

Focus On What You Want

In sports, like life, it's important to focus on what you want as opposed to what it is you don't want. But people tend to get lazy, and sarcastic, and feel that it doesn't really matter. In today's post Jonathan Edwards talks about why it does matter. It all matters.

Not On What You Don't Want

[00:00:00] Hey guys this Olympian Jonathan Edwards with athletes specific dot.com I appreciate you being here. I hope you enjoyed last week's video on changing the game and why you can't change the game. This week I want to kind of want to kind of dovetail off of that a bit and talk about focusing on what you want as opposed to focusing on what you don't want.

Well Meaning Parents Are The Worst Culprits

[00:00:22] This always surprises me. A lot of well-meaning parents or coaches will talk about you know the way casual comments on how all you know your team never gets the breaks or the ball never bounces your way or you don't do this as opposed to do that.

That Time When Zach Missed In His Head First

[00:00:41] I'll share with you a really interesting story. This was a true story that happened to me when I was playing lacrosse a long time ago. But our team was down by a goal with about a minute left, and one of the things that our coach did, which was always kind of fun was we worked on the special play. And it was this special play that was designed to get our buddy Zach the ball and Zach. I was the goalie. And so what was always fun was in practice the team would run this play. And so I was playing. I was always playing first. Obviously the first D against the first offense. So they run this play and Zach would always end up getting this clear shot at the net and I was always excited for that because Zach would rip it and it was either it was him against me and it was always fun and Zach would always get a really good shot off and I would have to make a really good save. And so in this game we were playing a team that wasn't as good as us and we were kind of playing down to their level. Just an off day for us as a team, and so we're down by a goal and coach calls a timeout, and we what are we going to do we're going to run that play we

always run. And so coach you know gets out the white board writes it up you know just we're just basically going over what we already know. We already know how to do it and you know we're going to run the play and Zach's going to get the ball and Zach's going to get a shot off. Now the other goalie was not as good as I was, and not to brag, but just you know we were we were pretty confident that Zach was going to get the ball, get a shot off. We're going to get a goal, tied up, maybe go to overtime ,whatever.

The Coaches Sarcastic Mistake

[00:02:14] So the timeout ends and we break the huddle and Zach's walking away, Coach says this. He goes "Hey Zach. Don't miss." And well what do you think happened? So we run the play, Ref blows the whistle. We run the play. Zach gets a shot. What did he do? He missed. Zach never missed him practice. And what happened there was that the coach put this image in Zach's head of missing. Your brain can't process a negative. So if I tell you, don't miss or I tell you don't think of a pink polar bear, you're thinking of a pink polar bear. Right. It may take you a second but you will. And so what happened there was the coach, just jokingly, put in his head. "Hey Zach don't miss", what's Zach seeing in his mind's eye? He's seeing missing. And sure enough, he did what his mind saw and he missed. Now what always floors me is parents, coaches, other athletes say kind of sarcastically, they'll say things like, "hey don't miss" or, "Don't let him beat you."

You Can't Not Think Of A Pink Polar Bear

[00:03:30] And what ends up happening is that the athletes mind focuses on that thing that they don't want to have happen. And guess what? It usually happens. The same is true...I'll give me another example: in race car driving. So when you learn how to drive a race car, what you learn how to do is you learn how to drift the car. And now an uncontrolled drift is a spin. But what happens is a driver is taught to recognize the drift. And basically the back wheels coming around, but then the driver is taught to focus on where he wants the car to go, right? So if a car is drifting, and it looks like it's going to hit the wall, the driver doesn't look at the wall because what ends up happening is that the body just doesn't know how to not steer away from that wall. And usually goes right into it. The driver is taught to steer, where they want the car to go. And then what happens is that the brain helps the body basically do what it needs to do to get that car to go and straighten out and go where they want it to go.

Change What You Say For a Better Result

[00:04:34] Right so that's a really cool metaphor. If you are an athlete or a parent or a coach watching this. What are you doing to help your athletes focus on what it is they want versus what it is they don't want? You know, so your comment as casual as like "oh the big guy on the other team always runs around the Defense." So whatever. What we should be saying is that, you know, "wow when that big guy gets the ball. Our team always rallies around each other and knows how to defend against that guy." Right? That's a much more positive vision. It's much more successful vision than focusing on the image of that big guy running around everybody and scoring. Right? It's athletes when they focus on you know, "Oh I'm always, you know, I'm never good in the rain."

[00:05:25] Well really.

[00:05:26] Well if you're reinforcing that and thinking about that then you're never going to be good in the rain. Whereas if you say, "Hey you know what? I'm great in all conditions." You know. All right. Yeah you're good in all conditions. Well what do you do to be good in all conditions. "Well when it rains I do this, this, and this." Right and that is the best chance to be successful in the rain. Right. Or if it's cold out you know, this always fascinates me, one last story for you. Tom Brady. You know the New England Patriots, I love talking about Tom Brady I'm a Patriots fan. So love him or hate him. He would always company's epic battles against Peyton Manning in the cold. Peyton Manning had a history of not being very good in the cold. And everybody would remind Peyton about how hey listen you know your stats aren't as good in the cold as they are in warm weather. What's the matter? So the media, you know, all the time. Hey you're going to New England. You're going to play in the cold. All they're doing is reinforcing in his head how bad he is in the cold. And I always, you know, I was I feel like professional athletes are always amazing because all they're getting peppered with all the time is negative questions from the media. "Hey you know stats say that you're not very good in this situation?" "Well, Thank you. I really don't need to know that because I'm focusing on being good in that situation.

What Mistakes Do You Make?

[00:06:48] So what is it for you. What are some things that you say to yourself or maybe if you're a parent or an athlete or coach watching this what do you say to your athletes sarcastically? "Hey you know we're never really good in the situation?" OK. That doesn't help me help me focus on the things that help me see myself being better in that situation. OK. Super.

[00:07:09] Hey guys Jonathan and thanks for watching. You know a couple of things before you go. First and foremost if you like this video do me a favor would you share it with somebody. E-mail it Facebook share it like it pinnate Google Plus it I sure would appreciate it. By all means please leave me a comment below. That's really the juice that kind of keeps this going for me is when I hear back from people in the community who are like what I've had to say or they don't like to say let's continue the conversation. And secondly subscribe. You can do right here on this video you subscribe on YouTube so that every time we put a new video you're going to get notified. And also if you'd like to get an e-mail notification you can click on the link in the shows in order to do that as well. And finally listen I've got a free course that I've put together for athletes parents and coaches and I hope that you'll check it out. It's called the three key abilities and what I have seen in my kind of lifespan of coaching and in having been an athlete is that all successful athletes possess three key abilities and without these three key abilities they're unable to reach the levels of success that they want to have.

[00:08:25] Most athletes that I have worked with that I see are usually really good at one maybe two but there's three total that really need to come together in order to make it athlete reach the goals they want to reach and do it successfully and do it with fun and enjoyment and to really make their dreams come true. So over at athletes specific if you click on the link AthleteSpecific.com/3keys You can head over there and I've actually created two versions of this course one for athletes and one for parents and coaches. So

where I speak it's similar content but it's basically me speaking to you as you need to hear whether you're the athlete or the parent or the coach. So I really hope you'll check that out. OK. Athletes specific dot com forward slash 3 keys. Thanks for watching. And if there's ever a topic you want me to cover I'd be happy to leave me a comment below and I'll see you next week. Cheers.

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