



**Volleyball  
Canada**

# **The PERSON Pillar**

## Workbook

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# COMMON NEEDS

**belongingness**  
**esteem**

# Belonging

Trying to fit in is the enemy of belonging. When we try to fit in, we change ourselves to fit with the situation or the group. In doing so, we often hide our imperfections and show up as inauthentic versions of ourselves. When we experience true belonging, we feel accepted as our authentic selves.

**List the places where you feel you belong (ex: with certain people, groups, teams, communities, places, etc.).**

1

**What is it about these places that make you feel a sense of belonging?**

2

**How have you changed yourself or hidden parts of yourself to fit in? How did it feel to do so?**

3

**What can you do to show your teammates they belong and that you accept them as they are?**

4

# Build your self-esteem road

Fill in each brick in the road by answering the questions on this page. Keep this page in your training bag or somewhere you will see it often to remind yourself of the things that make you special.



**A**  
3 OF MY SIGNATURE STRENGTHS ARE...

**B**  
3 OF MY MOST PROUD ACHIEVEMENTS ARE...

**C**  
3 COMPLIMENTS I'VE RECEIVED THAT MADE ME FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF WERE...

**D**  
3 CHALLENGES I'VE OVERCOME WERE...

**E**  
8 THINGS THAT MAKE ME SPECIAL AND UNIQUE ARE...

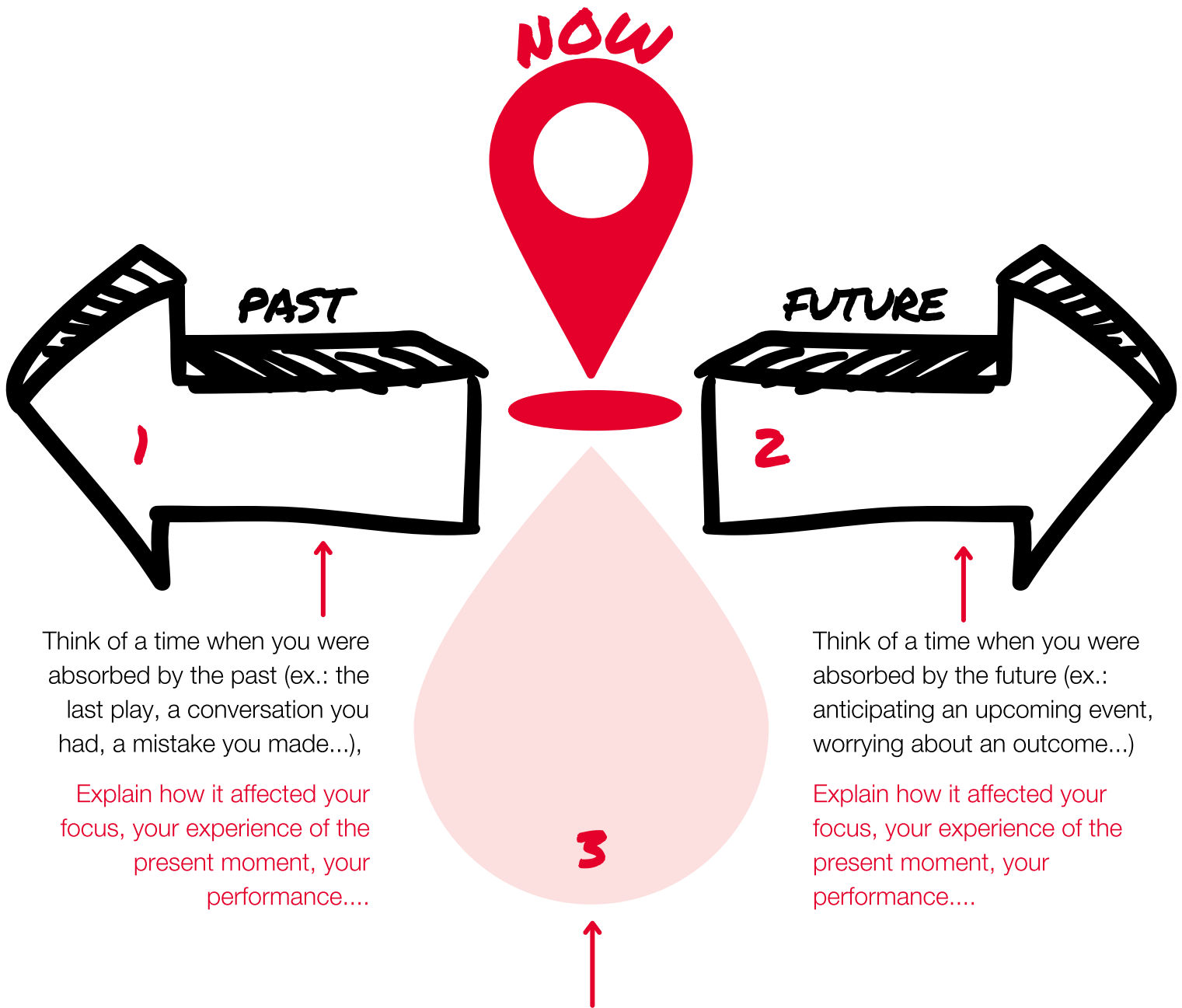


# CONNECTION

to the present moment

# The power of NOW

Reflect on how your engagement with the present moment has affected your experiences in volleyball.



Think of a time when you were absorbed by the past (ex.: the last play, a conversation you had, a mistake you made...),

Explain how it affected your focus, your experience of the present moment, your performance....

Think of a time when you were absorbed by the future (ex.: anticipating an upcoming event, worrying about an outcome...)

Explain how it affected your focus, your experience of the present moment, your performance....

