Win the Day: The Ultimate Coach’s Guide to Build and Sustain a Championship Culture (Lynch, Jerry)

I’m talking about what your day is going to look like. What11practice will feel like. What the environment will be. How your team will feel coming to work

“Write down ten things that are important to you, when you get back to your hotel tonight,” he said. “What are the most important things to you, personally, in your life? When you come back tomorrow, we are going to narrow down those ten things to four.

Those four principles represent you as a human being. We are all unique, so your four will be different from my four. But, if you are authentic with your team, and your daily routine at practice and games and team meetings reflects your principles, your personal core values, well then, now you’re going somewhere. Now, you’re building a culture. Now, you’re coaching. I

Ultimately, for the Warriors’ core values, I decided on joy, mindfulness, compassion, and competition.

and doing the little important things brilliantly in the present moment, rather than the big things marginally in the future. It’s all about “what’s important now” (WIN) in order to Win the Day.

Every Monday, group text your team telling them what specifically you will do that will demonstrate a “giving attitude,” a selfless act of kindness. In this way, they take ownership and accept responsibility with a willingness to 20 be held accountable.

“we are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected in the deep.”

The championship cultures I advocate must first learn that we’re all connected and find ways to discard the illusion of separateness.

A Simpler Way

“organization could accomplish so much more, if they relied on the passion evoked when we connect to others ... so many of us hunger to discover who we might become together.” The wisdom of The Art of War, the ancient Chinese book of strategy by Sun-Tzu, reinforces Wheatley’s astute observation.

“organization could accomplish so much more, if they relied on the passion evoked when we connect to others ... so many of us hunger to discover who we might become together.”

“You become part of something bigger, larger than yourself; you find something you did not know you possessed. There are mystical moments of pride, elation and love for each other.

It has been said that the success of the US Navy Seals culture is directly related to connection, caring,

selflessness, and a pervasive sense of family.

Similar to the concept of cultural wisdom, Kaizen sought

to humanize the workplace, and create a safe environment

where mistakes were instantly corrected; one that would

nurture the people and build strong relationships by praise

and encouragement, in which everyone felt relevant,

important and valued. Kaizen is a Win the Day philosophy,

what can be called an action plan—or a mission that takes

one day at a time and controls what you can as a way to

move slowly and methodically forward to create amazing

results in the long-term on a continual basis. 34

Their focus is on continuous, steady improvement, in the moment, one day at a time. For example, 49’ers coach Bill Walsh once said, “I have no grandiose plan for winning a championship, but rather a standard and plan for installing a level of competency at which our production level would become higher … on and off the field, than that of our opponents.

What connects a team is what they do. What connects a tribe is why they do it: for the love of each other and something bigger than winning on the scoreboard

It is the driving force that embodies a sense of toughness, courage, passion, and attitude that helps individuals rise above obstacles when they appear.

Never be afraid of errors, mistakes, losing. They’re our greatest teachers.

Never try to go BIG … just execute all the little things over and over.

•Never fail to respond immediately after a mistake— instant positive response.

• Never whine or create drama unnecessarily. The USNA women’s lacrosse team

Help my teammates feel valued, important, relevant, and respected.

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As we know, however, there are two types of athletes— those who make mistakes … and those who will.

Fear of failure, our greatest teacher. Fear weakens you. It’s the greatest obstacle to performance

I ask everyone to choose someone whom they deeply care about and text them a short message, expressing their care, love, and how important and valued they are to them.

When the time is up, we go back to this exercise, turn

the phones on and share the responses. Some are quite funny and even strange, but they all tell a story about the 93power we have to influence others in a positive way. On Power of Influenceoccasion, tears of joy are noticeable, and laughter is hardy, yet the caring and influences are remarkable.

People will forget what you say; people95will forget what you do. Feelings Equal Function But … they will never forget how you made them feel. —Maya Angelou, Author, Poet

caring, genuine, authentic, and vulnerable.

