without a HEALTHY PERSPECTIVE!**

Tennis Champion Jim Courier said it succinctly: "It is very, very dangerous to have your self-worth riding on your results as an athlete." Unfortunately, today's athletes usually hold the distorted belief that they are a good person after a good performance and a bad one after they stink it up. Rationally, they *may* know better, but this is how they FEEL! Our society leads our beliefs astray. Money and adulation of the masses are given to those with great statistics, without regard for the sources of their outcomes. Should superior genetics or shortcuts like steroids be rewarded? Even role models and coaches often knowingly or unwittingly reinforce this false idea that achievement in sports makes you a good person. A coach's body language clearly says, "I can't believe we didn't score in that situation." Or the star is given a free pass when discipline is called for. A parent pays cash for scoring a goal or hitting a home run. If everyone had the same genetic ability, environment, rules, and luck, achievement and effort would basically equal each other. As it is, achievement reflects effort, but it is NOT the same thing.

So life's not fair. We know that. What should we do about it? Rewarding achievement is a logical strategy for dealing with this, because it's easy to measure, and it *does* encourage many great skills including persistence, toughness, and focus. But the pitfalls are many...

**A performance-self-concept link is extremely damaging** to the quality of a performance. Ask A-Rod. Ask the Mets (who, despite their win to stay tied with Milwaukee last night, are about to miss the playoffs for their second collapse in a row). Ask anyone who's ever "choked," meaning that they played below their potential when they perceived that it was an especially important situation. **Worry is always bad for performance**, so if you're worried what others will think of you, you're going to be partially distracted from the task-at-hand. The easiest way to get locked in with a **tunnel-vision focus on the task-at-hand** is to care about giving your **best effort**, but not care about the outcomes. That's much easier to say than to do. Your value as a person does not depend on outcomes. The score does provide one excellent source of feedback about the quality of your effort, but it is not the only thing that matters, it's not the only verdict about what worked and what didn't work. Your self-worth should fluctuate on several factors, all or which are controllable, including the care you demonstrate for self and others, your integrity (thoughts, words, and actions are all aligned), and the effort you put forth to reach your goals.

A healthy perspective on the game defines success as John Wooden did, "the peace of mind that comes from knowing that you did your best." Failure is simply the gross negligence of this best effort, or quitting. A belief in these two definitions make it easy to get lost in the process of playing the game. "What I know," says 3-time national champion coach Augie Garrido, "is the getting lost in the process releases your potential as an athlete."

**COACHING POINT, for coaching yourself or others** - We already care about the score, probably too much, so reward the positive aspects of behavior that are not rewarded on the scoreboard and be critical of the mistakes that DO NOT directly impact the scoreboard.

## "Overheard" from the minds of some great athletes:

Poor Self-Talk can be transformed into

**Great Self-Talk**

Change: Winning matters most. to

**Effort matters most.**

Change: Whatever, man, this is ridiculous to

**I will not quit.**

Change: I failed. to

**I'll learn from this.**

Change: Why is my coach always criticizing me? to

**I want constructive criticisms. They help me figure out what's not working so I can change it.**

Change: I'm good because I'm better than him. to

**I'm good because I'm better than I used to be.**

At crunch time:

Change: Oh no. to

**Oh yes! {Or: what an opportunity!}**

Change: I gotta... to

**I don't 'gotta' anything, but this certainly is an opportunity for something great to happen.**

**Quote-of-the-Day:** "Thinking too much about how you're doing when you're doing is disastrous." -Harvey Penick, golf coach

**Inspirational True Story:** Deborah was a professional teacher for 22 years, and is now a middle school principal. She sounds like a hero already, but let's learn more... She's also a mother who got divorced a long time ago and raised three kids as a single parent. Clearly, she's a good Mom. How did this Mom help create a healthy perspective in her athletic son's mind?

