



6 STEPS TO HELPING SHAPE MENTALLY RESILIENT ATHLETES

TEACHING ATHLETES TO SUCCEED ON THE FIELD AND IN LIFE!

1 HELP ATHLETES DISCOVER THEIR AUTHENTIC SELF

The more aware we are about our authentic self, the more we are able to hold ourselves accountable, recognize when we step out of that version of ourselves, and stop putting our worth in external factors. Help your athletes discover their core values and who they are when they're at their best. Provide coaching, feedback, and recognition around this.

2 BE AN EMOTIONAL SUPPORT WARRIOR FOR ATHLETES

Each of us needs an emotional support system and people whose presence makes it safe enough for us to open up and tell the truth. When we don't have that, we keep our feelings to ourselves, we experience shame, and often behave in unhealthy ways. If you want to get the best out of your players then mentally push them on the field and emotionally support them off of it.

3 VALIDATE FEELINGS BEFORE TRYING TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

"I imagine you're so hurt because you worked harder than you've ever worked, you felt like you were finally ready, and you are disappointed that it didn't work out the way you wanted it to." Validating someone's feelings does not mean you agree with them. It is giving them permission to feel what they feel so you build stronger trust and connection. When this happens, you put your athletes in a stronger place to hear you. Remember: empathy first, information second.

4 TEACH ATHLETES TO REFRAME THEIR EXPERIENCES

It can often feel like the world is caving in on you when you're in the middle of a difficult situation. It often takes someone else to help us realize every experience is an opportunity to learn about ourselves and others. Teaching athletes how to reframe their experiences (once they are no longer emotionally hijacked) helps athletes see that mistakes are for learning. It also teaches them that failure is not a permanent condition. Ask athletes, "What does this experience teach you about yourself, the game, relationships, life?" or "How will you choose to be better because of this?"

5 EMPOWER ATHLETES TO TAKE FORWARD ACTION

We want athletes who do not stay a victim to their circumstance, but who reflect and then rise up stronger and take decisive action. When athletes focus on what they can control they feel more empowered and they step back into their personal power. Coaches can ask, "What action(s) do you need or want to take for your own emotional healing and growth?" or "What action could you take to start getting back to your best self?"

6 CREATE THE SPACE TO PRACTICE MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Resiliency can be taught, but it is developed through experience and practice. Give your athletes difficult (if not impossible) drills to achieve. Watch how they respond. Have them analyze how they're feeling, the impact of those feelings, and what informed decision they want to make next. You will teach your athletes that they are not responsible for the discomfort they find themselves in, but they are responsible for how they react in that discomfort. Additionally, you teach them to form habits that will serve them better in life.