**GOALIES MATTER DISCUSSION**

**Talk Disclaimers:**

1. *I am not a psychiatrist nor do I play one on TV.*
2. *You will NOT be judged based on your responses or participation in this discussion.*
3. *We have all been in your shoes*
4. *This discussion will be filled with passion and emotion and a whole lotta love*

**OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS**

(Show of hands or simply answer to yourself)

HOW MANY OF YOU…….

Ever been blamed for a goal?

Ever been told “Stop the ball”?

Ever been yelled at by a coach or player or been given goalie advice from

someone with NO Goalie Experience?

After a goal felt like No One supported you or tried to tell you it was “OK”?

Ever felt like YOU let them team down?

LAST QUESTION: How many of you ever felt like you didn’t play a perfect game?

FOLLOW ON – What does a “Perfect” game look like to You?.....(look for answers)

NOW - What’s the most important question a coach can ask you? What’s that question that carries a ton of weight, where the answer can be overlooked and not taken seriously? Most coaches ask it, but rarely are ‘LISTENING’ to the answer?

HOW YOU DOING TODAY?

The only way to answer this question is truthfully, and if they aren’t listening tell them again. Open yourself up, because if you have something inside of you eating you up it will affect your play for the day/week/game etc. Be honest….more importantly BE VULNERABLE!!!

**CAUSE:**

I’ve started Goalies Matter in response to a Social Media post this past year.

I’ve had the idea for some time, but it took THIS post to bring it out and make the idea reality.

GOALIES MATTER will be a resourceful website loaded with Mental Illness content to include: Goalie Support, Professional Help, Articles, and other media links to help goalies struggling with mental illness.

*(DESCRIBE THE POST)*

**SHARE INFO/PERSONAL STORY/CONTENT**

The #1 cause for many of our mental illnesses in lacrosse stem from Higher Expectations by a coach or worse….by US…..WE IMPOSE THIS ILLNESS upon ourselves…..Why do we feel like we have to be perfect or play a perfect game….every time?

Being IMPERFECT is PERFECTLY acceptable!!!! BEING IMPREFECT is PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE!!!!!

We need to take our focus away from being Perfect and Strive more for Excellence (this is healthy)

Some statements that might identify you as being a Perfectionist…….

* You spend days reflecting on ( and wallow in) that one piece of critical feedback in an otherwise glowing review.
* You’ve ever snapped at someone when they tried to offer you feedback.
* You’ll never let them know they got to you
* You only share stories that paint you in the best light
* You’ve ever wondered how long it’s going to be before they realize you’re not as good as they seem to think you are.
* AND Lastly…….A mistake feels like failure and failure feels like THE END!!!

A Common Perfectionist Statement one might say to themselves is

“I am not perfect until I get it the way I want it…….I’ll feel good about myself when I……..ex: Post a Shut Out, Save every shot, win the game for the team and everyone notices me.”

The idea of being perfect is what causes us to feel depressed, when we can’t fulfill everyone’s expectations, when WE let the team down.

Anxiety takes place before games and depression sets in AFTER games, especially when we don’t “Win” the game.

WE NEED TO LET THIS PERCEPTION GO!!! But HOW???

**SEEK CHANGE**

In order to overcome this pressure we place on ourselves, we need to show that we are vulnerable.

Brene Brown – “Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, accountability, and authenticity.”

GIFTS of IMPERFECTION

Cultivate Self-Compassion

* When you receive criticism/feedback about your play
  + Do you beat yourself up OR do you support yourself like you would a friend
  + Tell yourself “You Got This!” “It’ll be OK!!”
  + Tell the player or coach who criticized you “Thank You! I appreciate the feedback and I will try my best next time.” And then Let It Go!!

Cultivate Resilience

* Ask for support (reach out to a coach, goalie coach, peer etc)
* Ask for training or help with your game

Cultivate Gratitude and Joy

* Let go of your fears in the cage
* Acknowledge and Build on your strengths
* Allow yourself to experience Joy…be Grateful of what you have

Cultivate Intuition

* Trust your instincts
* Flex your courage and step in the cage no matter the opponent

Cultivate Creativity

* STOP Comparing yourself to others

Cultivate Calm and Stillness

* Let go of anxiety as a lifestyle
* Take time to re-energize

Cultivate Meaningful Work

* Let go of self-doubt and “Supposed to..”
* Remember what drives you to do what you do

Cultivate Laughter, song, and dance

* Let go of “being cool” and “always in control”
* Be different

Cultivate Authenticity

* Receive feedback with gratitude

**REPEAT OPEN ENDED QUESTION**

What does your perfect game look like to you? Do we really need to feel like we have to play “perfectly” in order to be recognized or make friends with your teammates?

