

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

WEEK #2 CREATE MOMENTUM

TAKING A TIMEOUT

Last week, in the first week of this message series I talked about the overwhelming negative momentum against us with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our lives have totally changed as we have adapted to a "new normal". This is in addition to the other personal, social and health struggles that we may be facing right now. We can feel totally swamped and see no way out. This is when we need to call a timeout.

In basketball, coaches use their timeouts to slow down or stop the opponents momentum and regroup as a team to change the flow in their direction. We need to do this in our lives right now—we need to take a timeout to stop the negative momentum and reassess, regroup and seek to create our own momentum—but how do we do this?

CREATE MOMENTUM

During a timeout, the coach disrupts the rhythm of the opponents while also offering coaching strategies and a change of game plan to shift the momentum. This may include changing defensive systems or isolating the opponents weaknesses more. In addition, the coach has to inspire the players reminding them that they can change the situation and win the game. This of course is easier said than done. In my coaching days I reminded my players that we chip away, one possession at a time and work our way back, grinding it out by outthrusting, outrebounding and outplaying the other team. How do we do this in our world today with the help of our faith?

(1) ELIMINATE BAD HABITS

During the timeout, the coach will point out the mistakes that are

happening and challenge players to fix those habits. We know that sometimes it is not what we are doing that is wrong but the way we are doing it makes it ineffective.

For us as we journey through these challenging times we need to examine our lives and see what bad habits we fall into. Maybe it is



gossip, negative thoughts or constant complaining. This may also include a poor diet and sleeping schedule. Does our daily routine make us stronger or does it drag us and others down?

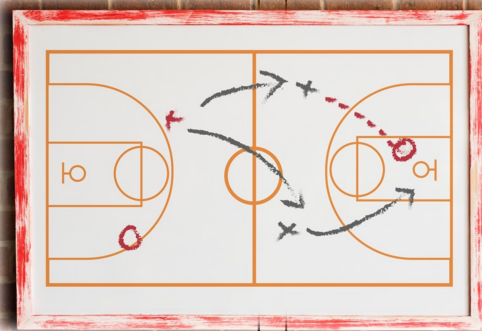
We need to eliminate those bad habits and

be dedicated to proper ways of doing things so that we stay positive, energized and a light in the darkness.

(2) WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

Often times a coach will remind players to do something that they are not doing at all. This may include fundamentals like keep your head up, boxing out for a rebound or to press after scoring. At times when we feel out of control we panic and forget what we are supposed to do. Our coach is there to remind us of what is missing and reconnects us to the task at hand to swing and create new momentum.

This too is so true with our faith. In our spiritual timeouts of prayer, reflection and listening with an open heart, we need to discover the things that we are not doing—what is missing in our faith lives that would help us gain perspective? Do I take enough time to pray? What



am I praying for? Do I look for the blessings that are around me each and everyday? What do I spend most of my time on each day? Do I turn to God when feeling overwhelmed or don't know what to do? Is God at the centre of my life?

When we figure out what is missing in our lives—we fill it in. The more we do this the stronger we become.

(3) BE A TEAM PLAYER

Often times teams get into trouble when they forget to work together.

Sometimes they get too focused on themselves and their stats. How many points do I have? Will I take the last shot? Why don't they pass me the ball? The most successful teams I have coached over the years were not the most talented, skill wise, but those who chose to humble themselves and wanted their teammates to be better. Each recognized their role and worked their hardest for the sake of the team.

To generate positive momentum in our lives we need to live for others. Our faith reminds us that we need to regard others better than ourselves. We are called to share who we are and what we have for everyone because that is true love.

(4) BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

In the end the coach can only offer direction, advice and inspiration. The players have to believe that they can shift the momentum by making the necessary changes, adapting to offer a response. No strategy or play will work unless the players believe in themselves and work hard to change the momentum and have a chance to win the game. Hard work and the belief that things can change become the core of creating momentum.

When we are overwhelmed by worries, concerns and negativity in our lives, we need to turn to faith. God is kind, loving and generous. When we seem defeated, God's grace pours out even more. When we feel lost or in complete darkness, God finds us and shines eternal light upon us. He believes in us even when we have given up and feel that we cannot be better or even change. Our God is a God of miracles!! We need to believe that God can transform our lives healing us and making us new.

The role of the Church is to always remind us of that love and empowers us to live out that love for others. When we experience this grace of knowing how much God loves us no matter what—nothing can stop that momentum. When we know that God always sees the best in our hearts and calls us to share the healing work in our world—nothing compares to that. Creating momentum can only happen if we believe in ourselves!!

A DAILY TASK

Creating and sustaining positive momentum is challenging. We need to be attentive to our faith practices and continue to deepen our relationship with God so when the storms come and the opponents try to disrupt our momentum, we are ready and adjust, adapt and pivot. We do this for ourselves but also for others. We are family! May we realize the influence and power we have to make this world a much better place!!