



ONE BODY THINKING

Everyone has experienced physical pain whether it is a broken bone or just a nagging stubbed toe. The injury, whether great or small, does not allow the body to fully function properly. Anytime there is a pain signal going to the brain from any body part it can serve as a distraction from the intended goal. Even the smallest distraction can be detrimental to a person whether they are throwing a ball, trying to fall asleep or just trying pay attention during a conversation.

The athlete needs as much focus on their current goal as possible (which should be to play well and strive to win). Yet when an athlete is injured, and most athletes always play with several injuries, the injury demands attention that is not profitable to the goal in mind. Instead, the athlete must give attention to the injury, and in some cases must compensate with other body parts which may put other body parts at risk because they are outside their normal function.

A healthy body allows the mind and body to excel together to greater potential. When the whole body is working in unison and each limb, ligament, bone, and so forth are all working together, the athlete is then at their best. Moreover, when the body feels good, the mind feels good and is freer to be bold and take risks because that athlete can put full trust in their body to do what they ask it, which opens the possibility for make the game exciting. However, when the body is not healthy and in constant repair, the athlete cannot trust their body to do the things they are asking it to do.

This is not an anatomy lesson, but an analogy to help you to understand how important it is for the body to be at full strength, to be healthy, and for each part of the body (team member) to be working in unison so that the athlete has the best chance of successfully performing to the best of their ability.

Think of your function in the body (your team) whether it be the eye, the hand, the foot, the hair. Your sole job is to function at your most optimal level. That's all you can do. If you strive to do your job, and your teammates (other parts of the same body) do their job, then the body is able to perform at its best. Remember, even the fastest runner in the world is not that fast if he has an ankle injury.

Again, this is not an anatomy lesson but a metaphor for the team to strive together in unison. That is the goal of the body. When division comes between team members, the team is hurt. When the human body is hurt it focuses all its attention on healing that area. So should it be in a team. An ailing body is not able to function at its optimal level of play. Remember, even a broken toe nail can take away the focus and trust an athlete has in their own body and performance. Similarly, little fights and skirmishes between teammates can hinder the whole body. When one part is hurting, the whole body

suffers. When one division between teammates becomes apparent, it affects the entire team culture and begins to eat away and devour.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING: The best way to fix the problem is to mend the body. Begin to think of others in a new light. To lift up one another. To encourage one another. When you learn to forgive one another of their faults, you can begin the process of forgetting. Though you may never forget, when you forgive, it makes it easier to mend and repair the team and you are then able to return your focus to the goals of the season. This is a day by day choice. This is a play by play decision to think of each other in a positive light. Each person (member) is important to a team no matter the role. If the body hurts when just a little scrape happens, so does a team when there are divisions in the team.

Something worth remembering: you do not have to like your teammates hairstyle, their friends, or agree with their life choices or their attitude. But one thing that you must agree on in order to be successful....the desire to win. When you agree on this everything else will take care of itself. When the focus is placed on pursuing team excellence and making each other better, the focus will not be on tearing each other down and creating division. You can only focus on one thing at a time. Therefore, it is up to each individual to think the same thing (regarding winning and playing well), and it is also up to each individual whether they choose to make choices that will help or hinder the team.

When you focus on the desire to win and to play well for your team, it takes the focus completely off of self and puts it on the team. The things you say to each other can then start to change. The way you think about your teammates and coaches then starts to change. The way you start thinking on the field starts to change because trust has been built within the team that they are giving their all each play. Which in turn allows you to play your best game rather than try to do too much when others are slacking.

This can be a very contagious mindset. A successful team must strive to think in this manner. You must strive to build up each other and speak kind and encouraging words to each other. It takes the same amount of effort to think and speak positively about yourselves and teammates as it does to think and speak negatively. It is again, up to you what thoughts you want to think and words you want to speak. Just as in the weight room when you are building muscles to get stronger, the same thing applies to each member of your team. The stronger you are mentally and physically, and the more you bring a positive and confident mindset to the game and towards your teammates, the greater potential there is for contributing to the growth amongst the team and success on the field.

Thoughts?