She was asked her secrets. **"Give them lots of love.** Celebrate their successes. And if something doesn't go too well, still give them that extra hug and tell them there's going to be another day. Never [fail to] provide support and guidance. Always lend an ear. And don't criticize. Let them analyze. They have a coach to do all that. Just be a parent."

"I was always stern as a parent," she said, "but from day one, I included my children as part of the decision process."

Back up a bit. This Mom listened and took it to heart when teachers told her that her only son was having problems in school. Starting with preschool, teachers complained: he can't stay quiet, he won't sit still, he doesn't keep his hands to himself, he is giggling and laughing and nudging kids for attention. She was directly told that, **"your son will never be able to focus on anything."** She heard the critique, but she didn't accept it. She found ways to play to his strengths. For example, when he had trouble reading, she gave him the sports pages to read.

**From adversity, strength.** In grade school he was often teased by classmates. He was unusually tall and long, and he had big ears. His size would benefit him in his sport, and his Mom said the teasing did, too, by helping him stay grounded even after extraordinary achievements.

Once, the boy was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. A reporter asked him what the worst part of that was. He said, "Having to look at my mother's face **knowing I had let her down.**" Mom: "I've been there not to dictate or guide. I'm there to listen to what he wants to do and try to help him solve problems and make wise decisions."

Despite being close during all the hubbub in Beijing, **Deborah Phelps** stayed away from any speculation about whether her son would break Mark Spitz's gold medal record. "I don't get caught up in the four, six, eight," she said. "Whatever the number might be, I just know I'm here to support **Michael** in every swim he takes."

### Testimonials for Coach Traub's consulting:

**Eric Newman**, former DBU head coach and current Nebraska pitching coach, "Aaron was an excellent addition to our program at DBU. His insight and workshops really helped our players and staff develop the mental part of the game, to a degree that we would not have reached otherwise."

"Our daughter thought your camp was very useful. She and her teammates continued to discuss it all through lunch today. Thanks."

### EXTRAordinary Quotes (from my book *Finding Your Peak Performance with Mental Skills Training*):

**Andre Agassi**, "Thank you for teaching me that my best is good enough."

**Dean Smith**, "If you make every game a life-and-death proposition, you're going to have problems. For one thing, you'll be dead a lot."

**Nancy Lieberman-Cline**, "There's no substitute for hard work. If you work hard and you prepare yourself as an athlete and you are in great shape, you might get beat, but you'll never lose."

**Olympian Medalist Silken Laumann**, "It's important to know that at the end of the day it's not the medals you remember. What you remember is the process - what you learn about yourself by challenging yourself, the experiences you share with other people, the honesty the training demands - those are things nobody can take away from you whether you finish twelfth or you're an Olympic champion."

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Advanced Mental Skills Training for Softball/Baseball varsity athletes:

Monday, 9/29 @ 7:00 p.m. in Irving. **(Limit 6)** Check [www.CoachTraub.com](http://www.CoachTraub.com) for following dates.

#### Next Performance Enhancement Seminar (all sports): October 27 @ 7:00 p.m.

at Sportsplex Valley View in Addison. Only \$30/family. Coaches attend **free!** Team Rates Available.

#### Non-Public Events: Metro Scout League - 9/28, UTA Baseball - 10/2, Texas Glory Gold - 10/5.

*All events come with a 100% satisfaction money-back guarantee.*

Register online @ [www.CoachTraub.com](http://www.CoachTraub.com) or **reply to this email for more information.**

**You can also bring Coach Traub straight to your team!**

**Coach Wooden Quote-of-the-Month:** "Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability."

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

**Baseball/Softball Rules Tip-of-the-Day:** The foul tip.

Definition: A batted ball that goes directly and sharply from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand.

Meaning: with two strikes, a batted ball hits the catcher in the waist area, rattles around, and is secured by the catcher without the ball hitting the ground. This is a foul ball, not a foul tip, and should not be called a strikeout.

*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*

*make it a better place to live by giving and loving generously.*

*God bless.*

## **Coach Traub**

**Enjoy your job. Know your job. Do your job!**