Think of a time when you were so dialed into a moment that you were unaware of anything going on outside of that moment.

Explain how it affected your focus, your experience of the present moment, your performance....

**Challenge:** Over the next week, try to bring your full attention to the present moment during one activity that you do regularly, such as eating, brushing your teeth, or taking a shower. Notice how the experience changes when you're fully present. If you find yourself getting distracted, gently bring your attention back to the present moment.



# Destination: Here & Now

Connecting to our senses is a great way to connect to the present moment as we only experience our senses right here and now. Try these tools to connect to the present moment. Notice which one you like best and practice it regularly.

## GROUNDING

Take a moment to name...



**5**

things you see



**4**

things you can touch



**3**

things you hear



**2**

things you smell



**1**

thing you taste

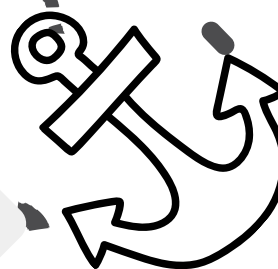
## ANCHORING

Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Bring your full attention to the physical connection of your feet with the ground. Notice the ground beneath you, supporting you, and the energy in the bottom of your feet. Try to focus on these sensations for 30 seconds.

HOW  
DID YOU FEEL  
BEFORE, DURING,  
AND AFTER THE  
GROUNDING  
EXERCISE?

WHAT  
COULD YOU  
ANCHOR TO IN A GAME  
OR PRACTICE? (E.G., YOUR  
BREATH, THE SOUNDS  
AROUND YOU, YOUR  
FEET ON THE  
COURT...)

HOW  
DID YOU FEEL  
BEFORE, DURING,  
AND AFTER THE  
ANCHORING  
EXERCISE?





# CONNECTION

to self

# Understand your **VALUES**

Your values are what you stand for and what is most important to you, guiding how you want to live each moment of your life. Knowing your values can help guide your actions, clarify your goals, and fuel your motivation.

## What are your values?

Read through this list of values, taking a few moments to think about each of them and to notice what they mean for you. Circle the values that are most important to you and feel free to add any others that you think of.

