

Goal Setting and Evaluation: Are You Positive?

By Mike Clayton

can still remember taking the oath of office when I was commissioned as an officer from Annapolis. We all had to repeat the phrase, "I do solemnly swear or affirm that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same..."

What an impact that statement made on me! I really felt like I was a defender of freedom, that I could and would do anything to serve my country faithfully.

I've been out of the military for a few years now, but I still feel a tremendous sense of pride from taking that oath and the time I spent serving our nation. The military does a great job of instilling confidence, pride and discipline in its people. We use some of the same methods the military uses to motivate its soldiers to motivate our wrestlers.

Chapter two of the Championship Training Log deals with goal setting and evaluation but perhaps the most important part of the chapter lies within the develop-

ment of positive mental affirmations. Positive mental affirmations are positive statements that reinforce your own personal goals or the goals of your team. Statements like, "I am confident, I am aggressive, I am a state/national champion!"

I was first introduced to using affirmation statements by Iowa State wrestling legend Mike Land. Mike ran a private gym in Des Moines, Iowa. My mom would drive me 1.5 hours each way once or twice a week. Coach Land used positive mental affirmations at the end of every practice. We would all walk around the mats in a circle and repeat the affirmations to our goals. "I have confidence in my single leg take down, I pin my opponents and I am a state champion!" I really felt that I could take anyone down. I really felt like I was standing on top of the award stand after winning the state championship. I may not have achieved all of my ultimate goals, but I know that I achieved much more than I would have without that influence.

Affirmation cards were another tool

Coach Land used widely. He told us to fill out the affirmation cards and put them somewhere we would see and read them everyday. I put one inside my locker at school and one on the mirror in our bathroom at home. Every day I would see those goals. Goals that I had written. They were there in front of me in my own words and it would cause me to think about my schedule for that day. Did my plans include any training to help me reach my goals? I'd question if my plans away from wrestling were going to help put me closer to reaching my goals or if they would take away from my chances of achieving them. Those cards helped me stay positive and focused on the goals I set for myself.


I just ran into the father of one of our Army wrestling campers and he told me that his son still has his affirmation statements hanging on the mirror in their bathroom. He mentioned that when family and friends visit and use the bathroom that they come out all pumped up and ready to wrestle!

Dr. Nate Zinsser is the sports psychologist in charge of the Center for Enhanced Performance at West Point. When speaking to athletes he often asks what percent of success is contributed to mental attitude. Many in the group reply that from 80-90% of athletic success relates directly to mental confidence and focus. Then he asks how much training time each athlete devotes to training his or her mind... It's normally a far cry from 80-90%.

That's the beauty of the Championship Training Log! Each and every day during your wrestling season you'll write down daily goals, review monthly and career goals and write statements that keep you positive and focused on your goals. You'll train your mind each and every day to stay focused on the task at hand while you analyze your training habits. You'll improve your chances of overcoming obstacles that might keep you from achieving your goals.


Do you solemnly affirm your commitment to success in wrestling? Are you courageous enough to make the right decisions each day that will help you stay focused on your goals? Will you support and defend your goals? Be truly faithful to your self. Start today. Take your oath of wrestling!

I hope to see you... in Session 6
Editors Note: Mike Clayton is the head assistant coach for the Army Wrestling Team at West Point, NY and the Author of the Championship Training Log for Wrestling. The Championship Training Log is available on the web at: www.Session6wrestling.com.



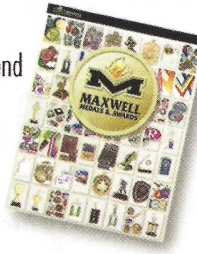
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