



LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS

MATTHEW L. DAVIDSON AND VLADIMIR T. KHMELKOV

MATTHEW L. DAVIDSON AND VLADIMIR T. KHMELKOV

EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS

**GUIDE FOR YOUTH LEADERS, YOUTH COACHES,
AND EMERGING YOUTH LEADERS**

Copyright © 2015 by Matthew L. Davidson, Ph.D. and Vladimir T. Khmelkov, Ph.D.

Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)

EXCELLENCE & ETHICS™ KNOWLEDGE & TOOLS FOR:

Intentional culture • Essential competencies • Optimal performance

501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization

216 Fayette Street, Suite 1

Manlius, NY 13104

Phone: 315-692-8054

Fax: 315-692-8091

e-mail: info@excellenceandethics.org

www.excellenceandethics.org

Excellence & Ethics™, Culture of Excellence & Ethics Assessment® and Power2Achieve® are registered trademarks of the Institute for Excellence & Ethics, Inc.

in partnership with

The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center | Drake University

1213 25th Street

Des Moines, IA 50311

Phone: 515-271-1910

Fax: 515-271-1907

www.drake.edu/RayCenter

CONTENTS

Preface: The Secret Ingredient	1
Implementation Guide.....	5
Integrity — Without It Nothing Matters	7
Culture of Trust, Culture of Truth	12
Personal and Collective Responsibility Optimal Performance Self-Study	21
From Goal Setting to Goal Achievement.....	25
Goal Achievement Optimal Performance Self-Study	41
Attitude + Effort = Improvement	45
Attitude+Effort=Improvement Optimal Performance Self-Study	57
Mindset of Motivation and Toughness.....	61
Tough-Mindedness Optimal Performance Self-Study	73
Develop Grow-and-Let-Go Mindset and Focus	77
Mindset & Focus Optimal Performance Self-Study	89
Want to Lead? Learn to Communicate.....	93
Embracing Conflict: Mastering the Art of Care-frontation	103
Communication/Care-frontation Optimal Performance Self-Study	113
Communication/Care-frontation Coaching Practices Self-Study	115
Heart of Leadership/Team Leadership.	119
Team Leadership Optimal Performance Self-Study.....	131

Develop Grow-and-Let-Go Mindset and Focus

Helen Keller famously said,

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.

ONLY through trial and suffering—what a powerful truth about the development of character. Unless or until we experience adversity, hardship, disappointment, our character is not put to the test. Until it is put to the test, it doesn't fully develop.

Some have argued that “sports don't develop character, they reveal it.” We would actually say that whether we're talking sports or anything else that puts our character to the test, it simultaneously DEVELOPS and REVEALS our character: one might break under the strain of some adversity, and this may reveal the current capacity of their character, but as a result of this experience one may also grow and develop and be stronger in the future as a result.

Character is often defined as “values in action.” It's the “in action” piece that is often neglected in the development of character, and that's the wisdom at the core of the Helen Keller quote: it is WHEN and IF you put a value into action that character is developed and revealed. Think about character as a muscle: all muscles have a certain strength capacity. The way a muscle's capacity is developed is by putting it under stress, by working it out.

We understand and accept this truth when it comes to our minds and our bodies, but we often think you're born with your character muscles or that you inherit them. Sure, just like our other muscles, we're all born with certain character gifts or strengths, some of which are a genetic gift of sorts. However, just like any other natural ability, it's only through hard work and deliberate practice that we maximize the potential of our natural abilities.