|                       |                      |                        |                        |                     |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>AUTHENTICITY</b>   | <b>DETERMINATION</b> | <b>KNOWLEDGE</b>       | <b>RELATIONSHIPS</b>   | <b>ACHIEVEMENT</b>  |
| <b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b> | <b>EXCELLENCE</b>    | <b>LEADERSHIP</b>      | <b>RESPECT</b>         | <b>LEARNING</b>     |
| <b>ADVENTURE</b>      | <b>FAIRNESS</b>      | <b>LOVE</b>            | <b>SELF-AWARENESS</b>  | <b>PLEASURE</b>     |
| <b>FAMILY</b>         | <b>FAITH</b>         | <b>BRAVERY</b>         | <b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>  | <b>SERVICE</b>      |
| <b>AUTONOMY</b>       | <b>FUN</b>           | <b>LOYALTY</b>         | <b>CARING</b>          | <b>PASSION</b>      |
| <b>BALANCE</b>        | <b>GROWTH</b>        | <b>COMPETITIVENESS</b> | <b>FLEXIBILITY</b>     | <b>FRIENDSHIP</b>   |
| <b>HUMILITY</b>       | <b>HAPPINESS</b>     | <b>OPENNESS</b>        | <b>SECURITY</b>        | <b>CONTRIBUTION</b> |
| <b>COMPASSION</b>     | <b>HUMOR</b>         | <b>OPTIMISM</b>        | <b>SELF-RESPECT</b>    | <b>CREATIVITY</b>   |
| <b>COMMUNITY</b>      | <b>INTEGRITY</b>     | <b>PEACE</b>           | <b>STABILITY</b>       | <b>SPIRITUALITY</b> |
| <b>HARD-WORK</b>      | <b>JOY</b>           | <b>FREEDOM</b>         | <b>SUCCESS</b>         | <b>RESILIENCE</b>   |
| <b>COLLABORATION</b>  | <b>JUSTICE</b>       | <b>HONESTY</b>         | <b>TRUSTWORTHINESS</b> | <b>PRESENCE</b>     |
| <b>PERSISTENCE</b>    | <b>KINDNESS</b>      | <b>CURIOSITY</b>       | <b>WISDOM</b>          | <b>HEALTH</b>       |

From the ones you have circled, narrow it down to your top 3, asking yourself "who do I want to be in life and in sports?".

My 3 core values are:

Why these values are important to me:

3 actions I can take this week to act in alignment with my values:

# Find your **WHY**

It is easy to get caught up chasing a dream without taking the time to reflect on why you really want to pursue it and how you want to experience its pursuit. Motivation can be categorized on a spectrum from internal motivation (enjoyment, pursuit of mastery) to external motivation (recognition, prizes, parental pressure). Athletes who are primarily motivated by internal factors are more likely to sustain their motivation in the long term and be resilient to the challenges they face.

1 What brings you joy in volleyball?

2 Why do you compete in volleyball?

Ex.: I love this activity; this is just what I do; I see the benefits to my health; this is what I should do; this is what others think I should do.

3 What do you want your journey to bring you?

Ex.: friendships and connections; challenges; the opportunity to push myself...

# Your training journal

Journaling is an excellent way to increase self-awareness, understand thought patterns, build accountability, track progress, and fuel confidence. Try these journal prompts for your next training session. Choose a few questions to continue journaling on a regular basis.

**BEFORE**

**What are you doing?**

**Why are you doing this?**

**AFTER**

**What went well? List 3 wins.**

**What was challenging?**

**What can you change for next time?**



# CONNECTION

to others

# Active listening

Active listening is a skill that vastly improves communication. Being an active listener will allow you to improve your connection to your team and anyone you interact with.

**Here is a 5-step process for active listening:**



## Be present

Eliminate distractions (e.g. put your phone away).  
Give them your full attention.



## Be open

Face the person, make eye contact, relax and uncross your limbs.



## Give space

Hold silence.  
Give the other person space to think and express themselves.



## Understand

Pay attention to what they are saying, not what you will say next!



## Engage

Demonstrate your understanding.  
Ask follow-up questions about what they said.

**Try these active listening skills in 2 conversations you will have this week. Choose one scenario that may be uncomfortable (ex.: a class you don't like) and one that may be more comfortable (ex.: hanging out with a friend). Come back and reflect on your conversations.**

**SCENARIO 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT DID YOU DO WELL?**

**WHAT WAS CHALLENGING?**

**WHICH STEP DO YOU WANT TO WORK ON THE MOST?**

**SCENARIO 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT DID YOU DO WELL?**

**WHAT WAS CHALLENGING?**

**WHICH STEP DO YOU WANT TO WORK ON THE MOST?**

# Effective communication

Communicating assertively is essential for strong connections with others. Assertive communication means demonstrating care for others while challenging directly.



## Care for others

Caring personally means you consider how your words will impact the person you're speaking with and demonstrate that their needs are important to you.



## Challenge directly

Challenging directly and openly means expressing your thoughts and needs, sharing what is working and what could improve, and doing so in a direct, clear and specific manner.

**TAKE A LOOK AT THESE 4 QUADRANTS TO FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLES. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR TYPICAL COMMUNICATION STYLE?**

### CARE FOR OTHERS

#### PASSIVE

Not expressing your thoughts to avoid hurting feelings or shaking the boat, at the expense of long-term benefit to you and/or others.

