



# **THE ULTIMATE BASKETBALL QUOTE BOOK**



# **INTRODUCTION**

At Dr. Dish Basketball, we're always striving to provide the best resources for basketball coaches, players, and trainers to help accelerate skill development.

And we can all use a little extra motivation to push ourselves to be better every day.

That's why we developed the "Ultimate Basketball Quote Book" to provide expertise from the top coaches and players in the game all in one place.

We hope you use this guide to draw inspiration from some of the best and implement these quotes with your players in games and practices.

For any questions and/or feedback, please reach out to us at  
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***ALWAYS REMEMBER TO TRAIN HARD,  
TRAIN SMART, AND TRAIN WITH A PURPOSE***



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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<i>PERSEVERANCE</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING BIG GAME</i>	<b>7</b>
<i>TURNING YOUR CAPTAIN INTO A LEADER</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>QUOTES FROM HALL OF FAME COACHES</i>	<b>12</b>
<i>JUST LOST A TOUGH GAME</i>	<b>15</b>
<i>GOING THROUGH A SHOOTING SLUMP</i>	<b>18</b>
<i>10 QUOTES ALL COACHES SHOULD LIVE BY</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>BEING COACHABLE</i>	<b>25</b>
<i>ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS BY MAXIMIZING YOUR POTENTIAL</i>	<b>28</b>
<i>PREPARE FOR GREATNESS</i>	<b>30</b>
<i>BRAD STEVENS: MINDEST IS EVERYTHING</i>	<b>32</b>
<i>PREPARE TO WIN LIKE BOBBY KNIGHT</i>	<b>34</b>
<i>ENTHUSIASM AND POSITIVITY LEADS TO SUCCESS</i>	<b>36</b>
<i>BILL RUSSELL QUOTES FOR ON THE COURT</i>	<b>38</b>
<i>TENACITY</i>	<b>40</b>
<i>TEAM CAMARADERIE</i>	<b>43</b>
<i>OFFSEASON</i>	<b>46</b>





***PERSEVERANCE***

Basketball is not a stress-free sport: it necessitates physical and mental persistence and an indomitable conviction that success is possible. Encourage your players to push themselves by emphasizing that perseverance is what separates a player with potential from a player who achieves that potential.

It's essential that everyone in your program - players & coaches alike - understands that talent can only take you so far. In the end, the team that wants it more often ends up coming up with the majority of hustle plays. And many times, those hustle plays determine who wins the game.

Inspire your players with these basketball quotes that highlight the unbreakable drive inherent in so many basketball players and coaches.

***DON'T GIVE UP.  
DON'T EVER GIVE UP.***

*– COACH JIM VALVANO*

This emotionally charged basketball quote was spoken by the former North Carolina State Coach as he accepted the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage at the ESPY Awards. Grappling with a fatal cancer diagnosis, Valvano offered future generations of athletes the kind of hope by which he lived. Basketball is a game of courage, one that involves tireless physical, mental, and emotional effort, even in the wake of overwhelming odds and heartbreak. The drive to keep pushing forward even in the hardest of times is nurtured by the game of basketball, and that attitude has the power to be absorbed into an individual's mindset, just as it was for Valvano.

***I'VE MISSED MORE THAN 9,000 SHOTS IN MY CAREER. I'VE LOST ALMOST 300 GAMES. 26 TIMES, I'VE BEEN TRUSTED TO TAKE THE GAME WINNING SHOT AND MISSED. I'VE FAILED OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN MY LIFE.  
AND THAT IS WHY I SUCCEED.***

*– MICHAEL JORDAN*

Michael Jordan's incredible self-awareness and attention to the sheer magnitude of his failings showcases that even legends like Jordan aren't perfect. Jordan emphasizes his failures not to beat up on himself, but to reveal that success and talent do not develop overnight: they are the culmination of constant failed attempts and the adjustments and improvements that follow.

***THE GAME HONORS  
TOUGHNESS***

*– COACH BRAD STEVENS*

Basketball is a game that demands physical, mental, and emotional toughness. Players can build toughness through perseverance. The physical pain of collisions and injury, the emotional pain of losing, and the mental strain of having opponents and crowds look for ways to undermine your team's performance are all demanding aspects of the game. The difference between coaches and players who let the pressure overtake them and those who let it toughen them is perseverance. Pushing past barriers and strengthening resolve, time and time again, is what allows players to become more resilient and confident. And the game honors them for it.

**ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THINGS IN LIFE,  
YOU DEFINITELY GROW MORE COMFORTABLE WITH YOURSELF.**

**TO PERSEVERE AND HANG IN  
THERE AND BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.**

– STEVE NASH

As a coach or a player, it's hard not to take your role personally. You've poured not only your talent, but parts of yourself into basketball, and a failure in a game is easily seen as a personal failing. There's comfort to be found in all the hard moments teams and individuals face: the reactions from opposing crowds, the lost games, and the days nothing seems to go right. In the process, athletes and those who inspire them learn how to move on after a rough period, to believe that they have the potential to do better, and not to let any experience rob them of the conviction that they have the ability to achieve phenomenal feats.

**IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WORKING HARD,  
IT'S ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER.**

**YOU HAVE TO CARE MORE ABOUT THE TEAM  
THAN YOU DO ABOUT YOURSELF.**

– COACH JOHN CALIPARI

Perseverance has a team dynamic, as Kentucky Coach Calipari has seen from his years of exceptional instructing. No one should have to carry a team on their back. A huge part of pushing through a season and doing your best no matter what involves caring about the team. That's an important lesson for coaches to stress. You persevere not only out of personal strength, but out of consideration for your team, because they're continuing to train and give all their effort for you as well.

# ***PREPARE FOR THE BIG GAME***





A signature win is so close for your basketball program that you can almost taste it. This next game will show the world what your team is made of. But, the last practice was shaky and you're sensing that your players don't understand the significance of preparing for this game.

You know this team has the physical ability to compete with their opponent, but you're not sure if they believe it. It's time to reach into your coaching bag of tricks and pull out some inspiration for your players. No matter how many suicides or basketball shooting drills they run, they won't be ready until they get their heads right.

HERE ARE FIVE INSPIRATIONAL BASKETBALL QUOTES TO HELP YOU PUT YOUR PLAYERS' MENTAL GAME ON POINT.

**YOU HAVE TO EXPECT THINGS OF YOURSELF  
BEFORE YOU CAN DO THEM.**

– MICHAEL JORDAN

This short statement holds an ocean of wisdom. It demands your players visualize success. It forces them to provide the details of their own success in their minds and what that success looks like. It's amazing how powerful expecting to succeed can be.

**WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO.  
EXCELLENCE THEN,  
IS NOT AN ACT, BUT A HABIT.**

– ARISTOTLE

This ancient Greek proverb has held its truth for thousands of years. It does triple duty for your team by encouraging players to believe in the system, promises excellence for their involvement, and letting them know their own hard work, not some magic act of faith, will make them better.

**TODAY I WILL DO WHAT OTHERS WON'T,  
SO TOMORROW I CAN  
ACCOMPLISH WHAT OTHERS CAN'T.**

– JERRY RICE

Simply work harder is the message of this quote. It offers a glimpse into the mind of someone who understands and is willing to do what it takes to achieve his athletic goals. Better still, it implies that anyone who won't go that extra distance is preparing for a competitive loss. This will help your players understand the importance of pushing themselves especially after tough practices and it helps players view winning as the logical result of their hard work.



