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LITTLE THINGS

QUOTES OF THE WEEK:

MONDAY:

"It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."
John Wooden

TUESDAY:

"Your big goals will never be achieved unless you achieve the little things first."
Coach Mackey

WEDNESDAY:

"Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned." Peter Marshall

THURSDAY:

"If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed."
Admiral William H. McRaven

FRIDAY:

"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together."
Vincent Van Gogh

WEEK 32

LITTLE THINGS CONTENT OVERVIEW



COACHES

Demonstrate how little things create big differences.



CAPTAINS

Earn the title of leader through small acts.



ATHLETES

Control little things to gain control of big things.



FAMILY

Enjoy the little things.



LITTLE THINGS

Everyone loves celebrating the big things. The trophies, the big wins, the acceptance letters. They're all big achievements, and they are certainly worthy of celebration, but people tend to forget all of the little things that had to happen to make those big things a reality.

Every goal achieved is a culmination of a lot of little actions. Reaching a new squat PR is a culmination of thousands of single reps made over the course of days, weeks, and years. Beating our best time is a culmination of shaving thousandths of a second off laps made over the course of days, weeks, and years.

It all requires steadfast purpose and the will to persevere to get just one more rep, just one more lap, add just one more pound, drop just one more tenth of a second.

But, because the focus is so often on celebrating the big things instead of the little victories, we sometimes buy the lie that it's only important to be successful in the big things. That if we're excellent on game day, we don't have to work as hard in the off-season, or excel in the classroom.

It doesn't work that way, though. How we handle the little things expresses how we'll handle the big things. If we can't be trusted to take care of the little things, how can anyone trust us to handle the big things? If we're complacent in practice, we'll be complacent during the game. But if we give our all to the practice, we'll give our all in the game.

If we want to find success on the field or court for the big wins, we need to commit to giving our best at the little things first. Over time, the little things will add up to become the big things.

WEEK 32

LITTLE THINGS FOR COACHES



LITTLE THINGS: FOR COACHES

In the original *Karate Kid*, Mr. Miyagi teaches Daniel-san the basic moves by having him use repetitive motions to wash the car, paint the house, etc. Of course, the kid has no idea that this is what's going on, so he starts to lose his temper until Mr. Miyagi demonstrates why those little tasks, performed over and over, have added up to make a big difference.

The drills we have our athletes perform serve the same function, and it's easy to assume that they understand why we're having them do these little things. But do they really get it? Does it actually hit home for them, or are they just going through the motions because we said so?

Instead of taking for granted that our players understand why we focus on the little things, help them connect the dots from those little things to the big achievements. For example, we can take a passing drill and explain how that drill has helped (or would have helped) in a recent game where a good pass (or a bad pass) lead to a victory (or defeat). Then, we can go a step further and show how that passing drill is combined with a shooting drill, which is combined with an endurance exercise, to build a full skillset.

It's all about transparency and openness. We want to be sure our athletes understand not just what is expected of them, but also how that expected action helps them and how it helps us to trust them. If a player isn't giving her all in a drill, how can we expect her to give her all in the game? To us, the connection is clear, but it might not be to our players.

THIS WEEK, BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR:

1. **Opportunities to SHOW how a little drill makes a big difference.** As with the example above, take a simple, frequent drill and tie it directly to something that actually happened in a recent game (season or preseason, last season if necessary). Then, build on that to show how that drill combines with other unrelated drills to achieve the desired goal.
2. **Opportunities to LOOK at how different stats add up to a win.** Statistics are helpful because they are concrete measurements of success. They don't tell the whole story of a game, but they can help athletes get a better visual of how many little stats combine to lead to a win.
3. **Opportunities for athletes to EARN trust.** Articulate the ways that athletes can earn trust on and off the field. Maybe that's helping to clean up equipment after practice, taking extra time to practice passing or hitting with a teammate, or taking the initiative to seek out tutoring for a class they aren't excelling in. The point is to make sure that athletes know that the little things impact your trust in them for the bigger things.

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LITTLE THINGS: FOR CAPTAINS

Leadership has to be earned before it is given, just like respect. Before you can become a leader, you have to put in the work that a leader would. Being elected as a leader of your team is like earning a job promotion. You have to prove that you can do the work before you will be given the promotion or raise.

The way you earn the promotion is through little acts. Things like helping to clean up equipment after practice, helping to settle issues between teammates before they grow and combust, and putting in extra effort in practice and on your own time.

None of these things on their own is sufficient. You can't just do one extra set of reps, or run an extra half mile, during one practice every now and then to show how dedicated you are to working hard. You can't just help a teammate practice his swing on one occasion and expect that to show that you're dedicated to your teammates.

