



# Seeing the Future You Want

Don Shula, former NFL coach of the Miami Dolphins, told his players they had just 24 hours to dwell upon their discouragement after a loss. After that, they needed to get back to work on their future. He was referring to the importance of working on the future they want. Because getting caught up in discouragement means you're dwelling on the future you DON'T want.

Our kids have times when they are discouraged. It's normal, and they are entitled to experience that feeling. But it's helpful to understand that for every moment spent being discouraged, you're building a future you don't want. Discouragement is about doubt and fear. It's based on a worry that you won't get to your desired outcomes; that you'll never make the progress you need to make to accomplish your goals.

So let's give our kids the tools they need to lift them out of discouragement. It begins by telling our kids that they are the producers of their own movie. They get to decide how the story will go. Since they write the script, why not write a good one? Then play the part of movie star, producer, director, usher, and popcorn vendor. Take charge of your movie....it's YOURS to live.

The two main tools we can encourage them to use are these: First, use your imagination to "see" the future you want, not the one you don't want. Imagine how you will be acting, what will you be saying, how will you practice on the way to your future. What kind of thoughts will you have as you build your future in your mind?

The second tool is knowledge. Each athlete will need additional knowledge. They must become a student of their sport. They can't understand what they've never seen or experienced. By carefully listening and watching someone with more experience and knowledge, young athletes can gain a new perspective on the elements of their sport that have been unfamiliar or hidden from them. The key is to gain exposure to more skilled athletes and other knowledgeable coaches who can open their eyes to what they will need to build the future they want.

Remember, they are the stars in their own movie. Their future is a choice. The Rapper, KRS-One says it this way: "Learn to be a friend to your future self."





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## Discussion Guide for Parent and Athlete

1

Invite your children to share the most positive elements from their imagination about their sport experience 12 months in the future.

2

Ask your children to list 3 resources that can be tapped for additional knowledge about their sports.