Bottom line: character is a muscle that must be worked, must be put into action. Our character muscles are not unlike the muscles of our mind: there's book smarts and then there's street smarts. When it comes to character, lots

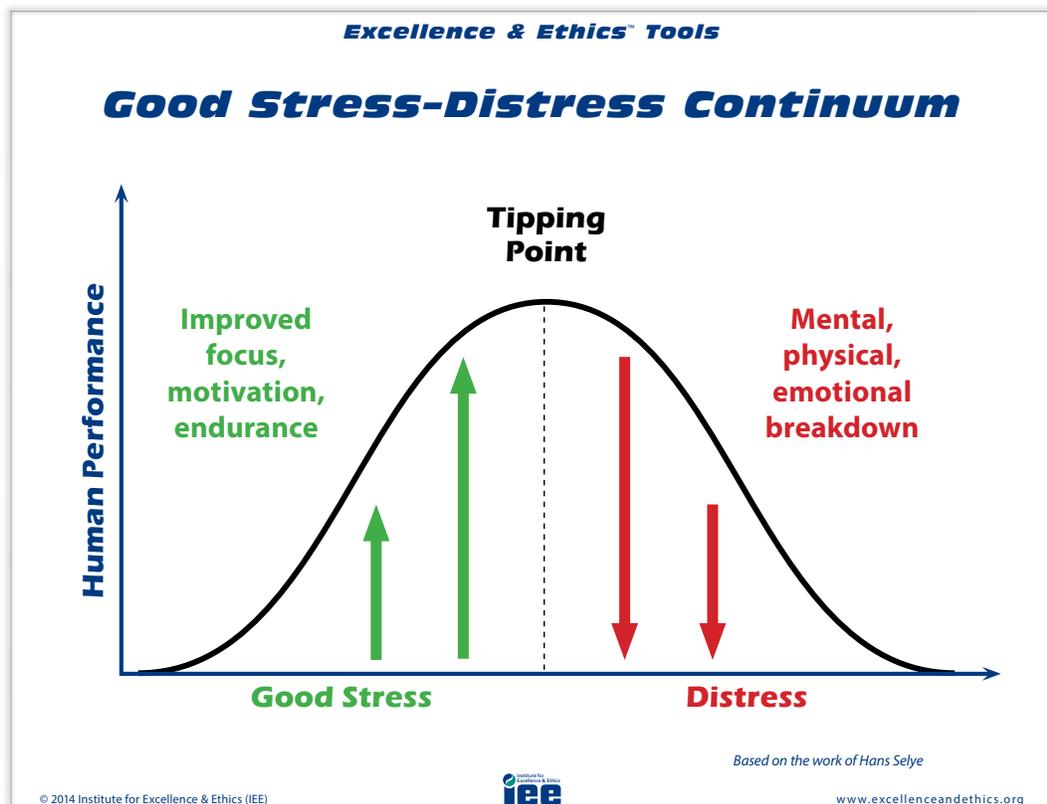
of us are book smart. We have knowledge about character, what it is and why it's important. That's not unimportant, but it's the street smarts about character that Helen Keller is talking about.

Street smarts come from putting your character muscles to the test in the real world challenges—and not simply the ones we choose, but also the ones that choose us. Doing what you don't want to do, when you don't want to do it; doing what life demands of you, even if you wouldn't choose this path—that's when the street smarts of character are really put to the test.

Stress—Life's All-Natural Character Development Supplement

Our character muscle is an interesting muscle in that it is a muscle that is put to the test whenever we put any other muscle to the test. Trying to learn something will test our willpower, attitude, and effort; it will also test our humility and honesty. Any intellectual, physical, emotional or spiritual muscle activates or puts stress on our character muscle.

When it comes to muscle development, it's stress that leads to growth. Too little—and muscles remain weak; too much—and muscles get injured. Just the right amount of stress and you get optimal muscle development. Below is what we call the Good Stress-Distress Continuum.



Research shows that the experience of stress actually improves human performance, including focus, motivation, and endurance. This is what coaches are doing when they create a practice experience designed to push athletes mentally and physically. However, there is a tipping point where good stress becomes distress and where we begin to experience physical and emotional breakdown.

In sport and life, our ability to manage stress is essential. When you manage stress well, you find ways to remain grateful, mindful and joyful—even when your struggles are difficult and painful. On the one hand we often do not like to work out our character muscles (who really likes adversity, right?); on the other hand, we often forget that like any other muscle, your character muscle gets tired too. This explains in part why after being responsible and disciplined on your diet all day long, you binge at ten at night and eat a bag of chips! It also explains why we make bad ethical decisions when we're under great stress.

