

“FOR YOU” OR “TO YOU”

“There is nothing in this world good or bad but thinking makes it so.”
-- William Shakespeare.

Something struck me as I was watching the Olympics recently. It was the power of mind-set over the performance and longevity of the athletes. There were many examples of the favorite underdogs achieving Olympic glory. The difference that I saw was the mental edge that the winners had. In most cases, there was a sense of joyful excitement coupled with total focus on the task at hand.

The winners had been able to let go of the past “failures,” “setbacks,” and “frustrations” and learned to be fully positive and present in the moment of action. Shawn Johnson, Usane Bolt, and Michael Phelps (just to name a few) all had significant challenges in the months and years leading up to their gold medal performances. They could not have continued training without some way of dealing with the difficulties.

What I have seen from champions in any field is the habit of acceptance, and even celebration, at what most of us would consider hardship or tragedy. I remember speaking with Bill Bartmann after one of his presentations. He had been sharing with us how his assets had been seized during bankruptcy. Part of his family’s home was on seized property, and the judge ordered that this part of his house be demolished.

This happened at Christmas time, so he and his wife took cookies and drinks out to the workers who had to work during the holidays. I asked how they could do this when the workers were the ones who were destroying his home. He replied that the workers were just doing their jobs, and that it was probably very difficult for them, too.

He also said that, long ago, both he and his wife had chosen to develop their belief that nothing “bad” ever happened to them, but that everything served a positive purpose. In other words, things happened for him, and not to him. This is the champion’s mind-set and one of the reasons that Bill continues to achieve spectacular things and be an inspiration to so many instead of being just another victim.

When you choose to see the good in any situation (or at least trust there is good), you change how are you how your brain and body function. This supports your health,

creativity, and peak performance. You stay in “the zone,” as athletes describe it, and can produce results that are more aligned with your true potential. On the flip side, when you choose to view events as “bad”, your psychology does the opposite, and you perform far below your natural ability.

How do you develop this champion mind-set? Like changing or establishing any habit, it takes a conscious choice and lots of practice. You can start by counting your blessings each morning before you start your day and every evening before you drift off to sleep. This will train your subconscious to be more sensitive to the good you encounter every day.

Next, remember events/experiences from your past and look for the good outcomes (i.e. what you learned, how you grew, what other opportunities came as a result of that experience, etc.). Start with events that are relatively minor and not too emotionally-charged until you get the hang of it. Once you get good at this, you can practice remembering your new truth in the moment that you are experiencing a set-back. You can even make the choice to celebrate ahead of time all the good that is going to come out of the situation -- even if you can’t see it yet. This will totally change your experience and give you more clarity to move through it faster.

Realize that the attitude you choose to have will not change the facts of the situation but can make it either harder or easier on you. “For you” or “to you” -- victor or victim -- the choice is yours.