

“THIS CUTTING-EDGE BOOK IS OUR FUTURE”

- Anson Dorrance, UNC Soccer Head Coach, 22 National Championships

WHAT DRIVES WINNING

FREE
SAMPLE
SECTION

Building Character Gets Results. Here's How.

BRETT LEDBETTER

An excerpt from the chapter:

Confident

The enemy of confidence is: self-doubt. We define the word confidence as the opposite: self-trust.

Confidence: Self-trust

How do we define trust? To rely on someone or something.

Self-trust means that you rely on yourself.

How's that different from how you viewed it before? Before, what was our confidence attached to? It was attached to an outcome—an external outcome that isn't within our control. Now we are attaching our confidence to something internal—that's within our control.

***Important:** Confidence (self-trust) can be built by tying it to an external source such as achievement—it's just not as stable because it's not fully within our control. Internal confidence (self-trust) is a sustainable confidence that can be applied across all situations because it's attached to things within our control. It's trusting in your ability to handle the moment (regardless of the outcome) and external sources provide the moment.*

What Confidence Looks Like

Situation: you're playing the #2 ranked basketball team in the country. You are having an off game, you're 0–5 from the three-point line. What if your coach drew up a play for you to take the game-tying three?

What would you be thinking? We asked some of the players in our Academy that question and here were some of their answers:

“What are you thinking, coach?”

“You need to find somebody else.”

“I can’t miss this.”

Can we agree that none of those responses listed would project confidence?

Here’s what confidence would look like in that situation:

1. You have *trust in your ability to be courageous* (go all-in) in that moment regardless of what happens.

Do you see how you are tying your confidence to something internal that’s within your control (Courage)? Your success is tied to your ability to detach from the result and “go all-in” in that moment. If your confidence was tied to the outcome in this situation—and you are 0–5 from the three-point line, how would that look? It would look like the three answers from above. See the difference?

What About Results?

It truly is a mind shift.

Player: I get it. But what happens when I go back to my practice and my coach (who doesn’t think like this) is yelling at me for the mistakes that I make?

Me: Do you have full control over whether or not your coach yells at you?

Player: No.

Me: What do you have control over?

Player: How I handle my coach yelling at me.

Me: The question becomes: Do you have enough *self-trust* to listen to your inner coach (instead of your coach) in that situation?

Player: Yeah. But that will take a lot of confidence.

Nobody said it was easy. In fact, it's one of the hardest things that you will do. That's why so many people struggle with confidence.

Important: *Having a positive inner coach that you can trust is critical for confidence. The next five tools will match the tools used in the Positive section. We will look at how to build confidence using them.*

Dealing With Expectations

Blakely told me, "I feel so much pressure." I asked her, "Where is the pressure coming from?" She told me that it's coming from the expectations that she has for herself and the expectations that others place on her. Before we did anything, I asked her to write a letter to pressure (as if it were a person) and describe the impact that pressure has had on her life. I needed to better understand the relationship that she has with pressure.

Dear Pressure,

I cannot stand you. I cannot stand the overpowering feeling you give me at times. You engulf my entire body, my mind, and my thought process. You make me feel that there is no other option but success. You take away my joy, my pleasure, and my happiness. But thank you.

As much as I hate you, I love you. I adore you, in fact. I could not live, or play, without you. Without you I wouldn't be me, I wouldn't

be the person that I am. I thrive off of you. Thank you for giving me your absolute worst, but making me my absolute best.

-Blakely

This letter showed me that she had a love/hate relationship with pressure. The good news: Blakely recognized the great things that pressure does for her. As I read the letter, it became apparent that she had become smothered by pressure. I asked her to do something for me.

Tool: Best Friend Advice

I asked Blakely to pretend that her best friend was in the exact same situation. I asked her to give her best friend advice on the best way to handle the situation. Blakely had some time to think about it. Here's what she wrote:

Set a time in your schedule (because I like schedules) after you complete your work, training, errands, etc. and take that time to escape from everything. Almost convert your mind into thinking that nothing else exists except for what you are doing in that moment. Whether that is reading a book, watching a movie, or eating cheesecake, commit to that and do not think or worry or "stress" about any other thing in your life during that time. You can work on this daily by having what you call your "Pressureless Time." And hopefully with that practice, you will get in the habit of knowing how to flip that switch when you want to, to continue to grow with it.

If you are giving advice to your best friend, it's based in love and care, and when you take that advice as your own, that's great dialogue with an inner coach. When your inner coach becomes somebody that gives you advice based on love and care, that's what a positive (good and useful) inner coach looks like. Here's where confidence comes into play.

Confidence equals self-trust. When you trust yourself, you trust your inner coach. You do that by taking your own advice. Confidence is essential for leadership because if you won't listen to your own advice, why would anybody else listen to you?

Confidence grows when you trust a good and useful inner coach.

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