#### ASSERTIVE

Clear, specific, sincere, kind;  
Adapting your communication to the individual;  
Addressing the problem rather than someone's character.

**DESCRIBE A TIME YOU DEMONSTRATED HIGH LEVELS OF CARE FOR A TEAMMATE. HOW DID IT GO?**

### CHALLENGE DIRECTLY

#### PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE

Giving insincere praise;  
Speaking behind another's back instead of addressing them directly;  
Sarcastic responses.

#### AGGRESSIVE

Brutally honest;  
Saying it like it is;  
Little care for how your words are received;  
Attacking someone's character.

**DESCRIBE A TIME YOU CHALLENGED A TEAMMATE DIRECTLY. HOW DID IT GO?**





# Practice assertive communication!

What is a challenging situation you're facing or that you anticipate facing? Think of an assertive way to address it.

**NOTE: TRY USING "I" STATEMENTS AS THIS BRINGS THE FOCUS TOWARDS YOUR FEELINGS AND NEEDS, RATHER THAN PLACING BLAME ON OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, INSTEAD OF SAYING "YOU WERE MEAN WHEN...", SAY "I FELT HURT WHEN..."**

## SITUATION

**EX: MY TEAMMATE MADE A COMMENT THAT WAS HURTFUL TOWARDS ME DURING A GAME.**

**EX: MY COACH DOESN'T GIVE ME AS MUCH PLAYING TIME AS I WOULD LIKE.**

## ASSERTIVE RESPONSE

**EX: AFTER THE GAME, I SAY "I FELT HURT BY THE COMMENT YOU MADE EARLIER."**

**EX: "HEY COACH! I NOTICED I HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING MUCH PLAYING TIME RECENTLY. IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO TO CHANGE THAT? YOUR FEEDBACK IS MEANINGFUL TO ME."**

**What barriers might you face in trying to be assertive?**

**How can you manage these barriers?**

**Remember: It's not me versus you, but rather us versus the problem!**



# CARE

for self

# Manage your mental battery

To perform at our best, we need to have a charged mental battery. It is important to recognize when this mental battery is getting low so we can recharge it, take steps to minimize how quickly it drains, and develop habits to charge it proactively.

**WHAT CHARGES YOUR BATTERY?**  
**EX.: READING, YOGA CLASS, SEEING A FRIEND, SLEEP...**



**THINKING OF THE LAST WEEK, HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU ENGAGE IN THESE BEHAVIOURS THAT CHARGE YOUR BATTERY? IS THIS ENOUGH FOR YOU?**



**CREATE A ROUTINE FOR ONE OF YOUR RECHARGE HABITS.**  
**EX.: I WILL DO 15 MINUTES OF YOGA, FIRST THING AFTER WAKING UP, IN MY LIVING ROOM.**

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

WHEN WILL YOU DO IT?

WHERE WILL YOU DO IT?



**WHAT DRAINS YOUR BATTERY?**  
**EX.: SCROLLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA, SPENDING A LOT OF TIME WITH PEOPLE...**



**HOW CAN YOU MINIMIZE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT DRAIN YOUR BATTERY?**  
**EX.: GET OFF MY PHONE BY 8 PM.**



# Self-Compassion

Self-compassion means you show yourself the kindness and understanding you would show a friend in a moment of suffering. It has 3 main components:

## MINDFULNESS

Openly observe what you're feeling, without ignoring or exaggerating your emotions.

## COMMON HUMANITY

Recognize we all experience suffering, pain, and feelings of inadequacy. You are not alone.

## SELF-KINDNESS

Be warm and understanding towards yourself, rather than self-critical.

**THINK OF SOMETHING YOU'RE EXPERIENCING THAT MAKES YOU FEEL PAIN OR INADEQUACY, OR WHERE YOU'RE BEING HARD ON YOURSELF.**

**Label what you are feeling.**

**EX: "I FEEL FRUSTRATED."**

**Recognize you are not alone.**

**EX: "OTHER ATHLETES FEEL THIS WAY TOO."**

**Say something nice and supportive.**

**EX: "MAY I BE PATIENT WITH MYSELF."**

(Neff, 2003)

**SELF-CRITICISM**

**SELF-COMPASSION**

## How would you treat a friend?

How do you speak to and comfort a teammate when they are struggling? Take note of the tone you use.

1

How do you speak to yourself when you are struggling? Take note of the tone you use.