Like a good strength and conditioning coach in the weight room, the best coaches, parents, and teachers, (and friends) help to “spot you,” helping to allow just the right amount needed for the circumstance and given your particular capabilities and/or sensibilities. Too much or too little, and sooner or later you enter distress either from weakness or from overuse.

Excellence & Ethics™ Tools

Stress Multipliers

Worrying about being perfect.

Worrying about making mistakes.

Worrying about the perception of others.

Hiding struggles or weaknesses.

Worrying about how you compare to others.

Not asking for help.



© 2013 Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)  www.excellenceandethics.org

In our efforts to manage our stress we will need to use lots of different strategies. Different times in our life, different situations, different personalities and preferences all mean that no one strategy will work for everyone. However, there are certain responses to stress that almost always lead to MORE stress.

We want to be careful to avoid STRESS MULTIPLIERS, like worrying about how we compare to others; hiding struggles or weaknesses; being embarrassed if our product or performance isn't perfect; or not asking for help. You'll notice that lots of these "stress multipliers" are also connected to character weaknesses—like bad pride, lack of humility, etc. So it's a circular relationship of sorts: character weaknesses cause more stress; the additional stress tends to overtax and then reveal our character weaknesses.

Mindset and Focus—The Hidden Drivers of Excellence

Through his experience in extreme adversity, Holocaust survivor, Viktor Frankl, identified what he referred to as "the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude, to choose one's own way." In essence, it's our mindset and what we choose to focus on that provides us the greatest character strength—and stress management technique.

“

*Character cannot be developed
in ease and quiet.*

”

In his book *Focus*, Daniel Goleman argues that focus is "the hidden driver of excellence." He also notes that today we are a distracted, burned out, and stressed out population, constantly striving for the next thing, worrying about the past, and obsessing about the future. Our mindset, what we focus on, and how we reframe challenging situations as growth opportunities is one of the essential qualities of great performers in every walk of life. No matter what happens, good or bad, we still have the power to choose our focus, how we approach the challenge, how we respond.

In the [Other-Study about Charlotte Brown](#), we see an example of someone with extraordinary focus. Charlotte Brown has developed amazing "street-smart character experience" from the adversity life has presented to her. She chooses to focus on the factors that are mostly in her control—like focus, strength, speed, work ethic, practice techniques, and coaching support. She lets go of the factors outside of her control, like her eye-sight deficiencies, what people might say or think, and whether she wins or loses.

Focus is a strength of character she has developed, which has built up a resilience in her, which gives her a “character advantage” that fully sighted pole-vaulters she competes with likely do not have. Her focus allows her to reframe her challenges as “good stress,” as muscle-building, which has in turn helped her to achieve optimal performance in spite of her many challenges.

Her coaches and parents act as extraordinary “spotters,” who help keep her safe by providing her the support she needs. They keep her safe and help develop to a higher degree the strengths she does have; they don’t compound her challenges and make her weaker by “wrapping her in bubble wrap,” hovering like helicopters, or bulldozing away the real life challenges she faces. Charlotte Brown has developed what researchers call a “growth mindset,” the ability to grow and let go.

Excellence & Ethics™ Tools

Grow-and-Let-Go Strategies

- » **Embrace challenges** as opportunities to push and stretch yourself.
- » **View mistakes and failures as opportunities to learn.**
- » **Continue to find ways to develop** in areas of weakness.
- » **Seek the help of others.**



© 2013 Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)  www.excellenceandethics.org