**CALL TO ACTION**

You are not defined by your performance but rather WHO YOU ARE, and your CHARACTER, that’s your identity, that’s who you play for, that’s why you play… You play to challenge yourself.

Being a goalie is only teaching you how to deal with the tough times you will face in life. If you can overcome these times through your playing experiences you are going to succeed in life.

You are Valuable, you are Worthy regardless of how you play, you have what it takes to do and be whomever you choose to be. This path you chose to be a goalie in lacrosse is only going to help you learn and grow along the path to adulthood.

Great leaders are vulnerable and courageous. If you weren’t paying attention to what I had to share REMEMBER THIS….. Be Vulnerable, BE COURAGEOUS, Be Brave, because winning isn’t about the wins and losses on the scoreboard, but being brave enough and courageous enough to step between the pipes and endure the shots and feedback we face every day that no one else can. That’s Winning!!!

**SHARE THE PERSONAL SUCCESS STORIES from below.**

My Challenge to you…….SHOW UP, BE SEEN, ANSWER THE CALL OF COURAGE, AND STEP IN GOAL, BECAUSE YOU ARE WORTH IT, YOU ARE BRAVE!!! AND BY ALL MEANS I(WE) LOVE YOU ALL!!! WE CAN’T AFFORD TO LOSE ANOTHER GOALIE TO THE DEMONS BEHIND THE MASK.

**STEP BACK AND LET THE OTHER COACHES SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS!!!!**

Stories, Advice, and Encouragement

From the Goalie Support Network

**Ronnie Fernando** (professional goalie): IG Message

“ Yes, Brad, I would love to be a part of the movement. As a goalie myself (as you know), I suffer from a panic and anxiety disorder that stems from my ADD. I have always been an advocate and will never shy way from talking about it and helping others cope with their needs.”

**Makenna** (former 6x6 student):

“ Hi Brad, I would absolutely love to be a part of your campaign, unfortunately, I’m also one of ‘The Stories’ in which my mental health and lack of support led to me quitting the sport that was my entire life in order to get myself better. I have put in the work to get on a better path now, so I am going to continue coaching the DU (Davenport) goalies next year, and I think the message you are spreading is amazing.”

**Shannon Keeler** (NCAA D3 National Champion – Gettysburg): IG

*Made headlines in the National Media earlier this year for an off-campus rape case she was involved in back in her freshman year at Gettysburg College. The aggressor messaged her on Facebook admitting to the act, prompting the prosecution to re-open the case.*

“ I Wanted to share this story years ago, after they originally told me there wasn’t enough evidence to pursue prosecution, but truthfully, I was scared – scared it would damage my carer, scared I would never find a boyfriend, scared people wouldn’t believe me, and above all else, scared it would define me.

For a while I pretended things were good and I was happy , but in hindsight I see that I was bottling up a lot of anger…anger that seeped out in ways I’m not proud of.

So I did what all us humans force ourselves to do when trying to find normalcy again following difficult situations – I GOT HELP. Wrote down the full story in its entirety, and did my best to truly move on.

When I found the confession messages last June, I was the best version of Shannon. As shocking as it was, I knew immediately that this was my chance to try and pursue justice again, and this time not give up. And on top of that, it became evidently clear to me over the following months that I was not alone in my experience, and this story was larger than myself.

TO ALL my friends, family, teammates, that helped me along the way (evenwhen I wasn’t the greatest) Thank You – You guys are the reason why I’m even able to try to push thigns forward and write this post. For those of you that reached out to me today, your support means the world to me and I hope that one I can pay it forward.”

**Tyler Storer** (Goalie Coach of CoachT\_Lacrosse) (Former BYU MCLA D1 Goalie): IG

“ You probably don’t know, but I missed my last year at BYU cause of an injury and subsequent surgeries, but went through major depression ended up addicted to meds, eventually ended up full blown Heroin addict and spent almost a decade in and out of treatment centers, pysch wards, and even incarcerated. Got clean in 2014, and until recently like a month ago, have spent the past 6 years working in the substance abuse and mental health field………..I definitely went through a lot alone, because of not knowing where to turn for help and feeling weak telling people what I was dealing with kept me sick a looong time. I love what you are doing, Brad, this is definitely needed. You will save a life with this initiative.”

**QUOTE**:

“Your Value Doesn’t Decrease Based Upon Someone’s Inability to See Your Wealth.” - Emily Rice