***IT'S NOT THE WILL TO WIN THAT MATTERS—EVERYONE HAS THAT.  
IT'S THE WILL TO PREPARE  
TO WIN THAT MATTERS.***

*– PAUL “BEAR” BRYANT*

This quote helps players understand the importance of mental strength in competition. By acknowledging how commonplace the 'will to win' is, it takes the focus off the upcoming game and forces them to expand their definition of what they need to do to successfully compete. It helps them understand that winning isn't a strategy, it's a result. And that result depends on planning, collective effort, and discipline.

***IF YOU DO NOT HAVE TIME TO DO IT RIGHT,  
WHEN WILL YOU FIND THE  
TIME TO DO IT OVER?***

*– JOHN WOODEN*

This gem gets to the heart of competition. The athlete who's worked harder on their fundamentals -- talent being equal -- will usually win the contest. But, it's not just a call to get the mechanics right, it's an admonition to respect the time spent perfecting the skill. Time is limited so do your best to get it right so you can move on to other skills.

Use these basketball quotes to guide your players through the mental minefield of big game preparation and, if all goes well, be ready for a noisy and happy locker room when it's over. Good luck!

# ***TURN YOUR CAPTAIN INTO A LEADER***



When you selected your captain, the pride in your young player's eyes made you smile. You've just set him on a lifelong journey. The weight of that "captain" title will weigh on him years after his career is done. But it will weigh on you as soon as he accepts it. To ease your burden, we offer you three of the absolute best quotes to turn your captain into a leader.

As his coach, you saw a spark that set him apart from his peers. It may have roots in his physical talents, but the reason he was selected captain is because you and your team believe he will accurately represent your program. He'll be able to react quickly under pressure and inspire better courses of action. He'll be respectful to referees that haven't earned it and he'll understand that losing – painful as it is – is a part of the process.

That's a young man you want to lead your team. Your goal is to place tools in front of him that he can use for his own personal growth. From now on, the hardwood court isn't the end of his journey, it's just the start.

**LEADERSHIP IS DIVING FOR A LOOSE BALL.  
IT'S ABOUT BEING ABLE TO TAKE IT AS WELL AS DISH IT OUT.  
THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU'RE GOING TO GET  
RESPECT FROM OTHER PLAYERS**

– LARRY BIRD

The quote describes servant leadership – not asking for more than you're prepared to give. An added bonus is Bird brings up respect, which is crucial to any cooperative success. While many leaders are thought of as vocal, leading by example can be even more impactful. Once your captain is able to sacrifice for the good of the team, he will be one heck of a leader.

**YOU CAN'T LET PRAISE OR CRITICISM GET TO YOU.  
IT'S WEAKNESS TO GET CAUGHT UP IN EITHER ONE.**

– JOHN WOODEN

There are even many adults who have yet to learn that lesson. Still, it's important for your captain to understand compliments and criticism are two sides of the same distracting coin. Wooden doesn't suggest ignoring either. He simply says not to 'get caught up' emotionally. Some criticism is true – use it to improve. Some compliments are false -- look for the motives behind them. And most importantly, don't let either change your mindset as a leader.

**I ALWAYS MEAN WHAT I SAY,  
BUT I DON'T ALWAYS SAY WHAT I'M THINKING.**

– DEAN SMITH

It's the mark of a true leader that he or she holds something in reserve as the situation unfolds. It speaks to depth and discipline. The benefits of having your captain understand this quote is two-fold. First, he will understand your thinking and why you coach the way you do. Second, he will understand that being a great leader may require him to refrain from ALWAYS saying what is on his mind.



# ***QUOTES FROM HALL OF FAME COACHES***



In its 100+ years of existence, the sport of basketball has seen its share of coaching greats. This inventive bunch has transformed the game into the fast-paced global sport it is today.

Every superstar in every era and at every level saw his or her legacy strengthened by his head coach. Though they don't score the points or play defense, coaches set the foundation for success. Some have been wildly inventive offensive minds, while others are defensive geniuses, but all of them know how to mold players into cohesive, winning units. If you want to learn the deepest lessons about winning basketball and championship teams, you could do worse than listen to the advice the best coaches in the NBA and NCAA D1 have to offer.

Listed below are quotes from eight Hall of Fame coaches, six with the greatest number of wins at their level and the two – one from the NBA and one major college coach -- with the most championships.

Listen and learn from the greatest -- the Zen Master, Coach K, the General, the Wizard of Westwood and their illustrious peers. Each is speaking in his own voice about the subtleties of team chemistry and winning basketball games. And, boy, do they know how to win.

BETWEEN THESE EIGHT MEN, THEY'VE WON 30 CHAMPIONSHIPS AND 8,501 GAMES.

**GOALS SHOULD BE REALISTIC, ATTAINABLE,  
AND SHARED AMONG  
ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM.**

- MIKE KRZYZEWSKI  
1016 WINS, 4 NATIONAL TITLES

**THE KEY IS NOT THE WILL TO WIN...  
EVERYBODY HAS THAT.  
IT IS THE WILL TO PREPARE TO WIN  
THAT IS IMPORTANT.**

-BOB KNIGHT  
889 WINS, 3 NATIONAL TITLES

**WHAT TO DO WITH A MISTAKE -  
RECOGNIZE IT, ADMIT IT, LEARN FROM IT,  
FORGET IT.**

- DEAN SMITH  
879 WINS, 2 NATIONAL TITLES

**FOR ACHIEVEMENT THAT IS MOST IMPORTANT.**

- JOHN WOODEN,  
664 WINS, 10 NATIONAL TITLES

**REMEMBER, RESULTS AREN'T  
THE CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS —  
IT'S THE EFFORT MADE**

-JOHN WOODEN  
664 WINS, 10 NATIONAL TITLES

**YOU HAVE A LOT OF UPS AND DOWNS IN COACHING, BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER ANY  
BAD TIMES AT THIS POINT. I MEAN, THEY'RE ALL GOOD. A LOT OF TEARS WHEN  
YOU LOSE, A LOT OF DOWN TIMES, BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER ANY OF THEM.  
THEY'RE ALL POSITIVE NOW. EVEN THE BAD  
TIMES WERE GOOD.**

- DON NELSON  
1335 WINS

**IF YOU CAN'T GO THROUGH IT, FIND A WAY AROUND IT.  
DON'T SPEND ALL YOUR TIME  
BANGING YOUR HEAD.**

- LENNY WILKENS  
1332 WINS, 1 CHAMPIONSHIP

**HEART IS WHAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.**

- JERRY SLOAN  
1221 WINS

**I THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT COACHING IS THAT  
YOU HAVE TO HAVE A SENSE OF CONFIDENCE  
ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING.**

- PHIL JACKSON  
1155 WINS, 11 CHAMPIONSHIPS

# ***10 BASKETBALL QUOTES AFTER A TOUGH LOSS***



In a big game against your biggest rival, your basketball team played like champions – and came up empty with a tough loss. As their fans scream with joy you and your staff escort your kids with their head's down to the locker room.

Your job is to make sure this loss doesn't crush their spirits. Of course, you'll use your own words, but don't neglect the wisdom of accomplished sports figures who have also lost heartbreakers. There are thousands of them. After all, 50 percent of sports is about losing.

