

## RELEASE YOUR MENTAL EMERGENCY BRAKE

EMERGENCY BRAKE ON: FOCUS ON WINNING.

EMERGENCY BRAKE OFF: FOCUS ON GIVING A FULL EFFORT.

Let's talk about focus.

Almost every athlete focuses on the wrong thing - they focus on winning.

Let me see if I can get you to focus on the wrong thing . . .

RIDDLE: Anna's mother has three daughters. One is named Penny, another is named Nickel. What is the name of the third daughter?

Do you think the answer is Dime, Quarter or Half-Dollar? That's because you're focusing on the wrong part of the riddle. If you focus on the first two words of the riddle, "Anna's mother," you realize that the third daughter's name is Anna!

Most athletes do the same thing. They're focusing on the wrong thing. They're focused on winning.

This is a big mistake.

Why? Because you don't have control over winning. But, you do have control over your effort.

Gandhi once said, "Full effort is full victory."

FOCUS ON EFFORT NOT OUTCOME!

Dr. Alan Goldberg is one of the very best sport psychologists in the country. In his talks and seminars, he tells the story of when he was a freshman at UMass/Amherst. He played #1 singles on the tennis team. At the end of the season, he was playing in the finals for the Yankee Conference championship, a big deal for a freshman. Alan easily won the first set, 6-3. He was ahead 5-2 in the second set and was serving for the match. In other words, he needed only four more points to win the Conference championship.

When changing sides between games, Alan got a glimpse of the trophy table and he saw the big trophy that the champion would receive. Four points away from winning, Alan says that he started thinking about that trophy. He started thinking how cool it would be to bring that trophy back to his dorm. All of a sudden, he started focusing more on the prize and less on the next point. He started focusing more on the outcome and less on the effort. Alan lost the next two sets.

The moral to this story is: You can't keep one eye on winning and the other eye on the ball. It won't work.

I once read that a frustrated football coach said, "We lost because we were focused on winning while they were focused on football."

Keep your focus on your effort - not on the outcome. Keep your focus on the process - not on the product.

## REVIEW

In order to release your mental emergency brake, here's what you can do right now . . .

REALIZE THAT you do not have to win.

DO NOT feel that you must win.

DO feel that you want to win.

DO NOT focus on winning.

DO focus on giving a full effort.

Focus on the EFFORT not on the OUTCOME.

Focus on the PROCESS not on the PRODUCT.