2

How does the way you speak to yourself compare to the way you speak to a teammate in a challenging moment?

3

How could your performance and experience change if you spoke to yourself the way you spoke to your teammate?

4



**CARE**  
**for others**

# The gift of empathy

Empathy is understanding and caring about what other people are feeling. It is putting yourself in their shoes to feel what they are feeling. In demonstrating empathy, you show the other person that they are not alone in their suffering.

## HOW TO SHOW EMPATHY

### 1 BE CURIOUS (not judgmental).

Be open, listen actively, hold space.



### 2 UNDERSTAND THEIR PERSPECTIVE

What is it like to be in their shoes?



### 4 VALIDATE + ENCOURAGE

"I hear you, that sounds hard. Thank you for sharing this with me."



### 3 RECOGNIZE THEIR EMOTION

Read their body language, their expressions, their tone of voice.



## Reflect

### BEWARE OF EMPATHY PITFALLS:

#### Looking for the bright side

**"AT LEAST..."**

Looking for a silver lining in their struggle devalues their experience.

#### Comparing their story to yours

**"WHEN THAT HAPPENED TO ME I..."**

Making the moment about you demonstrates a lack of care for them.

#### Trying to make things better

**"DID YOU TRY THIS..."**

When we don't know how to listen and care, we often try to give solutions and advice.

Think of a time someone showed you empathy.  
Explain how it felt.

Think of a time you felt empathy for a teammate. Explain what you felt.

Look at the 4 steps of empathy (top right) and the empathy pitfalls (bottom left). How can you strengthen your skill of empathy?

How does empathy help you be a better teammate?

# Be a gold medal teammate



A gold medal teammate realizes their impact goes beyond their performance. Every time you show up to train and compete, you can impact the team far beyond your own play by raising the level of your teammates. The first and most important step is caring deeply for the people with whom you share the court.

*WHEN YOU COMMIT TO  
HELPING AND SUPPORTING  
YOUR TEAMMATES, YOU MAKE  
THEM BETTER PLAYERS, YOU  
CREATE A CARING CULTURE,  
AND YOU LIFT THE LEVEL OF  
EXCELLENCE IN YOUR TEAM.*

**Make a list of the different things you can commit to doing to help support your teammates this season (ex.: encourage them in the gym, ask them about their life...).**