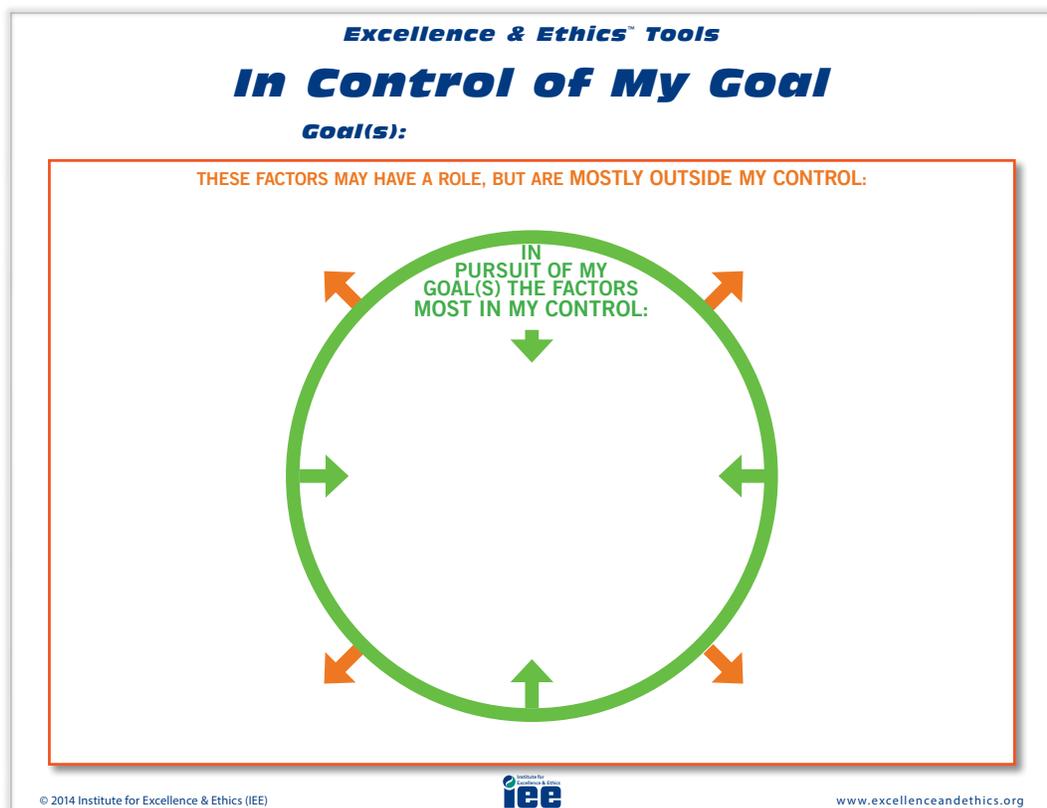
The Grow-and-Let-Go Strategies encourage you to focus on growth, not perception and perfection, and to let go of the past and the things you can’t change. Much of our stress results when we are worried about what others think and when we’re trying to be perfect, which causes us to be afraid of failure or mistakes, to be worried about how we compare to others, to hide

struggles or weaknesses, to feel embarrassment if we're not perfect or as good as others, and to be afraid of asking for help.

Even if you focus on the things that are within our control and adopt a mindset focused on growth, there are still plenty of things we can't change or do anything about. Those are the things we just need to let go of. When we won't let go, we often experience embarrassment, shame, frustration, isolation, depression, etc. We often continue to repeat the same mistakes and we end up causing ourselves even more stress.

FOCUS—on what's in your control

Focus is a hidden driver of excellence, precisely because it is often hidden from the things we commonly think about being in our control to develop. For any goal that you might have in life—any goal whatsoever—there are things you can control and things you cannot.



Joseph Campbell said, “The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek.” We are often afraid of the adversity and challenges we face; ironically, it's in and through the things we most fear, life's challenges and adversities, and in pursuit of noble goals that we find the hidden treasure that lies within

our character muscles. But it's not enough to simply think about these things, we have to put them into action.

Mindset and Focus Strategies Behavior Indicators

Developing the value of focus requires putting it into action consistently so that it becomes a habit. What are some optimal performance indicators of focus?