You’re important to this team. We need your awesome efforts. (Relevant) • I love your work ethic. It motivates all of us. (Remarkable) 99• If you keep playing like that, you’ll be one of the best River Effect athletes I’ve ever coached. (Inspired)

• We value your presence on this team. You bring out

the best in everyone. (Valued)

• That last week of practice was one of your best thus

far. (Validated)

• I want to give you permission to keep being a great

leader. (Inspired)

• When you play and compete like that, you’re being a

true champion. (Empowered)

• Without you, we wouldn’t be the great team we are.

(Revered)

• I appreciate and love how much you give of yourself to

your teammates. (Important)

“the first job of leadership is to help people see their significance.”

must be strong and demanding, establish boundaries, set limits, create a path, and yet, be kind, respectful, affirming, loving, and caring. Demanding and loving … soft and strong … are, indeed, compatible.

At this point, take your cell phone and send a signal to a friend, a short text, helping them to feel cared for, relevant, important, and how valued they are to your life.

What do you need to start doing or stop doing to demonstrate your power of influence? Think about how the RIVER effect can help you answer this query. ❑

fight for your heart by using the greatest success strategy Part II ever—LOVE.

these youngsters, unlike me, may be

insecure, immature, and very fearful. They’re afraid of

messing up, letting others down, failing, looking silly, losing,

making mistakes, not being good enough,

Really listen. Don’t act as

though you’re listening and let it go in one ear and out the

other.” It has been observed that three out of four leaders

and coaches will interrupt their staff and athletes on average,

within 15 seconds of the start of a conversation. Such a 111 Listening With the Heart

practice precludes you from truly learning from others what you need to know in order to do your best work.

Some of the ways I take the

mask off is to admit I was wrong: “boy, I really screwed

that up.” I will tell others that I have failed greatly in my

lifetime. Or, when presenting an idea, I’ll say, “tell me

what’s wrong with this idea,” or “maybe you can punch

holes in this

“You are enough.”

I put these three simple words on the board in our team room. I wanted the tone to be one of compassion. Many players feel that they may not be strong enough, fast enough, or good enough to meet the challenges that lie ahead. These feelings can create anxiety and a lack of self-compassion. By reassuring our incoming players that they were, in fact, enough, we were able to reduce their anxiety levels, which resulted in more productive preseason practice sessions.

There’s no comparison between what’s lost by not trying and what’s lost by not succeeding.

Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have, we will not be happy—because we will always want to have something else or something more.

I like to remind my players that hard experiences, when shared, are joyful and life-affirming. “We don’t do sprints (only) for the conditioning,” I like to say. • The last words I always say to my team in the huddle before a game are, “Have fun out there!”

Sir Roger Bannister, the first athlete to run a sub-fourminute mile, talked about the joy and fun of going all out, even while experiencing pain. Fun doesn’t mean you take the job of training less seriously. Fun is simply toning down the stress, anxiety, and pressure. In fact, fun is why most athletes started engaging in their sport in the first place! Find

“we don’t whine or create drama out of respect for each other.

The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk by the vulnerability champion, Brené Brown. This is the wave of the future for all sports performers

In USNA’s head women’s lacrosse coach Cindy Timchal’s culture, “we act ‘as-if’ we’re champions in practice, in games, in our meetings, and affirm strongly our belief that we are national champions.

I love to tell my teams that their opponent’s greatest advantage is your lack of belief in yourselves.

“we come together, we win together, we lose together, we compete together, we love each other.” As Cindy so aptly noted, “I

Nobel Peace Prize winner Mother Teresa’s words on the value of love say it all: “When we come face to face with God, we are going to be judged on how much we loved.” And how often we won the day.

“The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them.”

I wish to make a difference by inspiring others to do things that inspire them,

Because of my clearly defined purpose

 It’s not what you say or do that they will remember it’s how I make them feel, and they never forget that.