Development Mindset

Explanation for Athletes

What is a Development Mindset?

A development mindset means believing there's always room for improvement and learning through hard work and practice. A development mindset focuses on the process and having fun instead of results, talent and comparing oneself to others.

> *"I see obstacles as the first step to growth. If everything were easy, you'd never grow."*
> **Martin St-Louis**, Montreal Canadiens

Why Adopt a Development Mindset?

People with a development mindset see obstacles, challenges, feedback and other people's successes as an opportunity to learn and improve.

They're often more determined, motivated to learn new skills, and confident in their abilities, which helps them be more successful. A development mindset promotes respect, active listening and mutual support in a team, and in turn, reduces stress, jealousy and self-doubt.

How to Foster a Development Mindset

- When you make a mistake, think about what you can learn from it.

- When you're faced with a challenge or obstacle, tackle it head on instead of trying to avoid it, giving up, getting upset, or cheating.

- When you receive feedback, think of it as a chance to improve instead of negative criticism.

- Be inspired by other people's successes instead of being jealous and putting them down.

- Celebrate your hard work, not just your wins. It can take time to see some progress, but perseverance is key!

Feedback and Discussions

Reinforce: Congratulate your players on their hard work, learning and progress instead of just celebrating their results or talent. Use phrases like:

"I'm really proud of all the work you put in during practice!" **instead of** "Well done, you're so good!"

Reteach: If a player says something like, "I'll never be able to do it," or "Everyone is better than me," encourage them to focus on their progress and enjoy working on their skills. Explain how working hard can get you places you never thought possible.

Is your player very emotional? Try to help them manage their emotions before focusing on development mindset (see the *Managing Your Emotions* life skill).

Award the *Development Mindset* sticker to a player who has a development mindset and sets an example for their team (e.g., takes on challenges with a positive attitude, responds positively to feedback).