The dedication is apparent after several small acts like this over a long period of time. Together, they build a picture for your teammates that you are in this for them, and that big picture is what earns you the respect and qualification to be a team leader.

Once you've earned the title, that doesn't mean you get to stop doing those little things, either. In fact, the position of team leader anchors you to the responsibility of completing those little tasks even more. If you don't continue to put in the effort that earned you that position in the first place, you will end up losing the position.

To maintain your teammate's trust and respect for you as a leader, you have to focus on the little things.

/// CAPTAINS' LOG ///**"LEADERS ALWAYS LEAD"**

What are some little things that you do now to show you deserve to be a team leader?

What other little things could you be doing?

Why is it important for you to maintain the trust and respect of your teammates?

Why should your teammates trust and respect you?

How do your actions now support your answer to #4? What other actions could you take to add support to that?

WEEK 32

LITTLE THINGS FOR ATHLETES



LITTLE THINGS: FOR ATHLETES

Sometimes your goals or dreams may seem too big to achieve, but everything is possible if you break it down into smaller pieces. It helps if you start with the big goal and work backward.

Say your goal is to finish the school year with a 4.0 GPA, all straight As.

- What has to be achieved to do that? Well, you have to get an A in geometry, English, chemistry, etc.
- What do you have to do to get an A in each of those? Study regularly.
- What do you need to be able to study? You have to have paid attention in class to take notes.
- What do you need to be able to pay attention? A good night's sleep.
- How do you get that? By turning off the phone an hour before a set sleep time.

There are lots of places in there where you can break things down further to get even smaller tasks that can be easily completed to build up the little victories toward achieving the big (possibly daunting) goal you've set. For example, the answer to "what do you have to do to get an A in each class?" could be "Turn in all homework assignments on time," which would lead you to a different set of questions to reach another goal.

Success breeds success. If you work on harvesting success in little things, they will grow into bigger success. Even something as small as making your bed in the morning can be a little success that helps lead to the next little success of eating a healthy breakfast, and the next little success of making it to school on time.

As these little things keep accumulating, you set the stage for success in the larger areas, like getting As in all of your classes.

ATHLETE'S EXERCISE:

1. What are five little things you can do every day before noon to breed success?
2. How will those five things help you succeed throughout the day?
3. Think of a big goal that you have. How can you break that down into smaller, more readily achievable pieces?
4. Why is it important to do at least one little thing successfully early in the day?
5. Why should you celebrate the little accomplishments?

WEEK 32

LITTLE THINGS FOR FAMILY



LITTLE THINGS: FOR FAMILY

The little things that happen to our children are what transform them into the adults they will become. This includes some things that are completely unrelated to us and that we won't even be around for—like the chemistry experiment that made them want to pursue chemical engineering, or the first time they were asked out on a date in the halls between classes.

But it also includes a lot of things that are directly related to us, like the chores we assign, the little acts we do that instill our family values, and the time we spend together having dinner or playing games. These things seem small, but they make a big difference over time.

We all know that our kids grow up too fast. It's a cliché for a reason. But even knowing that every time we look up it seems like he's grown another two inches or she's given away another beloved toy, it's still a shock if we think about how little time we really get with our kids.

We know they have to leave the nest someday, but it's hard to prepare for how big of a change that will really be. Before they graduate from high school, we see a lot of our kids face-to-face. Once they move out, especially if they move far away, we won't get that in-person connection anywhere close to as often as we do now.

That's why it's important to pay attention to the little things. The small conversations and interactions we have daily with our children will make a big difference later in their lives. That doesn't mean cramming everything we've ever wanted to say to our kids into one giant conversation over a three-day weekend. But, it does mean noticing and appreciating the opportunities that we have to pass on little nuggets of wisdom and praise.

Time flies faster than we'd like, but we can enjoy all the little moments with our children while it does.

/// BEST 5 ///

THE BEST FIVE MINUTES OF THE WEEK

Do you take time to appreciate the little moments with each other?

How can you continue to do so, or how can you do more of that?

What's a recent little moment that you enjoyed?
What's a recent little moment that your child enjoyed?

What are some ways that you could spend more time interacting with your kids in-person?

Do you think face-to-face interaction is better than talking on the phone or online, or vice versa? Why?

● **Little Things Worksheet**

In the big rectangle below, write down your big goal. In the remaining spaces, write down the next steps or little things that will help you reach that big goal. Keep working down from the big goal until you reach the smallest things that you need to do to make the goal happen.
