

GAME ON!

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"Confidence comes not from always being right but from not fearing to be wrong."

~Peter T. McIntyre

Master your mental game & take control of your performance

HOW AM I DOING? Getting effective feedback

Feedback serves many different functions, but most importantly, it serves the purpose of improving motor skills through error correction. Errors let you know that something needs to change in your technique. Without that feedback, you can't learn how to improve.

Our brain's ability to learn happens in response to information coming into the system. Sometimes that information is providing us with evaluative feedback.

When you actively seek out feedback, you are helping to speed up the process of your ability to



learn, adapt, and improve. Open yourself up to receiving feedback and you open yourself up to improving your performance.

There are two types of feedback: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic feedback is sensory feedback we receive through movement, also known as kinesthetic awareness. The ability to bring awareness into your body and feel how your body is moving through

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ARE YOU A SORE LOSER?

My husband is one of those guys that will pick up a sport pretty quickly. Throughout the years I have wanted nothing more than to just beat him at SOMETHING! Whether we were hiking, snowboarding, or playing disc golf; instead of having fun I was miserable and just focused on how badly I felt I was doing compared to him.

So why do you sulk, pout, and make excuses when you end up getting beat? For one thing, it shows you have a competitive drive and want to do well

at your sport. However, it also shows you are gauging your success based on beating the person next to you instead of performing better than the last time. Everyone wants to win. But, if you only gauge your success based on how you are doing relative to the person next to you, it's going to eat away at your confidence and motivation, not to mention make everyone around you crazy. Instead of focusing on winning or losing, put your energy into figuring out what skills you need to improve in

order to up your game. Set specific goals for improving those skills and then gauge your success based on your performance relative to the goals you have set.

Keeping these things in mind, now when I go out with my husband I have fun and feel good about my performance. When we play disc, he has the power for the drives and I have the finesse for the putts. If you are focused on your own improvement, pretty soon you'll find that you'll be trading wins and enjoying yourself again!

Asking for Feedback

Feedback isn't just for skill improvement.

Feedback is also good for looking at the big picture.

Feedback Questions

What are my top 3 strengths?

In what ways do I hold myself back?

What are 3 things I need to improve?

What is the most important thing for me to work on now?

Write it Down

Answer these questions for yourself first and then get feedback from your coaches, teammates – anyone that you feel can answer honestly.

Type out the questions and ask them to write their answers down so you can sit and have time to process all of the feedback. After evaluating both sets of feedback, set goals to improve performance.

Say Thanks

It's not always easy to ask for and hear honest feedback. It's also not always easy to give. Make sure you thank anyone that provides you with feedback and give yourself a pat on the back!

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space is essential for learning, and fine tuning the skills of your sport. Extrinsic feedback is feedback that we receive from external sources like a coach, a judge, the clock, etc. Both types of feedback help to bring awareness to what changes need to be made or what needs to be reinforced for optimal performance.

Intrinsic Feedback

You can improve your ability to receive intrinsic feedback by practicing mindfulness, or being present in the moment. Try this exercise: if you are sitting in front of your computer reading this article, let your arm hang down by your side and slowly rotate it in circles. Do this 5 times. Now take 5 deep breaths and as you breathe, bringing your awareness into your body. Continue breathing and focus on how your arm feels hanging by your side. Now rotate your arm once again. As you go through your 5 rotations, notice how your arm has to move through the space in order to execute the skill. Notice what your shoulder has to do in

order to rotate your arm. By taking the time to tune in your focus you are opening yourself up to receive the intrinsic feedback you need in order to improve any skill that you are working on.

Using Video

Many times we don't realize we are doing something wrong until we see it on the screen in front of us. Video is a great tool for supplementing intrinsic feedback.



Sometimes the use of video can be the most informative, and the most brutal, because the camera doesn't lie. During practice, video can be used in the moment while trying to learn how to properly execute a skill. Record yourself performing the skill and then watch it and evaluate any changes you need to

make. Video can also be used to see how an expert executes the skill so you know what you're trying to emulate. Watching video post-competition is a great way to review and critique performance. Watch your own performance, as well as the competition, to learn what works and what doesn't.

Feedback from others

"Oh no, here it comes." Anyone who has received constructive criticism has probably uttered those words. Feedback is sometimes hard to hear, especially if you are getting feedback on something that you take pride in; something that is important to you. Our ability to learn is directly related to the feedback we receive. If you really want to break through to the next level, go out and ask for some honest feedback. Ask your coach, teammates, family, and friends – even your competitors! (Check out the side panel for tips on how to ask for feedback!) Consider honest feedback to be the greatest gift you can receive as an athlete.

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