- focusing on what's in your control
- working hard and smart
- building on your strengths
- improving in an area of (but NOT obsessing about) a weakness
- being radically grateful for everything—for the opportunity, for your strengths, for your challenges
- NOT whining, complaining, or making excuses or blaming outside factors for your struggles
- avoiding perfectionism and fear of failure
- being open to suggestions for improvement
- seeking external help and support as needed.

WHEN you face trial and hardship—and it's not if, but when—these are the things on which to focus. If these become your habits, they become your character; and this strength of character will ensure that your “soul be strengthened, your ambition inspired, and your success achieved.”

Winston Churchill famously said, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” Pursuit of success requires facing down our fear of failure; it means failing forward so that we grow and learn from each loss; it means embracing adversity as an inevitable part of life—a part that often contributes to new growth and enhanced resiliency.

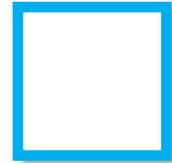
Resources:

Focus (http://www.amazon.com/Focus-Hidden-Excellence-Daniel-Goleman/dp/0062114867/ref=sr_1_1)

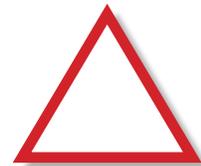
Other Study about Charlotte Brown (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZLMp3rTHIM>)

Squaring Up, Pointing Out, Circling Around...

1. What squares with your beliefs or experiences?



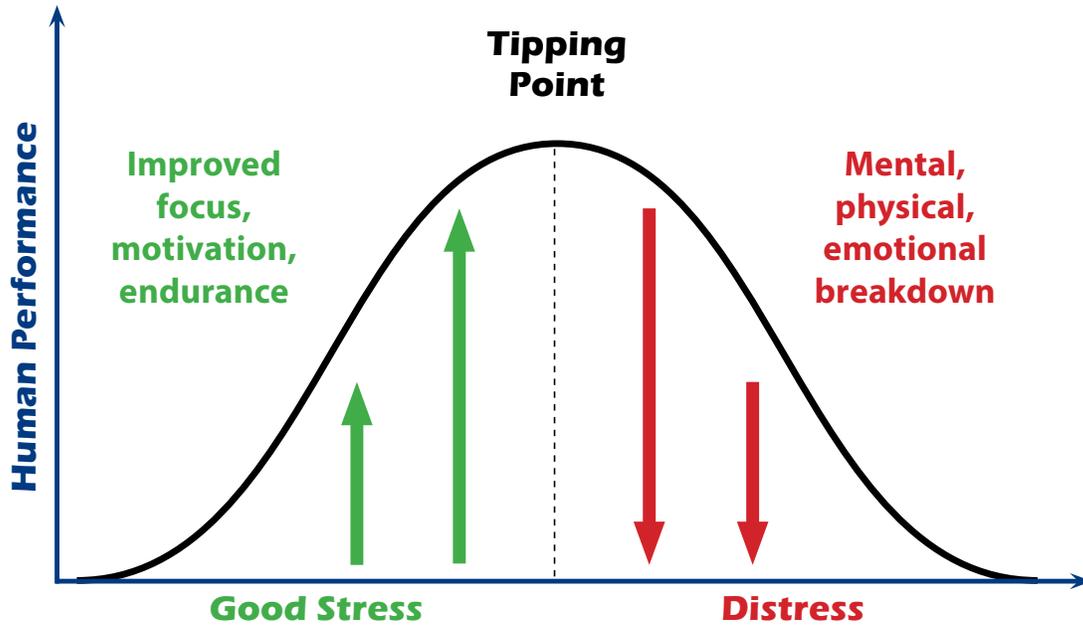
2. What are 3 main learning points that stick with you?



3. What questions are circling in your mind?



Good Stress-Distress Continuum



Based on the work of Hans Selye

© 2014 Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)



www.excellenceandethics.org

Description

Good stress is what is needed to strengthen our muscles, improve our focus, endurance, and persistence. However, there is a tipping point where good stress becomes distress and that leads to physical and emotional breakdown.