**What are you doing that may be hurting your team (ex.: gossiping, complaining...)?**

**Who can you support this week?  
How will you support them?**



# CARE

for groups

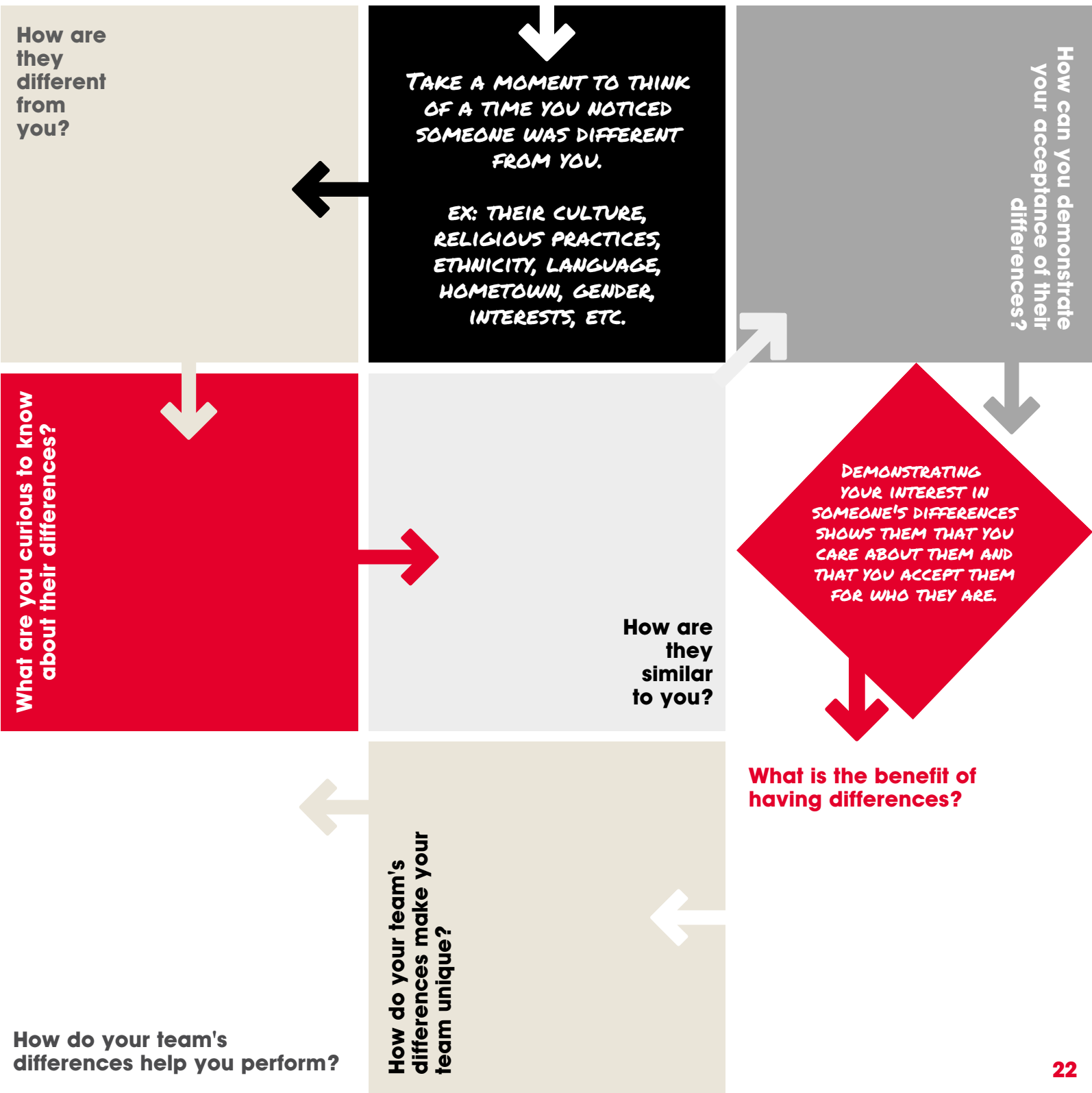


# Curiosity

## **"BE CURIOUS, NOT JUDGMENTAL" -WALT WHITMAN**

Rather than judging someone for their differences, try to be curious about them. When you're curious, you stay open to new ideas and demonstrate acceptance. This in turn can create an environment where others feel safe to be themselves and can embrace their differences.

Follow the arrows to practice being curious.



# Advocacy

To advocate means to speak up and/or act in support of a cause or another's needs.



**1A**

What is an example that you have seen of someone advocating?

**1B**

How do you think it made the person being advocated for feel?

**2**

Have you ever advocated for one of your teammates? If so, how?

**"WHEN THE WORLD IS SILENT, EVEN ONE VOICE BECOMES POWERFUL."**

**-MALALA YOUSAFZAI**

**4**

Take a moment to think of your community. What could you and your team do to contribute positively to different groups in your community?

**3**

If you were in a situation where you felt you had to advocate for someone or a group, how would you do it?

**EXAMPLE SITUATIONS:**

**SOMEONE MAKES A RACIST COMMENT TOWARDS YOUR TEAMMATE. SOMEONE MAKES A HOMOPHOBIC JOKE IN THE LOCKER ROOM. YOU FIND OUT ANOTHER TEAM GETS LESS FUNDING THAN YOURS.**

Example: Organize a food drive for a local food bank. Set up a volleyball clinic for underprivileged youth. Organize a fund-raising tournament for an important cause.



**COURAGE**  
to take risks and fail

# Embrace discomfort

Discomfort is required for growth. It can be scary to leave your comfort zone, but if you never do, you will miss out on opportunities for growth and improvement. Take a moment to look at the diagram on the bottom left of the page and explore what happens when you step out of your comfort zone before answering each question (Dweck, 1999; Page, 2020).

## REFLECT

Think of something you did recently that was uncomfortable for you (ex.: having a hard conversation, running an extra kilometre, training a skill you struggle with...). Describe what you felt.

## ACCEPT

Were you able to sit in the discomfort or did you try to get out of it?



