



GO ROUTE

EP. 1 EMBRACE YOUR HUMANITY



Oftentimes when we look at performance, a lot of the weight falls on the athlete. As parents and coaches, you play a huge role in the life of the athlete. A big takeaway from the Heroes in Our Midst podcast featuring Andrew Harris is that the path-way isn't perfect. Everyone has these plans in place on the road to success, but in reality, we have little control over the future. What we can control from a parent/coach point of view is celebrating the individual. Andrew pointed out in his story that his journey to success relied a lot on timing and embracing opportunities. A lot of the time, things aren't going to go according to plan (e.g., Injuries, COVID, etc.) so celebrating our athlete's path is important, whatever that looks like.

FREEDOM TO FAIL

Celebrating the individual also includes giving your athlete the freedom to fail. Failure is often seen as an end result, when in actuality, it provides us information on how to achieve our goal. The route we originally planned didn't work, so how can we find another way to the end goal? There is so much fear surrounding failing that we try to prevent it all together. We even start playing it safe in order to avoid performing poorly or coming eye to eye with failure. As role models in our athletes lives, normalizing failure is meaningful and influential. Everyone's path is going to look different, and for many, failure is going to be something they will run into. Reframing failure as a learning opportunity and a chance to grow as a human and an athlete significantly changes the weight of the word failure. Failure always seems to come off as something negative, but we have the power to change that definition for ourselves and our athletes. As parents and coaches, we have the opportunity to give our athletes the freedom to fail and celebrate wherever they are on their journey.

KEEP THE DOOR OPEN

In the podcast, Andrew reflected on times where he was vulnerable in his life. As parents and coaches, it's important to keep the door open for your son, daughter, or player. Let them know they can access you. Humans are wired to avoid discomfort, so naturally, it can be scary or intimidating to have these conversations with a parent or coach. They also might not know how to have critical conversations with important people in their life and especially if this behavior has never been modelled for them. Let your child or player know you're available for those moments of vulnerability and open the door for these conversations.

REVIEW THE TAPE

Have a conversation with your athlete on failure and what it means to them? Open the door for these conversations. Find articles on athletes who have struggled and talk about it with your athlete/child.

Model behaviors for your athlete such as: having critical conversations or being vulnerability. Talk to them about experiences you have had in your life.

RESOURCES

Ted Talks: How to Make Stress Your Friend
Click here to watch the talk

The Players' Tribune: A Letter to NFL GMs
Click here to read the article