It is your job to be prepared to share the words and actions that will help your team recover quickly from what they see as a tragedy. You will demonstrate to your players how to accept the loss. Arguably, it's a coach's most important job.

According to sports psychologist Dr. Chris Stankovich, the first thing to do is emphasize the team's effort. Praise them – honestly – for what they did well. Then, he suggests you re-frame the experience; point out areas the team can improve on in the future; develop a short memory for losing and, finally, ask for input from your players. The 10 quotes listed on the next two pages take these suggestions into account and help you with the hardest part of your job.

**LOSING IS PART OF THE GAME.**

**IF YOU NEVER LOSE, YOU ARE NEVER TRULY  
TESTED, AND NEVER FORCED TO GROW.**

- DAVID SIRLIN

**FAILURE DOES NOT COME FROM LOSING,  
BUT FROM NOT TRYING.**

- LARRY BROWN

**SUCCESS IS NEVER FINAL. FAILURE IS NEVER FATAL.  
IT'S COURAGE THAT COUNTS.**

- JOHN WOODEN

**YOU HAVE NO CHOICES ABOUT HOW YOU LOSE,  
BUT YOU DO HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT HOW YOU  
COME BACK AND PREPARE TO WIN AGAIN.**

-PAT RILEY

**IT'S NOT WHETHER YOU GET KNOCKED DOWN;  
IT'S WHETHER YOU GET BACK UP.**

- VINCE LOMBARDI



**BAD THINGS DO HAPPEN; HOW YOU RESPOND TO THEM DEFINES YOUR CHARACTER AND THE QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE. YOU CAN CHOOSE TO SIT IN PERPETUAL SADNESS, IMMOBILIZED BY THE GRAVITY OF YOUR LOSS  
OR YOU CAN CHOOSE TO RISE FROM THE PAIN...**

- WALTER ANDERSON

**THE HARDEST SKILL TO ACQUIRE IN THIS SPORT IS THE ONE WHERE YOU COMPETE ALL OUT, GIVE IT ALL YOU HAVE, AND YOU ARE STILL GETTING BEAT NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO.  
WHEN YOU HAVE THE KILLER INSTINCT TO FIGHT THROUGH THAT, IT IS VERY SPECIAL.**

- EDDIE REESE

**NEVER GIVE UP, NEVER GIVE IN, AND WHEN THE UPPER HAND IS OURS, MAY WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO HANDLE THE WIN WITH THE DIGNITY WITH WHICH WE ABSORBED THIS LOSS.**

- DOUG WILLIAMS

**DO YOU KNOW WHAT MY FAVORITE PART OF THE GAME IS?  
THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY.**

- MIKE SINGLETARY

**LOSING IS ONLY TEMPORARY AND NOT ALL ENCOMPASSING. YOU MUST SIMPLY STUDY IT, LEARN FROM IT, AND TRY HARD NOT TO LOSE THE SAME WAY AGAIN.  
THEN YOU MUST HAVE THE SELF-CONTROL TO FORGET ABOUT IT.**

- JOHN WOODEN

Use these 10 quotes when your team's spirit is on the brink and remember, you are in good company. Name any of the greatest basketball coaches of all time - Wooden, Smith, Summitt, Auerbach, Auriemma, Riley, Jackson - and each of them has faced the same kind of sorrow in front of you. Their teams rebounded back from defeats to do amazing things. Your team can, too.



***GET OUT  
OF A SHOOTING  
SLUMP***

You weren't sure, but your last ice-cold outing is the final proof. Shots you used to sink with ease are now clanging off the rim. It's clear...you're in a shooting slump. You're beginning to second-guess yourself and your shot. But all top level players like Stephen Curry, LeBron James, and Kevin Durant all agree: mental toughness is critical to shooting success.

Nothing presents more of a mental challenge than a shooting slump. Every basketball player has them. The great ones learn from them.

## EVEN FIVE OF THE GREATEST SHOOTERS IN BASKETBALL HISTORY HAVE GONE THROUGH SHOOTING SLUMPS. HERE ARE LESSONS THEY LEARNED AS THEY CLAWED BACK TO GREATNESS.

### ***KEEP YOUR MECHANICS CONSISTENT.***

*-KYLE KORVER*

Atlanta's Korver was on pace for a historic 2014-15 NBA season. He was going to be first to crack the 50-50-90 club – 50% from the floor, 50% from 3-point range and 90% from the free throw line. But, poor late season shooting derailed it. His fix was a deep understanding of the mechanics of his shot.

"I'm a firm believer that if your body is working correctly and you shoot it the same way every time, you're able to minimize those kinds of shooting slumps."

### ***WATCH THE WEIGHT LIFTING.***

*-STEPH CURRY*

Before revolutionizing shooting in the NBA, Stephen Curry was a first-round draft pick who wasn't hitting his pre-season jump shots. Coach Don Nelson planned to limit his rookie's minutes because of poor shooting. Nelson advised Curry to cut back on weight lifting. "Your triceps are very important in shooting," Nelson said. "If you're fatigued because of too much lifting or you're not used to it [your shot may suffer]."

### ***PUT IN EXTRA SHOOTING DRILLS.***

*-LARRY BIRD*

Boston's former superstar, Larry Legend, is credited, along Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan, with jumpstarting the modern NBA. Of the three, Bird was regarded as the best shooter. So, when Bird had off nights his remedy was extra shooting practice. "I don't have the skills a lot of the players do," he said. "I have to go out and shoot that extra hour." Whether this is before, during, or after practice, make sure you're training your shot at game speed.

## ***'SHOOT LIKE THERE'S NO SLUMP.'***

*-REGGIE MILLER*

Reggie Miller never led the Indiana Pacers to the NBA championship in his 18-year career, but his ungainly shot always kept them in the chase. "Reggie Miller's answer to every shooting slump he has ever had has been to keep shooting," said sportswriter Steve Herman. "Again and again and again. As long as it takes." Miller was the epitome of confidence in his 18-year career. He was known for long-distance daggers and breaking the hearts of NY Knicks fans. What he didn't have was a classically lovely jumper. Former Golden State coach Mark Jackson said, "If I had a shooting coach with Reggie Miller when he was a kid, they would've changed his shot, told him he'd never be a shooter, and corrected him probably a hundred times."

## ***DON'T CHANGE FOR CHANGES SAKE.***

*-RAY ALLEN*

Allen is the most prolific 3-point shooter in NBA history, a game-changer whose jumper secured a championship for the Miami Heat. He advises shooters to think long-term success. Whether you shoot well or poorly, he says, stick to your routine. "If you're working hard," he said, "the averages are going to average out. I don't get too excited about shots I make because I'm supposed to make them. I'm more perplexed when I don't make it."

Getting out of your slump may require a mental adjustment or a few more hours on the basketball shooting machine. However you solve it – and you will – the effort will make you a better basketball player and shooter. Use these basketball quotes to accelerate that process.



# ***10 QUOTES EVERY COACH SHOULD LIVE BY***



Coaches have a tremendous impact on the lives of their players. The interactions I had with my middle school basketball coach are still very vivid today and I still employ some of the lessons he taught me about the value of hard work to this today.

As the summer comes to a close and basketball season gets closer every day, it is a good idea to take a minute to remind yourself that it's not just about winning enough games to make the state tournament.

