

### VALUES DEFINE OUR PROCESS

What we achieve in life is ultimately a matter of the choices we make. Which choice is the correct one? How do we ensure our choices are consistent both with our aspirations and our principles? How do we progress children toward more mature behaviour and help them to take more responsibility for themselves? That is the role of a values system. They are the rules that govern our day to day decision making. They are largely, though not exclusively, controllable matters. They do not have to reflect morality – rightness or wrongness, culture or kindness – though they certainly can. Values are used to provide continuity of behaviour. Our environments can be highly variable and should, ideally, become more challenging and stressful as we age and advance. Our values keep us stable along with way. They move us continually forward and ensure we make choices consistent with how we see ourselves and our goals.

The recent focus on drug use in sport is an interesting example of decision making as a function of values. Should I use drugs to enhance performance? Leaving aside the moral argument, the answer depends on what you have been taught about the nature of achieving success. In school programs, progress is implied as a function of two key factors: 1) always turn up to class, and 2) listen and think (use your brain). These are the values of schooling and they define the process of learning. What values do children commonly learn in sport? Should they be largely different to those of learning? Perhaps not, but what I am certain of is that children who are taught that winning is the only thing that matters (the most important value) are far more likely to take risks or look for short-cuts than those who are taught instead to place the greatest value on a specified process for achieving success just as they are in the classroom.

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There are specific traits and behaviours that we seek to instil in children growing from adolescence into adulthood. They define a mature individual who can cope and prosper in stressful environments; one who has resilience and the skills necessary to be a high achiever.

### TRAITS OF A HIGH ACHIEVER:

- Self-reliance/ -responsibility/ -directed
- Self-awareness
- Internally motivated
- Reflective
- Emotionally stable/ rational thinker
- High self-expectation/ sets big goals

These traits are not randomly or accidentally attained. They are the native outcomes of stable development with supportive and intelligent education and role-modelling. They are also the product of demand. Demand, expectation, and achievement go hand in hand. Children who are expected to take some responsibility for themselves and those who have busy lives invariably develop the behaviours and traits that enable them to achieve what's expected.

### NOTE ON SCHOOLING AND SPORT:

Schooling and sport work well together. Far from impairing schooling, involvement in a fulltime sporting program complements learning. The reason for this is demand. With time and energy pressures, prosperity depends on being organised and self-directed.



### The Sport Performance values:

The values we promote are designed ultimately to promote one thing: a positive work ethic. Many other behaviours spring from a strong work ethic, such as the willingness and ability to take responsibility for oneself.

### Adherence/ attendance -

- Expectation. A person who always turns up to training expects to succeed. This person will listen and learn, and they will apply themselves. Adherence/ attendance are the most basic way in which we can learn to take responsibility for outcomes.

### Intelligence -

- The ultimate source of all human abilities – physical or mental – is the brain, so development in sport and exercise can be defined as a learning experience. Repetition is implied in the process of adapting a body but more important again is to teach and impart the ideas that underpin the skills. On this basis, the opportunity to extend in sport and exercise is the same for all regardless of talent or physical gifts. No one should be excluded or left behind because we all have a brain.
- The more aware I am the less likely I will be to procrastinate or cut corners – commitment/ application and awareness go hand in hand.

### Responsibility –

- In order to learn, you must pay attention to detail. The most common answer to the question of what defines greatness in sport is this: They do everything they can all of the time. What's meant by this is that great sportspeople seek to find an advantage wherever they can: Eating correctly, stretching after exercise, arriving early to warm-up more comprehensively, and going to bed early or forgoing late nights and so on. These are the behaviours of a high-achiever in any setting. They define someone who is prepared to take responsibility for their own success.