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I LOVE SPORT. MOST SPORTS. THE REASONS I LOVE SPORT ARE MANYFOLD. I LOVE THAT IT IS A FANTASTIC WAY TO COMPETE AND DOMINATE WITHOUT DEATH, PILLAGE OR PLUNDER. MOST OF THE TIME. I LOVE THAT THERE IS A MAMMOTH AMOUNT OF PREPARATION FOR A TINY SLICE OF POSSIBILITY. THAT MY FRIENDS, IS THE SAME REASON I RESPECT THE MILITARY. I LOVE THE LIFE LESSONS THAT STRIVING FOR VICTORY (ESPECIALLY TEAM VICTORY) TEACH US. THAT, IF WE'RE SMART AS MANAGERS, LEADERS AND PLAYERS, WE SHOULD TAP INTO IN WHATEVER ARENA WE COMPETE IN. SUN TSU WROTE "THE ART OF WAR" 2,500 YEARS AGO AND THERE WOULDN'T BE A FORTUNE 500 COMPANY THAT DOESN'T HAVE A COPY OF IT SOMEWHERE ON THE PREMISES. ENDLESS ANALOGIES ABOUT LEADERSHIP, COMMUNICATION, MORALE, TERRITORIALITY AND A HOST OF FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO VICTORY. THESE DAYS, GREAT SPORTING COACHES ALIGN THESE FACTORS ON THE FIELDS, COURTS, TRACKS AND POOLS THAT DEMAND SIMILAR DISCIPLINES FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE VICTORIES. ALL THESE FACTORS ARE AKIN TO ISSUES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO BUSINESS SUCCESS AND THE PLANNING, VISION, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP STYLES OF OUR 'CAPTAINS' THAT SHOULD TURN OPPORTUNITIES INTO POSSIBILITIES AND THEN INTO REALITIES. AN OPPORTUNITY IS A BLANK SLATE. A NEW BORN BABY. A TEMPLATE FOR POSSIBILITIES BASED ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE INFANT AND FACTORS EXTRINSIC TO ITS CONTROL. WHEN CONSCIOUS DECISIONS ARE MADE AND ACTIONS ARE TAKEN, OPPORTUNITIES NOW BECOME POSSIBILITIES. SEEING POSSIBILITIES THROUGH CREATES REALITIES – EITHER VICTORIES OR DEFEATS. THERE IS NO SHAME IN DEFEAT IF IN REFLECTION, ALL THAT COULD BE DONE, WAS DONE. CONSIDER OLYMPIC PB'S. CONSIDER GALLIPOLI. NOW I'D LIKE TO SHARE THE THOUGHTS OF SOME ELITE PEOPLE IN THEIR VARIOUS FIELDS.

"All my life, I prepared for war because I knew that somewhere else in the world, another man was preparing for war and that one day, we might meet. When that happened, I wanted to be better prepared than he was. Better prepared physically and emotionally. Well, that day came....and he's dead". Paraphrased from Jocko Willink's book "Discipline equals Freedom." He's a U.S. Navy Seal team leader. It's interesting how the more grave the consequences for failure are, the harder the training is.



Billy Slater is the best rugby league player I've seen in my time. He's arguably one of the best athletes Australia has produced winning two Rexona Challenges against Olympians and the best sportspeople from other codes. He once said "I've never compared my game to any other fullback." He doesn't care about benchmarks because he made himself one. He also said, "I felt it as a player but when you're a coach, you really feel like a family member – a father to these guys. They just go out there and they put it on the line for you." Your skills should get you the manager's job but your team's skills will keep it for you.



Former heavyweight champion of the world, Joe Frazier once said, "You can map out a fight plan or a life plan, but when the action starts, it may not go the way you planned, and you're down to the reflexes you developed in training. That's where roadwork shows - the training you did in the dark of the mornin' will show when you're under the bright lights." This is literally about turning opportunities into possibilities. The reality will be the result in the ring. My good mate John Blaine added his own slant when he told me, "It's the work you do when no one is watching that gets you the applause when everyone is watching."



"My motto was always to keep swinging. Whether I was in a slump or feeling badly or having trouble off the field, the only thing to do was keep swinging." So said the legendary Hank Aaron. Being in a slump is not the problem. The problem is the decision that you make as to when to quit or give up. Your greatest victories often come at the same time as your worst fears and certainly your greatest challenges. To discover your limits, you actually have to fail. That kind of failure you can use because you learn.



"Beckham is unusual. He was desperate to be a footballer. His mind was made up when he was nine or ten. Many kids think that it's beyond them. But you can't succeed without practising at any sport." So said Sir Bobby Charlton (R.I.P.) about David Beckham. I'd add one thing to that. Mindset was Beckham's first step before the practicing. That's when potential turns into possibilities. Without drive that comes from the will, potential can lead to massive regret. Goal setting also comes from the will. Foresight is great but it's insight that turns possibilities into realities because you need to know where you stand relative to where you're going



Not all of us can be as elite as this collection of benchmark people but victory is a relative notion. We all owe it to our stakeholders to be the best version of ourselves that we can be so that one day, when we look back, we do so with a level of satisfaction rather than regret. The stakeholders I refer to are anyone in your circle that relies on you to prevail; or anyone who has ever encouraged, taught, forgiven, loved, funded or cared about you. You are surrounded by people who want and need you to be great. If you want to go quickly, go alone but if you want to go far, go together. As my young friend Albert Oraha said, "I'm humble enough to know I am not the best. I'm confident enough to know that I will be!"

THANK YOU ROSS GRAY FOR THE INSPIRATION AND THANK YOU ALBERT & JOHN BLAINE AND GOOD LUCK SCOTT MAYNARD