**A COACH IS SOMEONE WHO CAN GIVE  
CORRECTION WITHOUT CAUSING RESENTMENT.**

- JOHN WOODEN

Almost all of us can think of a coach or PE teacher that we've had that seemed more like a Drill Sergeant than a Coach. They were hard, and typically yelled and most, if not all of their players, were fearful of them. There is nothing wrong with being a tough coach. Coaches like Bobby Knight have made a career out of being tough. However, they commanded respect, rather than resentment, because they were focused more on correcting flaws through tough love, rather than abusing their position of power to demand obedience.

**ATHLETES NEED TO ENJOY THEIR TRAINING. THEY DON'T ENJOY GOING DOWN TO  
THE TRACK WITH A COACH MAKING THEM DO REPS UNTIL THEY'RE EXHAUSTED.  
FROM ENJOYMENT COMES THE WILL TO WIN.**

- ARTHUR LYDIARD

Never forget that the reason we play or coach a sport is because we genuinely enjoy the game. At the end of the day, players join the team because they love the game of basketball. As a coach, it is your job to be able to find a balance between having fun and working hard. If you can do this, your players will be willing to run through a brick wall for you.

**BEST COACHES NEVER TELL THEIR ATHLETES THAT THEY ARE WRONG.  
THEY RATHER FOCUS ON  
CREATING AWARENESS.**

- ABHISHEK RATNA

Coaching is much more than pointing out when someone does something wrong. You have to be able to find a way to not only show your players what they did wrong, but also what they can do to fix it; all without belittling them in the process.

There will be times when the situation seems unavoidable and the player might feel embarrassed. That is part of the process. It only becomes a problem if you do not use that moment as an opportunity to teach the player how to not make the same mistake again.

**MENTORSHIP IS SIMPLY LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES AND  
MASTERY OF A SUCCESSFUL PERSON IN HIS/HER FIELD.**

*-BERNARD KELVIN CLIVE*

Try not to forget that even though it might have been decades ago, there was a time that you didn't know how to shoot a ball or how to set a screen. Someone had to teach you. When you were playing, you made mistakes as well. But you learned from them and now have the ability to teach others how to avoid the mistakes that you made.

On the other side of that, there were things that you were good at as a player that you have most likely made a point of emphasis in your coaching philosophy. Just remember that someone taught you how to develop those skills as well.

**TO TRULY MOTIVATE OTHERS  
DISCOVER WHAT THEIR MOTIVES, DESIRES AND DRIVERS ARE AND GENUINELY  
CONNECT WITH AND SUPPORT THEM FROM THE HEART.**

*- RASHEED OGUNLARU*

Get to know your players. Understand where they are coming from and why they want to play the game of basketball above anything else. Not only does this instill more confidence in them that you are a good coach, it will show them that you truly care about them. This will allow you to find the best way to motivate individuals and get them to trust that you have the ability to make them a better basketball player.

**GREAT LEADERS DEVELOP THROUGH A NEVER ENDING PROCESS OF  
SELF-STUDY, SELF-REFLECTION, EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE**

*- TONY BUON*

Red Auerbach and Phil Jackson, two of the most successful NBA coaches of all time, are known for a specific style of coaching and had a tendency to play the same style of play regardless of the talent level or style of players on their roster. However, this does not mean that they stopped learning about new techniques and coaching philosophies.

The bottom line here is that you should not become complacent. You should never stop searching for new ways to improve your coaching skills. Don't hang your hat on the fact that you won a league, division, or tournament last year. Always be looking for ways to keep improving.

**WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY THAT ONLY EMBRACES SUCCESS, THAT IS WHO WE ARE.  
IT TAKES A GREAT DEAL OF INNER STRENGTH  
TO DEAL WITH THE TIME COMMITMENT OF COACHING  
WHEN VERY LITTLE SEEMS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.**

*- GEORGE M. GILBERT*

Games are won and lost during practice. In order to put your team in a position to win the big game, you must develop your teams ability to execute your game plan during practice. It is not glamorous, and it isn't what the parents, boosters and fans care about, but if you want to win on game day, you and your players have to put in the work in practice.

**BEFORE SUCCESS CAN TRULY BECOME ROUTINE, THERE MUST BE THAT  
TRANSITION FROM THAT WANTING/HOPING TO HAVE SUCCESS TOWARD  
HONESTLY KNOWING YOU CAN EARN SUCCESS  
WITH YOUR TALENTS AND WORK ETHIC.**

- GEORGE M. GILBERT

Entering my Sophomore year of high school, my team had lost 27 consecutive games. A new coach came in and from day one, all he talked about was a state championship. With almost every starter from the previous year coming back, the team was almost identical. We made it to the state semifinals that year. The only difference was a coach that made us truly believe that we not only had the ability to compete with teams, but had the ability to beat them. Do your best to show your players that you have confidence in them and you will be amazed at what they can accomplish.

**WINNING TAKES A GAME PLAN AND  
THAT'S WHERE A GREAT COACH COMES IN.  
HE HAS TO HAVE THE VISION. HE HAS TO BE THE ARCHITECT AND DESIGN A  
PARTICULAR STYLE OF PLAY THAT HIS PLAYERS CAN WORK TOGETHER AND  
EXCEL AT. THE GREAT CELTICS TEAMS THAT WON 11 CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE  
SPAN OF 13 SEASONS (1957-69) NEVER CHANGED THEIR SYSTEM. THEY PLAYED  
THE SAME GAME REGARDLESS OF WHO THEIR CAST WAS.**

- WALT FRAZIER

Red Auerbach won 11 championships in 13 years because he figured out how to utilize his TEAM in the most efficient way possible. For most of their championship seasons, the Celtics did not have a player that finished the season in the top 10 in scoring, but all five starters averaged double digit point totals for the season.

Phil Jackson, who won 11 championships in 20 seasons with his famous triangle offense, was able to dominate the NBA in multiple decades by finding players that would fit his system the best. Of course having Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal didn't hurt, but he still had to develop a game plan that would allow them to play within the system.

**"...THIS WAS THE THING WITH COACHING: YOU HAD  
TO STEP BACK AT EXACTLY THE MOMENT  
YOU ACHED TO STEP FORWARD.**

- CHRIS CLEAVE

# ***BEING COACHABLE***





There will come a time during the season - most likely during a critical moment of a big game - when you won't be able to call a timeout to draw up the perfect play. What your players do in that moment will show you how well you've coached them. Your job as a coach is to teach your players what to do in the moments when the opposing team hits a shot to go up by one with 20 seconds left and you have no timeouts.

When you really get down to it, you became a coach because you love the game of basketball and you love to see others develop that same love of the game.

**ALWAYS KEEP THAT IN MIND. IF YOU DO, YOUR PLAYERS, YOUR PROGRAM AND YOUR SCHOOL WILL BENEFIT FROM IT.**

***MY BEST SKILL WAS THAT I WAS COACHABLE.  
I WAS A SPONGE AND AGGRESSIVE TO LEARN.***

*- MICHAEL JORDAN*

It is widely recognized that Michael Jordan is one of the most skilled players to have ever played in the NBA. Of all the skills he had, (post moves, ability to drive to the basket, his defense, his obsessive competitiveness and work ethic) Jordan himself states that his greatest skill was his coachability. He knew that by soaking up as much knowledge about the sport for every direction that he could, he would be able to use that knowledge when it came down to crunch time. One could argue that his coachability helped him to transform from a kid that once didn't make his high school varsity basketball team, into one of the greatest athletes the sport has ever seen.