*WHEN YOU LEAVE YOUR COMFORT ZONE, IT IS NORMAL TO FEEL INSECURE, LACK CONFIDENCE, AND FIND EXCUSES - THIS IS THE FEAR ZONE.*

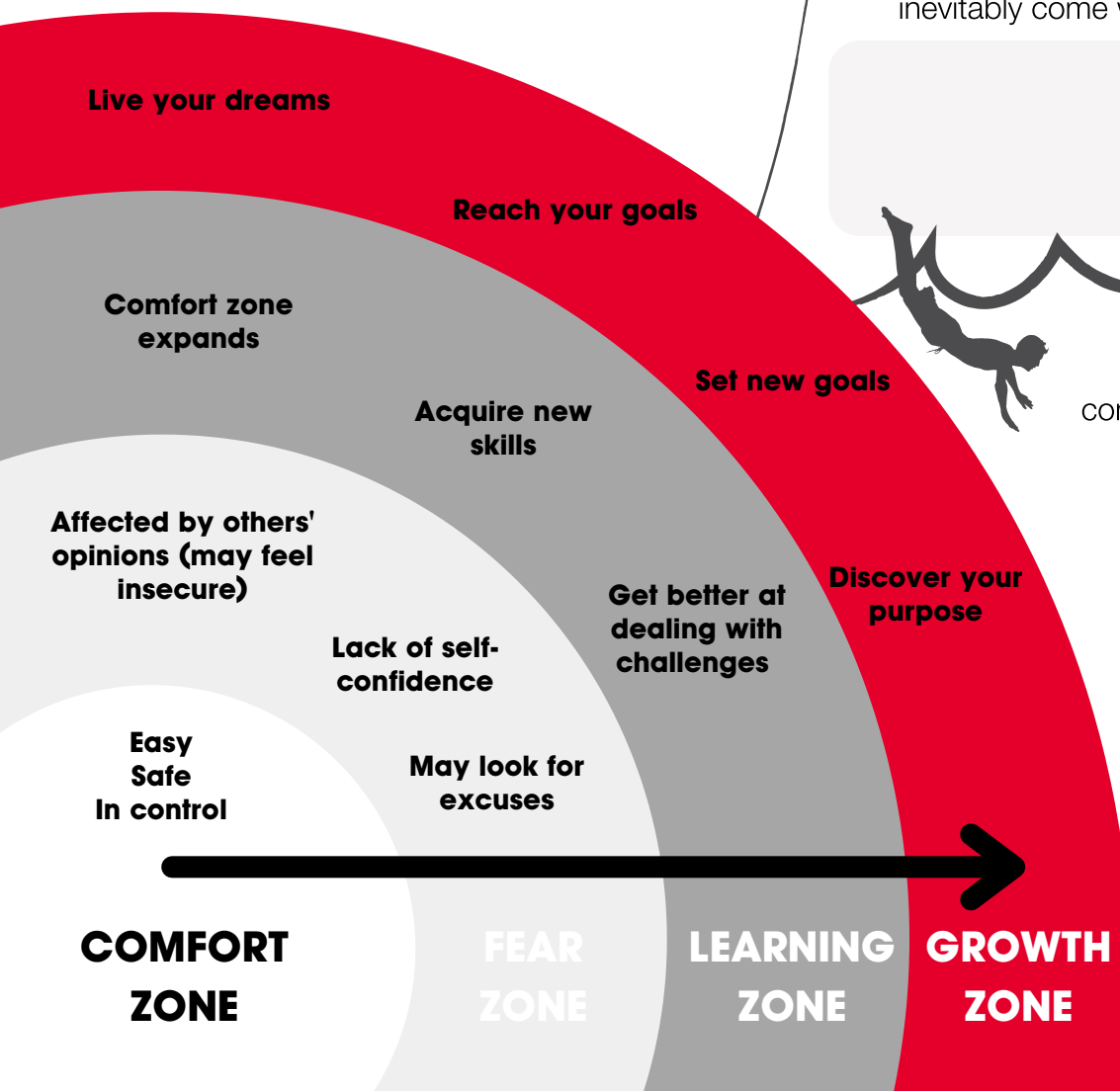


How willing are you to feel the discomfort that will inevitably come with the pursuit of your goals?



## DIVE IN

List 2 things outside of your comfort zone that you can do this week to practice embracing discomfort.



*PRACTICE SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT AND PUSHING THROUGH IT TO GIVE YOURSELF THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND GROW.*

# Manage your intensity

To perform at a high level, it is critical to be aware of the state that is most helpful for you to perform. Understanding your desired intensity for volleyball allows you to identify at any given moment if you need to turn up the heat or cool it down.

## HIGH-INTENSITY

Think of a game in which you were highly intense (ex.: very excited or very stressed). Describe what it felt like (energy level, focus, heart rate...).

