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Building Character Through Soccer

Teamwork:

To work together as a group toward a common goal
Synonyms: collaboration, cooperation, coordination

Teamwork Story

A title to an article written on August 24th, 2014 was, "OSU's Urban Meyer Says Teamwork Will Pull Buckeyes Through." There are few national sports storylines this past year that demonstrate "Teamwork" as does the improbable 2014 Ohio State Football team BCS National Championship.

That article was written before Meyer was aware that OSU would lose a Heisman caliber quarterback, Braxton Miller, before the season started and then an equally talented second string backup quarterback, JT Barrett against Michigan with the final four games remaining in the season. That left Coach Meyer calling on the untried third string quarterback, Cardale Jones for the championship run.

The article was written before the Buckeyes lost the home opener to Virginia Tech who finished 7-6 for the 2014 season. And the article came out before Kosta Karageorge, an OSU lineman and teammate, was found dead on Nov. 30th after he had been missing for 4 days. So how does a coach keep a team focused on their goals when these events are taking place? Teamwork.

Meyer attributes winning to commitment, teamwork and positive results, but none of that can be achieved without trust. Meyer says, "Building a "Brotherhood of Trust," took the team from a culture of whining and complaining to a culture of accountability and positive leadership."

Meyer credits OSU success to a Navy Seal approach to a "small unit cohesion." "Winning is not going to happen if I don't know you and you do not know me. How are you going to develop trust in me? I can take a small group and I can find a way to get that group to believe in me. Because if we take care of our business and we get each group to do their business, guess what happens on game day?"

Jamie Dimon, the chairman and CEO of JP Morgan Chase (250,000 employees) met with the team several weeks after their win. Mr. Dimon said, "Teamwork doesn't mean to go along to get along, but that it means to be loyal to principals...to work as hard as your teammates....to tell the truth... and that it is okay to put pressure on each other because at the end of the day you are all part of one team."

Teamwork means putting the team first and our individual interests and achievements a distant second.

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Follow Up Questions:

Write a brief description of a time when your team achieved a goal by working together. What did you learn from the experience?

Write a brief description of how teamwork can aid in achieving long term success.

Write a brief description of a time when you could have been a better teammate.

What practical steps can you take to work better with others in your everyday life?