***AS AN ATHLETE YOU HAVE TO BE COACHABLE.  
AND BEING COACHABLE IS A HUMBLING THING.***

*- RASHAD EVANS*

When you think of words to describe an athlete that has made it to the top of their game, humble isn't necessarily a word you think of. However, Rashad Evans, a member of the Mixed Martial Arts Hall of Fame, states that one of the keys to his success was humbling himself enough to become coachable.

It's not always easy for someone who is one of the best athletes in their profession to take advice from someone who is not currently, or may never have been as accomplished as them. But just because someone may not have the same athletic ability as you doesn't mean that their mind isn't designed for this game. Look at Gregg Poppovich as an example. As a basketball player, he was not selected to play for Team USA in the 1972, but he has just been selected to coach Team USA in the 2020 Olympics after coaching the San Antonio Spurs to 5 NBA Championships during his tenure. It goes to show that while your coach might not be able to jump as high as you, your coach has years of experience that will improve your game tremendously. Make sure to pay attention.

***YOU MUST ALWAYS BE THE APPRENTICE.  
EVEN WHEN YOU BECOME THE MASTER.***

*- CHRISTOPHER CUMBY*

As mentioned earlier, Michael Jordan emphasized that learning and staying coachable throughout his career allowed him to become the player he was. In 1991, Jordan was the league leader in points per game, voted season MVP, won his first title and was voted Finals MVP. It would have been easy for him to think that he had mastered his sport, but he continued to be coachable and went on to dominate the league for almost a decade afterwards.

***TO SUCCEED...AT ANYTHING, YOU HAVE TO PREPARE YOURSELF.  
THAT MEANS YOU HAVE TO BE OPEN,  
BE COACHABLE, AND WILLING TO LEARN.***

*- TAMMI FUGITT*

If you take one thing away from this chapter, I want it to be this: The only way to be coachable is to humble yourself and accept that others can help you improve. You cannot come in with the mindset of someone who believes that they are naturally talented and only need to tweak the little stuff. Even if you are talented and you really do only need to focus on tweaking the little stuff, don't approach it that way. If you can approach every practice with the enthusiasm and attentiveness that you had when you went to your first basketball camp, you'll be amazed at the improvements in your game.



***ACHIEVE YOUR  
GOALS BY  
MAXIMIZING YOUR  
POTENTIAL***

Jim Valvano is a man that lived his life to the fullest. Not only was he known for his great coaching, but he was also known for his dedication, motivation and joy for the game of basketball. Coach Valvano had the unique ability to pull out the best in his players and every single one of his players would have run through a wall for him. These two basketball quotes below sum up the mindset and willingness a player must have going into the off-season. To be great you must be willing to do more than even what you think you are capable of.

**THERE ARE 86,400 SECONDS IN A DAY.  
IT'S UP TO YOU TO DECIDE  
WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.**

- JIM VALVANO

Athletes tend to value their training time more and more as they get older. Younger players are often times learning the very basics and just learning to love basketball. A player won't really understand the value of training until they hit some type of adversity. When that adversity hits, the reality of not achieving a personal goal becomes a reality and that usually kicks players into full drive. The sooner a player has the desire to take their training to the next level, they will give themselves the opportunity to make their goals a reality and also achieve things they never thought possible.

Ultimately it's the player's choice if they want to maximize their full potential. Jim Valvano's quote above sums up, down to seconds, the amount of time you have to train and become the best you can be each day. Sacrifices and tough decisions will be made, but if you put in the time and effort, the results will take care of themselves.

Each person that walks this earth has the opportunity to present and be the best version of themselves each day. High school and college athletes often have bad days at school or are tired from the previous night's practice. Some times the stress of a game or practice may be a deterrent from a player showing what they truly have. The great and most successful players understand that some of these things are out of their control and that they need to focus on what they can control and also continue to work hard everyday!

**HOW DO YOU GO FROM WHERE YOU ARE TO WHERE YOU WANT TO BE? I THINK YOU  
HAVE TO HAVE AN ENTHUSIASM FOR LIFE. YOU HAVE TO HAVE A DREAM, A GOAL,  
AND YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO WORK FOR IT.**

- JIM VALVANO

The easiest thing for a player to do is set goals. Almost every basketball player will say their goal is to play varsity basketball, college basketball or play in the NBA/WNBA. That should be one of the goals a player has because that's the ultimate goal for most. The part that is difficult is the planning, purpose, enthusiasm, sacrifice and dedication. The process in reaching a goal takes patience and time. Many players want to go from a 12 year old basketball player to the NBA in a day and that's not how it works. There are many obstacles and smaller goals that must be achieved before achieving that ultimate goal. The most important thing to remember is that in anything you do, you have to work hard and you must be willing to sacrifice more than the person you're competing against!

# ***PREPARE FOR GREATNESS***

*BY COACH MASON*





The game of basketball continues to evolve and we want coaches and players to have all the tools necessary to accomplish the goals they set for themselves. Greatness is often times right around the corner but it takes effort and energy to get there.

Preparing for greatness happens throughout the year but especially following the season when everyone has an understanding on what needs to be done to become better. One thing that sets great players apart from the rest is the type of mindset they carry into every practice and every game. Outside factors can affect some players on court performance and not being mentally prepared can ultimately cost a game. Coaches preach staying focused and being mentally stronger than your opponent because these play a major part in becoming a champion on and off the court.

These two basketball quotes below sum up a few characteristics that Dr. Dish is synonymous with and these quotes will definitely hit home for players and make them want to compete each and every day.

***I TREAT EVERYDAY LIKE IT'S  
MY LAST DAY WITH A BASKETBALL.***

*- LEBRON JAMES*

I personally love this quote because it's something that I lived by. I always had the feeling an mindset that someone, somewhere around the world was working to be a better player than me. I knew that if I didn't treat everyday like it was my last, I would take days off and I would never fully reach my potential. Many people live each day assuming they have another and basketball is the same way. Injuries and opportunity can halt or end a career and most of the time these things happen when least expected. This is why it's important to enjoy every practice and every memory on the court even when you are having rough or off days.

Majority of young players have the aspiration to become college or professional players. The only way that dream can become a reality is if the time and hard work is put in. Almost every college and professional player will tell you they spent countless hours and days in the gym. It truly is a sacrifice if you want to become the best and have success. If you treat every day like it's your last on the court, then you will develop a love for the game that will take your game to new heights.

***THOSE WHO WORK THE HARDEST  
ARE THE LAST TO SURRENDER.***

*-RICK PITINO*

I can remember my college coach telling me that I needed to get through the figurative wall that was stopping me from taking my conditioning to the next level. I'd get to a point where I was extremely tired and then would sometimes dial it back and take plays off. I can tell you this did not sit well with my coach and at that level it was impossible to do that and win games. My coach would continue to push me and tell me to get over that wall because when I did, I would take my game to the next level and I would be that much closer to reaching my full potential.