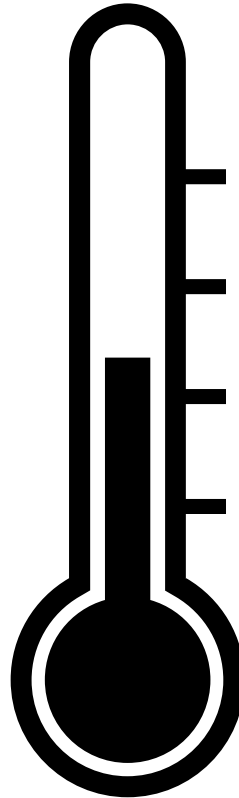


## LOW-INTENSITY

Think of a game in which you were lacking intensity (ex.: you had no energy, weren't motivated...). Describe what it felt like (energy level, focus, heart rate...).



Extreme  
excitement



Deep sleep

## YOUR OPTIMAL INTENSITY

What is your optimal level of intensity to perform in volleyball?

My optimal intensity  
(between 1 and 10) is:



My feelings, actions, and sensations  
when I'm in this state are...

## FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING

Breathing is a powerful tool. By breathing in strategic patterns, you can increase, maintain, or decrease your intensity level to reach your desired level. Try each of these patterns for 1 minute and reflect on how they affect you.

### UP BREATHING

Inhale for 6 seconds,  
Exhale for 4 seconds.

How do you feel?

↑  
INCREASES  
INTENSITY

### EVEN BREATHING

Inhale for 5 seconds,  
Exhale for 5 seconds.

How do you feel?

=  
MAINTAINS  
INTENSITY

### DOWN BREATHING

Inhale for 4 seconds,  
Exhale for 6 seconds.

How do you feel?

↓  
DECREASES  
INTENSITY

NEVER WA I I'M SO EXCITED! BRING IT ON.  
JUST **Optimize your inner voice** OWN IT!

DO IT! Think back to a game in which you were not playing well, your team was losing or you were feeling overly stressed. Try to imagine yourself back in that challenging moment and take note of the thoughts you were having.

I DESERVE TO BE HERE. I AM SO  
I'VE GOT THIS. ENJOY GOOD

**What thoughts  
do you typically have in  
challenging moments?**

**Look  
through the  
thoughts you wrote  
down. Are they  
helpful to you?  
If yes, keep it up!  
If no, go to C.**

**Translate your  
unhelpful thoughts into  
more helpful thoughts:**

**CREATE YOUR MANTRA**

d  
Using your thoughts in C,  
create a mantra for these  
challenging moments. Keep it  
short, simple, and meaningful.  
You may draw inspiration  
from the mantras written all  
over this page.

BE ALL IN. LIVE IT!  
GO FOR IT.  
DARE TO BE GREAT.  
OWN IT!



# **COURAGE**

**to commit and persevere**

# Goal-setting

Setting goals gives you a direction to move towards, drives motivation, guides your efforts, and builds resilience. Starting with your dream goal, work your way down filling in your goals and how you will reach them.

## Dream goal

### Dream goal

One big, ultimate goal.  
ex.: Go to the Olympics.

## Outcome goals

**Outcome goals**  
are outcome-focused and often include some form of comparison.  
ex.: Win junior provincials.

## Performance goals

specify the performance standards you want to achieve.  
ex.: Get 90% of my serves in.

## Process goals

detail the actionable steps you will take to reach your performance goals.  
ex.: After every practice, serve 3 balls to each zone.

## Performance goals

## Process goals

**GRATITUDE.** Don't forget to pause and appreciate what you already have. List 3 things you are grateful for.



# Common goals

Set aside 15 minutes for this team activity.



# Prepare for obstacles

On the road to your goals, you will inevitably encounter obstacles. Anticipating obstacles and planning for them will help you be resilient to whatever comes your way.

Fill the sky with potential obstacles you may face on your way to your goal.

These obstacles might be technical (struggling with my serve), tactical (my team struggles to adapt to a team's offence), physical (an injury), mental (feeling nervous during a big game), social (team dynamics), or environmental (a challenging schedule).

## POTENTIAL OBSTACLES:



From the list you created, choose the 5 obstacles you feel are most probable and come up with a solution for each.

### 5 OBSTACLES:

### SOLUTIONS:

1

2

3

4

5

1

2

3

4

5

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