Grow-and-Let-Go Strategies

- » **Embrace challenges** as opportunities to push and stretch yourself.
- » View mistakes and failures as **opportunities to learn**.
- » Continue to find ways to **develop** in areas of weakness.
- » **Seek the help** of others.



Description

These strategies are essential for stress management (and performance enhancement). In sport and in all aspects of life a “Grow-and-Let-Go” mindset allows you to reframe loss as learning, challenges as opportunities, and to let go of delusions of perfection in exchange for the very real possibility of continuous improvement. The Grow-and-Let-Go Strategies encourage you to focus on growth, not perception and perfection, and to let go of the past and the things you can’t change.

Much of our stress results when we are worried about what others think and when we are trying to be perfect, which causes us to be afraid of failure or mistakes, to be worried about how we compare to others, to hide struggles or weaknesses, to feel embarrassment if we are not perfect or as good as others,

and to be afraid of asking for help. Even if you focus on the things that are within our control and adopt a mindset focused on growth, there are still plenty of things we can't change or do anything about. Those are the things we just need to let go of. When we won't let go, we often experience embarrassment, shame, frustration, isolation, depression, etc. We often continue to repeat the same mistakes and we end up causing ourselves even more stress. Finally, you have to find ways to grow from your stress, see challenges as opportunities for development, and learn to seek help from those who have experience or expertise in the areas you need to grow in.

Notes:

Mindset & Focus Optimal Performance Self-Study

Select a PERIOD OF TIME that you will focus on: _____

Rate your performance on the Inadequate-to-Ideal scale:

INADEQUATE

= not meeting what is expected of you, detracting from the goals or objectives of your group/team.

IDEAL

= just right for the circumstances/situation in meeting what is expected of you, in promoting the goals and objectives of your group/team.

Part 1: Rate your performance ...

Inadequate



Acceptable



Ideal



1) ... focusing on what's in my control.
2) ... working hard and smart.
3) ... building on my strengths.
4) ... improving in an area of (but NOT obsessing about) a weakness.
5) ... being radically grateful for everything—for the opportunities, for my strengths, for my challenges.
6) ... NOT whining, complaining, or making excuses or blaming outside factors for my struggles.
7) ... avoiding perfectionism and fear of failure.
8) ... being open to suggestions for improvement.
9) ... seeking external help and support as needed.

© 2015 Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)

DEVELOP GROW-AND-LET-GO MINDSET AND FOCUS

© 2015 Matthew L. Davidson and Vladimir T. Khmelkov; excellenceandethics.org

OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT™

Part 2: Reflect on the questions below.

- 1) For this period of time, list examples when the way you put *mindset and focus* strategies into action was **IDEAL** (or close to ideal) for the circumstances/situation:

- 2) List examples of something you could do **DIFFERENTLY OR BETTER** in the future to put *mindset and focus* strategies into action in a way that would be more ideal:

© 2015 Institute for Excellence & Ethics (IEE)

Module Summary

How I will use these strategies and tool(s) ...

In my education/personal development:

In sports/extracurricular/community activities:

At home/with my family:

Other:

Planning and Reflection

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin blue border, intended for writing or drawing during the planning and reflection phase.

LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS

MATTHEW L. DAVIDSON AND VLADIMIR T. KHMELKOV

Made possible by a partnership between:



EXCELLENCE & ETHICS™ KNOWLEDGE & TOOLS FOR:

Intentional culture • Essential competencies • Optimal performance

216 Fayette St, Suite 1, Manlius NY, 13104 • Phone: 315.692.8054 • Fax: 315.692.8091
www.excellenceandethics.org

and



The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center

1213 25th Street Des Moines, IA 50311 • Phone: 515.271.1910 • Fax: 515.271.1907
www.drake.edu/RayCenter

Version: 1.0 build 150116

EXCELLENCE
& ETHICS PUBLISHING
www.excellenceandethics.org

EXCELLENCE with INTEGRITY