Rick Pitino's quote embodies a warrior and a winners mentality. When I was playing professionally, I wanted to know that the guys on the court with me were willing to give everything they had to win. That feeling was contagious and mentally prepared us for any challenge and any team that stepped on the court. Players that give in and won't battle when things get tough in practice are typically the first to bow out when it's game time. The players that work the hardest are willing to sacrifice the most for the team and are usually the ones coaches can count on the most. Sometimes the sheer ability to outlast and out work your opponent can be the driving factor in a win.



# ***BRAD STEVENS: MINDSET IS EVERYTHING***

*BY COACH MASON*

## MAKE SURE WHEN YOU STEP ON THE COURT YOU ARE THE HARDEST WORKER BECAUSE THEN YOUR OPPONENT KNOWS YOU WON'T GIVE UP AND THAT YOU'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN

Brad Stevens has become one of the most respected coaches among his peers and players. He has a unique approach to the game and his philosophies have gotten his players to really buy into the team aspect of the game.

## BUILDING THE TEAM FROM THE INSIDE OUT AND HOLDING EVERYONE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THAT IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS.

**THE KEY IS TO MAINTAIN AN EVENNESS.  
TRY TO PLAY ONE POSSESSION AT A TIME,  
REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENED ON THE LAST POSSESSION**

- BRAD STEVENS

One characteristic that everyone can agree Brad Stevens exemplifies is patience and remaining even keel. You will rarely see him go crazy on the sidelines and most of the time if he does, it's because he's defending one of his players. The game of basketball is made up of many plays and if you focus too much on one possession, you can cost your team the game. The team that makes the least amount of mistakes and can bounce back from the plays that have already occurred will always give themselves a chance to win a game. Oftentimes a huge dunk or a big play will get the crowd going and the opposite team flustered which can be game changers. The teams that can stay even and understand it's just one play will be the ones who can win in any situation on the road or at home.

**YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE WHEN YOU'RE NOT PLAYING.  
EITHER YOU'RE INVESTED AND A GREAT TEAMMATE, OR YOU'RE NOT**

- BRAD STEVENS

One of the toughest things to deal with as a player is sitting on the bench or being injured. Every player wants to get playing time and be a factor on the court. Unfortunately, there are only so many minutes to give out. One thing that Brad Stevens emphasizes is helping your team even if you're not on the court. This can mean holding yourself to a higher standard off the court or in your personal life and it also can refer to actually sitting on the bench during games. Team support and camaraderie are characteristics of championship teams and that includes every player on a team. You can always tell the demeanor of a player by how they look on the bench. When I watch basketball games I often see players uninterested or not cheering for their teammates when they are on the bench. Those players are oftentimes the negative ones in the locker room as well. Great coaches will make sure to straighten that out or ultimately make the decision to replace that player for the well being of the team. Make sure you are not the player on or off the bench that portrays yourself this way.

Never be satisfied at where you are as a player and continue to work hard but always be a supportive and positive teammate! To be a successful team and player, you need more than skill and athleticism. Great players must be able to think the game, be willing to prepare, be focused, and consistent with what they do. Both coaches and players need to make sure to practice good habits so that it's second nature come game time.



# ***PREPARE TO WIN LIKE BOBBY KNIGHT***

*BY COACH MASON*



Everybody wants to win but success doesn't come from luck, it comes from preparation and hard work. Great opportunities only come around every once in a while, so when they do you must make sure that you are fully capable and ready to take on the challenge. Every coach and player's legacy is built in the off season when no one is around or looking. The blood, sweat and tears that come with pushing through a tough practice week are what makes champions. Sacrificing time and energy is what it takes to become the player that you envision yourself to be.

***THE KEY IS NOT THE 'WILL TO WIN'...***  
***EVERYBODY HAS THAT. IT IS THE WILL TO  
PREPARE TO WIN THAT IS IMPORTANT.***

*- BOB KNIGHT*

Success is fun and anyone in athletics knows the feeling of finishing a game and looking up to see your team on the winning side. I don't think you can find one athlete that doesn't like to win or doesn't have the desire to win. Even though most or all athletes want to win, that doesn't necessarily make them winners or equal success. Coach Bob Knight emphasizes that the will to prepare to win is the most important part when it comes to winning. As a coach I can ask 10 basketball players right now if they want to win and be successful and all 10 players would reply with a resounding "yes." But if I followed that up with telling them they needed to show up for 5am sprints or needed to sacrifice significant time, effort, and energy, likely most of those players would probably say, "No thanks."

Coaches provide scouting reports to players which help them have an edge on their opponent, but simply having this report doesn't give you the edge. You have to sacrifice your time to study it, find weaknesses in your opponent, figure out their game plan so that you are properly prepared to win. Preparation needs to be executed properly on and off the court before there is any chance for success.

***DISCIPLINE IS DOING WHAT HAS TO BE DONE,  
WHEN IT HAS TO BE DONE, AS WELL AS IT CAN  
BE DONE, AND DOING IT THAT WAY ALL THE  
TIME.***

*- BOB KNIGHT*

Consistency is key when it comes to success in basketball. Players have to buy in with what coaches are selling and they have to believe in the process set forth. Teams that continually make mistakes tend to be unsuccessful. Usually mistakes come from a lack of discipline and forgetting offensive and defensive assignments.

Coach Knight's quote really sums up how players should approach every practice and every game they play in. Your goal is to be the best version of you on the court and to make sure you are consistent with your responsibility and role within the team. When teams win championships, one of the first things coaches will talk about is the discipline the team exhibited and how they executed the game plan properly.

There are so many pieces that must be in place to win games or be successful throughout a season. As a player and/or coach you have to practice great habits all the time so that it become second nature when you hit the court.





# **ENTHUSIASM AND POSITIVITY LEADS TO SUCCESS**

*BY COACH MASON*

The excitement of a new season can be a mixture of positive and uneasy feelings for players and coaches. A new season brings the opportunity for change and a new start. It only takes a few games into the season to see mentally and physically where your team is at and/or where you stand as a player. The hope is to always start the season strong with wins but that's not always the case. When things aren't going as expected, it's hard to stay motivated at practice at times. The two basketball quotes below speak volumes to coaches and players alike in how to approach each game and practice opportunity.

***I WILL NOT LET ANYTHING GET IN THE WAY OF ME  
AND MY COMPETITIVE ENTHUSIASM TO WIN.***

*- MICHAEL JORDAN*

Michael Jordan is considered to be the best basketball player to ever play the game. His ability to go above and beyond was astounding. The stories of how he competed against opponents and teammates is a testament to the mindset he had which brought him success on and off the basketball court. Jordan has become legendary in so many ways and continues to motivate players even though he retired from the game many years ago. Michael Jordan was known for being unbelievably competitive and the desire to win consumed him. He knew that not only did he have to lead by example, but he had to push his teammates to develop the same mindset he had. Jordan never took a day off and would make sure that if you were on the court with him, you wouldn't either. I know as a former player how contagious it is to see your best player work hard and lead by example. There are so many outside factors that may limit your ability to enjoy the game of basketball or limit your ability to come and practice at the highest level everyday.

I can remember not feeling well some days or being disappointed in my performance the day prior and this would lead me to be mentally defeated before I even started that days practice. That mindset didn't allow me to get the most out of that day on the court and ultimately hurt my team. Each player is a piece of a puzzle which is the team and when everyone comes together as one, it becomes a masterpiece. Winning is more than trophies and accolades. When you win, you know that you practiced harder then your opponent and as a team proved you had more of what it takes to win than your opponent. Knowing that you prepared and executed your teams game plan and then delivered a win to all your fans watching is a feeling that's indescribable and insatiable feeling.

