

Being a Champion: ***Competing with the Right Frame of Mind***

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The secret to success lies in your pattern of thought - your attitude. Your attitude will determine whether you are successful or not.



**Be careful what you are saying to yourself
because you will believe what you say.**

True inner character will reveal itself by how you react after you lose. That is why you have to learn how to lose with dignity before you can learn how to win with class. Learning how to lose with dignity is far more difficult.

It is easier to be a winner when you have won and it takes more self-confidence and courage to lose with dignity. Lessons learned in a

losing effort are more likely to be reinforced than those learned in a winning effort. Athletes and coaches have to realize the essence of success lies in the full out effort brought forth in competition. This effort centers on controlling what we have control over and not worrying about that which we have little or no control over.

We have control over developing, improving and perfecting physical, technical, tactical and psychological components of our performance. We have little or no control over officiating, the environmental conditions, etc. For example, an athlete should never lose a competition because of poor physical conditioning. Getting our bodies into superior shape is what we have the most control over. Failing to prepare any of the above components is preparing for failure.

It is important to focus on putting forth a full 100 percent effort in controlling that which we have the most control over. Championships are won before hand in the training sessions. When you step out to compete, you must know that you have prepared more than your opponent has. This being the case you will develop an attitude, in which you will refuse to lose in any conditions that you have control over. This is what I call confidence; although, be careful not to be over-confident as this could lead to detrimental results. Being confident is knowing you can lose, but thinking you will win. Being over confident is knowing and thinking you will win. Think of every competitive opportunity as a championship event, and where your opponent will challenge you to the best of your abilities.

More is not always better than less, because working harder is not better than working smarter. Working smarter means being productive by doing the right things, the right amount, and at the right time in order to improve physically, technically, tactically, and psychologically.

You should also make sure you are eating a nutritious diet, getting adequate rest and recovery. You also have to prioritize the following with the end in mind: education, work or a career, a relationship and/or family, and a social life. This is what successful athletes do. Unsuccessful athletes do not like to do all these things or do not do these things well.

Everyone wants to win, but not everyone is willing to pay the price for success. It takes commitment to do this in order to get your body to perform under the most demanding conditions, but the effort is worth the lessons that will be learned in the process. If you are willing to commit yourself to doing this, and to sacrifice things along the way, you will find that success will take care of itself. By focusing on the process, the product will take care of itself.

When you step out to compete you will be prepared, focusing on the here and now - task at hand, what you can do effectively, and not on what you cannot or should not do. Look for reasons why you should perform to potential, not excuses why it will be acceptable to lose. Be positive and think about what you are going to do.

Don't be distracted by that which you have not control over; for example bad calls by the officials, illegal tactics and fouls by your opponents to get you to lose your composure, the crowd, the noise, and/or any other environmental factors. Visualization, relaxation and concentrations skills are psychological skills that can help you to overcome these situations.

Never worry about the outcome, focus on your performance, the lessons learned, and you will come out a winner. Remember that there lies a possibility that you can lose and still perform well.