

Athletes Create the Right Resolutions by Answering These 3 Questions

by Michelle Wells, Guest Contributor



Around this time of year, I have often thought that the world was made up of two kinds of people – those who **love setting New Year’s resolutions** and **those who don’t**.

I confess that I am in the camp that loves to set new – and often audacious – resolutions or goals every year. There is something about the endless possibilities that a “clean slate” presents, that prompts me to action.

But for those naysayers who feel that New Year’s resolutions are doomed to fail before January is even over, let me suggest that success with resolutions and goal setting has a lot to do with **how** you go about creating the **right** ones.

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As a mom of several young athletes, I believe the **process** of evaluating where you are and looking forward to where you want to be, has great value in and of itself.

Here are 3 questions that can be a roadmap, as you help your child develop resolutions for the three important areas of life – body, mind, and spirit:

1. **When it comes to my physical (mental or spiritual) condition, where is there some level of dissatisfaction?**
2. **What vision do I have for how I could be better?**
3. **What is the first step to changing this?**

Body

Your athlete's physical condition is the area of life where some of the most obvious goals come to mind – especially in light of sports.

Begin by recognizing what they might be dissatisfied with. For example:

- Is he getting winded every time he has to sprint to the ball?
- Is a lack of strength in her upper body affecting her skill level?
- Are they always tired during practice and/or while completing homework?

After identifying these, take a moment and envision what the best case scenario would look like in regards to his strength, endurance, energy levels, and skill sets.

Dream a bit. This is the fun part. Ask your child to imagine what could be true in the future.

Once you have a clear vision of what the particular area **could** look like, determine what would be the best first step to take to improve it. Perhaps she needs to:

- Do hill-work to develop the cardiovascular response so that sprints are not so challenging
- Lift weights twice a week or begin doing 50 push-ups everyday so that her upper body strength increases
- Go to bed 30 minutes earlier every day so that they have the energy needed for practices and late night homework

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Mind

Great performers have to pay as much attention to the growth and development of their mental condition as they do their physical condition. Sometimes it takes a coach or parent to help a young athlete see what mindsets need to be refined and developed.

Perhaps the area of discontent is in how your athlete deals with...

- the mistakes of others on the team or of her own shortcomings.
- anxiety over performing well in competition.
- a right attitude toward hard work.

Visualizing what a better mindset looks like is a powerful exercise in itself. Spend some time role-playing to determine what responses are most effective.

A first step to changing a mindset is choosing a specific and measurable action to take. Perhaps, in the case of an athlete with high anxiety, it might be to spend time once a week with a mentor who could share tips for settling their mind prior to a game.

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Spirit

If you have ever met someone with a mature spiritual component, you quickly realize that there is an inner strength that seems to transcend external circumstances. Professional athletes such as Tim Tebow and Jeremy Lin display this well every time they face competition.

As parents to young athletes, you have the ability and responsibility to impact this area of your child the most. To identify areas of your child's spiritual condition that might need to be developed, ask questions such as these:

- Does my child see beyond himself and connect with a bigger picture?
- Is there a hope for the future even when things are not going well currently?
- Is kindness toward others a priority?

If the spiritual element has taken a backseat in your own life, then it might be difficult to have a vision of how it could be better for your child. Start small and involve the whole family.

Much research from the science community has established that families that regularly engage in prayer and meditation report higher levels of overall well-being and happiness. Here are a few ideas for first steps:

- Meditate on an encouraging or positive word or a passage from scripture
- Come together as a family to pray for each other
- Find a volunteer project that has a charitable impact

New Year's Resolution Success

A new year is not a magical cure for all the areas your athlete may need to grow in. However, it does represent a perfect transition into small, specific changes that can have a positive impact on them.

Have a discussion with your athlete about the answers to these questions to help you both set the right resolutions for 2018.

Michelle Wells is a wife to one and a mom to six, with 20 plus years of experience at both. With a love for being active in sports she took her passion for competitive training to the world of triathlons where she rocked the elite age group level for several years. In an effort to share her enthusiasm for a balanced and healthy life she inspires others through personal training and freelance writing. <http://michellewells.com/>