***WHEN IT COMES TO TEAM DYNAMICS,  
ON A BASKETBALL COURT OR IN A CORPORATE SETTING,  
MAINTAINING A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE IS CRUCIAL.***

*- RICK PITINO*

In my career, I played for many teams and I was fortunate to play on some really good teams and have a lot of success. Even though I enjoyed many successful seasons, I also have had a few rough seasons. Naturally it's pretty easy to stay positive when you're winning games and playing good basketball. On the flip side, when you have a bad season negativity can spread like a bad cold throughout the locker room.

Usually the teams that figure out a way early in the season to remain positive have a better chance to turn the season around than those that don't. If your team ends the season with a losing record, it's obviously disappointing. But as a coach and player it's important to take the positives of the season and build on them. The most promising thing a team can offer going into the off season is positivity and the willingness to get better. If the locker room is full of players that are continually negative and are not leading by example, its a clear sign that things need to change. Remember to stay positive during the ups and downs of the season because that will build resiliency within the locker room, helping to build a winning attitude and program.

# ***BILL RUSSELL QUOTES FOR ON THE COURT***

BY COACH MASON



When it comes to all-time greats, it's hard to argue against the player with the most Championship rings of all-time. Bill Russell was not only a great player, but a great teammate and competitor who was always focused on being the best he could be on both sides of the floor. Below is a defensive and offensive quote that embodied the way Russell played and how every player should play on the court. These basketball quotes should be taken to heart on and off the court.

## **CONCENTRATION AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS ARE THE MARGINS OF VICTORY.**

*- BILL RUSSELL*

For most players, getting low and playing in a defensive stance when completely exhausted can be a major struggle. Most agree that defense wins championships, but defense is often less focused on when trying to become a great player on a great team. I can always remember my coaches stressing being tough and focusing when I was fatigued. The reason being is that when you hit that wall, your concentration and focus can quickly go out the door. This leads to missed assignments on the court, defensive lapses, and positional errors.

This is a great quote from NBA great Bill Russell because it eliminates the discussion around what can cause a team to lose or win a close game. Sometimes games come down to the last play and people often correlate the two. In reality, there are a series of small mistakes and mental breakdowns that lead to a team losing or winning a game. Each game includes many mistakes and breakdowns that happen throughout the course of a game. Usually the team that makes the least amount of mistakes is the team that ends up winning the game. This is where the focus and toughness come into play especially on the defensive end. You have to practice this way and you also have to hold yourself accountable for your assignments on the court and as a teammate.

Make sure as a player you are concentrating on everything you need to do throughout a game or practice so that you can do your part in helping your team being successful. Hard work, focus and toughness is contagious so make sure you are spreading the things that your team needs and set an example on defense.

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT MEASURE OF HOW GOOD A GAME I PLAYED WAS HOW MUCH BETTER I'D MADE MY TEAMMATES PLAY.**

*- BILL RUSSELL*

When I was a young player in high school I thought the only way my team would win was for me to score 50 points. I also thought the only way I'd earn a college scholarship was to do the same. I can tell you that I was wrong in so many ways. I quickly learned that the game was played as a team and that I needed to rely on my teammates as much as they needed to rely on me. I also learned that the better my teammates played, the better I played and we also one games as well. I knew that I needed to work hard in practice so that my teammates would follow and I knew that if we pushed each other to the limit in practice, then we would do the same in games. Depending on what role you have on the team, make sure you always embrace that role and do it to the best of your abilities.

The toughest thing for coaches to teach players is that individual success comes from team success and that recognition follows as well. The greatest feeling in the world is seeing yourself and players you have been training with succeed and go beyond expectations. Bill Russell was spot on with this quote because it shows how important each player on the team is no matter your role and that when you have a larger role, it's important to make the people around you better and lead by example.





# **TENACITY**

BY COACH MASON



I often sit back and think about all the great athletes and the unique stories many of them have about becoming successful at what they do. Every athlete I know has faced adversity of some sort. The difference between great athletes is that they know how to persevere during the toughest times. They know how to push through the wall, mold, and adjust to get to their ultimate goal. These basketball quotes embody what it means to never give up and to maximize your own personal potential.

**SUCCESS IS NO ACCIDENT. IT IS HARD WORK, PERSEVERANCE,  
LEARNING, STUDYING, SACRIFICE AND MOST OF ALL,  
LOVE OF WHAT YOU ARE DOING  
OR LEARNING TO DO.**

- PELE

The only way you can maximize your full potential is if you have an all around understanding of what you want to achieve. Great players pay attention to detail and they are looking for every advantage over their competitor. I can always remember my college coach telling us players to enjoy the process. Initially I didn't know what this meant, but eventually I realized it meant enjoy the hard practices, sore muscles, long days and time it takes to be a champion. When you finish a workout or practice session and know you gave your all, it's a satisfying feeling. When you know hard work is preparing you for success, that's something amazing to look forward to. Having this mindset will allow you to love the game through the ups and downs and no matter what you will want to get better and reach your full potential.

As a former pro athlete, I can clearly remember waking up and feeling like my body could no longer train or workout. The feeling of exhaustion and aching muscles is tough to overcome and mentally defeats most people. Finding the tenacity to overcome, will leave an exhilarating feeling of accomplishment and achievement. In all sports, players eventually hit a wall that seems insurmountable. The challenge is figuring out a way to get over the wall or better yet break through it. I think this quote applies to anything in life since we have all hit a wall of some sort and had to either give up or break through. The ones that choose to make it happen, lead successful satisfied lives and this is no different when dealing with sports.

**I DO NOT THINK THAT THERE IS ANY OTHER QUALITY SO ESSENTIAL TO  
SUCCESS OF ANY KIND AS THE QUALITY OF PERSEVERANCE.  
IT OVERCOMES ALMOST EVERYTHING,  
EVEN NATURE.**

- JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

Athletes overcome many obstacles that may not even involve basketball. There are tremendous documentaries of athletes overcoming huge life obstacles that would have deterred the average person. Perseverance is a quality that can not be faked and requires mental strength as much as physical ability. During intense games or practices, players will become exhausted and physically drained. When this happens, one of the first issues a player will face is the mental aspect of the game. Your mind will tell you to stop or give in. Often times plays and assignments are forgotten and when this starts, you're heading in the wrong direction. You have to go against your human nature to give in and continue to persevere through the pain and exhaustion.

***YOU CAN'T GET MUCH DONE IN LIFE IF YOU ONLY  
WORK ON THE DAYS WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD.***

*- JERRY WEST*

Basketball involves a continual flow of ups and downs. Players get injured, shots don't fall and expectations are not met quite often in an athlete's career. It's very hard to stay even keel when things change instantly, but athletes that are able to battle through adversity and stay on their course will be the ones who ultimately become successful. It's easy to work hard in practice when you won the night before. It's easy to get better when things around you are falling into place, but the most important work you will put in will be based around the days that don't go according to plan. This is where the separation between good and great really takes place. The desire to train on days when you don't feel like it comes from a desire and drive within. If you can channel this and bring it out, you will give yourself a chance to maximize your potential.

***YOUR BIGGEST OPPONENT ISN'T THE OTHER GUY.  
IT'S HUMAN NATURE.***

*- BOBBY KNIGHT*

I included this basketball quote last because I personally think it's the most important of them all. I believe it's essential for athletes to first believe in their skills and abilities before worrying about what an opponent is doing. My personal goal was always to be the best version of me possible. I knew if I put the time, effort and energy into becoming the best player I could be, it would prepare me for any opponent and any challenge in front of me. I would be lying if I said I never had thoughts of giving up. I would be lying if I denied thinking that I may not be good enough. I can truthfully say that when those thoughts crept up on me, I quickly shot them down and proved to myself in the gym that I was willing and worthy. As a player make sure to truly believe in yourself, it will take you far in life.

# **TEAM CAMARADERIE**

*BY COACH MASON*



In every sport there must be some type of team camaraderie or bond that is developed in order for a team to be successful. Rarely do you hear of a team winning a championship and the players disliking each other. Building a bond is important in sports, especially when you are playing in a hostile environment or when the odds are stacked against you. When times are tough it's important for a team to stick together and not look to put the blame on someone else.

BELOW ARE 4 QUOTES THAT WILL HELP MOTIVATE PLAYERS TO STAND FOR EACH OTHER AND ULTIMATELY BUILD A STRONG LOCKER ROOM.

***INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT TO A GROUP EFFORT  
THAT IS WHAT MAKES A TEAM WORK,  
A COMPANY WORK, A SOCIETY WORK,  
A CIVILIZATION WORK.***

*- VINCE LOMBARDI*

Basketball is a team sport and unlike wrestling or bowling, you need your teammates to succeed. Trusting your teammates and having each other's back is extremely important throughout the season. When times get tough on and off the court, the closer you are with your teammates, the easier it will be to overcome the obstacles. Make sure everything you do on and off the court is to benefit the team. This will lead to team success when it really matters.

***I INVITE EVERYONE TO CHOOSE  
FORGIVENESS RATHER THAN DIVISION,  
TEAMWORK OVER PERSONAL AMBITION.***

*- JEAN-FRANCOIS COPE*

It's important every player understands group and team success comes before individual success. If players are only focused on their own personal goals, the team will suffer and often times individual goals will never be achieved. Anytime one person's success overshadows the ultimate team goal, there will be division and problems within the locker room. Leadership trickles down from the top. Sometimes a coach can step in and take responsibility for mistakes even if it's really not their fault when blame must be taken. This is difficult to do, but will ultimately bring a team together.



**UNITY IS STRENGTH...**  
**WHEN THERE IS TEAMWORK  
AND COLLABORATION, WONDERFUL  
THINGS CAN BE ACHIEVED.**

- MATTIE STEPANEK

In sports we often see the team that is unified as one, plays as one, and thinks as one, usually has the most success and enjoys doing it at the same time. When individual players think their way is the best way and coaches think the same, separation within the team begins. Great coaches learn how to mold and adjust to their players and likewise, great players can mold and adjust to any style coach. The flexibility part is important and when people within a team see a person sacrificing and giving everything they have, it becomes contagious. There is unity in strength and when a team is a well oiled machine, the sky is the limit.

**THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOUR  
TEAMMATES HAVE TO KNOW YOU'RE  
PULLING FOR THEM AND YOU REALLY WANT  
THEM TO BE SUCCESSFUL.**

- KOBE BRYANT

Selflessness is one of the most important parts of team success and building team camaraderie. It's a great feeling knowing someone has your back no matter what. When you can play a sport knowing you have teammates who will support you through mistakes and blunders it makes all the difference. Playing uptight and afraid will equal failure at any level. When you genuinely enjoy your team and show that to your teammates, it will translate into wins and a natural flow on the court. When there is no ego or individual goal, extra passes will be made, unselfish plays will be made, and that will make any team hard to handle when game time comes.



***OFF-SEASON***

# **MORALE AND ATTITUDE ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS TO SUCCESS.**

- BUD WILKINSON

As your players prepare to focus on success for the upcoming season, this quote serves as a reminder that basketball is a mental sport as well as physical. Emphasize that it takes both physical and mental stamina to assert maximum effort throughout an entire season. You know your players can succeed, but it's important they realize the same about themselves and their team.

# **THE STRENGTH OF THE TEAM IS EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER. THE STRENGTH OF EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER IS THE TEAM**

- PHIL JACKSON

You're preparing for a new season, but with the new season comes a new team. Some established seniors have left the team. Some new team members offer a unique vision. While the members of any team fluctuate, the desire for unity is constant. Remember that everyone is playing for each member of the team, and not only for themselves. Stressing their role in a larger cause denotes a sense of purpose, and increases their commitment. Also, let members know that they have been chosen to play for the team for a reason, and that the team would be incomplete without them.

# **FIRST OF ALL, WHAT HAPPENS IS, WHEN YOU'RE GOOD AT SOMETHING, YOU SPEND A LOT OF TIME WITH IT. PEOPLE IDENTIFY YOU WITH THAT SPORT, SO IT BECOMES PART OF YOUR IDENTITY.**

- MIKE KRZYZEWSKI

This quote strikes a chord, because it gets at a more personal component of basketball. A love of basketball is simultaneously a display of talent and a piece of one's identity. While people understandably define themselves according to a range of interests and abilities, our passions and that which we focus our energies on certainly forms a part of our identity, often a very personal one. During the off-season, remind your players and yourself that thinking about basketball is a way for them to take pride in what they are good at and what they care about.

***FAILURE IS GOOD. IT'S FERTILIZER.  
EVERYTHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT COACHING,  
I'VE LEARNED FROM MAKING MISTAKES.***

*- RICK PITINO*

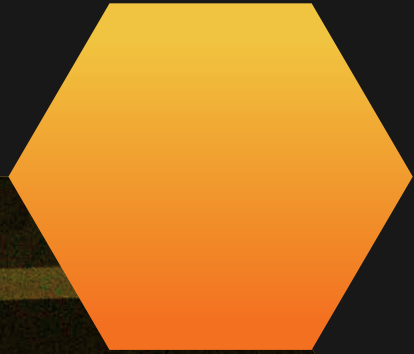
Here's a great quote reminding coaches and players alike that failure can set the tone for success just as much as achievements. During the off-season, players and coaches are looking for proof that their team can compete and that they function well as a unit. Building this confidence in the team raises morale. But it's harder to acknowledge that everyone's also experienced failure. You and your players shouldn't be ashamed of this though. Remember that improvement starts with identifying that which needs to be improved, and that addressing and solving weaknesses is your way of making your team more indestructible.

***DOING THE BEST YOU ARE CAPABLE  
OF DOING IS VICTORY IN ITSELF,  
AND LESS THAN THAT IS DEFEAT***

*- JOHN WOODEN*

One of the most valuable lessons you can teach your players is that motivation can't purely be delivered from an outside source. Confidence comes from within, and once players train themselves to be in the mindset of delivering maximum effort, they put themselves in the best position for success. Defeat is a natural part of the sport, it is unreasonable to expect it never to occur, but it is reasonable to ask yourself and your players to give it their all. This determination applies whether they are winning big, losing big, or it's a close game. It's that fighting spirit that allows for maximum improvement going forward.







**DR.DISH**

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