

Fear is not an option

By Tierra Greenlea

“The greatest mistake a man or women could ever make is being afraid to make that mistake.” Mistakes are the foundation for becoming successful and overcoming our greatest fears, without mistakes how will we ever learn? Whether it’s missing a layup, a free throw, or turning the ball over. Or is it a careless foul that results in the other team gaining points. We as human beings are capable of being anything we put our minds to. But how can we become successful if we fear making mistakes?

Not a day goes by where I don’t regret the decision of giving up the game I love because I was scared of making mistakes. I let fear prevent me from furthering my potential as being a better basketball player. Just to give you a recap for those of you who don’t already know my story, it all started in 2006. I was a high school freshman, fresh out of Gunning Bedford Middle School (Located in New Castle, DE). I was enrolled at Paul M. Hodgson Vocational Technical High School (Located in Newark, DE). My new environment was so unfamiliar. I was very shy; I mostly kept to myself and didn’t say much to people. High school and its many battles and conflicts became a tough struggle for me. I struggled trying to fit in and make friends, to the point I began experiencing depression.

I didn’t want to eat, I had trouble sleeping and I got to the point where I saw no purpose in life for me anymore. My depression became so severe that I began contemplating suicide. Two days prior to my planned suicide I was approached by Christopher Jones (Head Coach of the Hodgson Lady Silver Eagles Girls’ Basketball Team). He had asked me if I would be interested in being the manager for his team. With a little hesitation I agreed to help out but I was still

going to carry out my plans of suicide. As I watched the girls practice something inside me said maybe I should stick around and see what else this team has to offer and so I did. I began seeing my true purpose in life and that was to be a part of the game of basketball.

Yet, there was still something missing. Even though I enjoyed being a part of the team, I felt like I wanted more. I wanted a jersey to wear, a number that I could call my own, and a warm outfit just for me. I wanted a spot on the bench; where I could sit patiently waiting for my name to be called. So I could join my sisters out there on the court. Every time I got the urge to want to play, fear set in. I feared that I would be judged if I messed up. I feared that if I didn't do things the right way the first time, my teammates wouldn't associate themselves with me anymore. I was scared of those who were better than me. Now during that time I was slowly progressing out of depression but I was capable of falling back into it. Finally, the end my senior year rolled around and it was too late to get over my fears.

Now that I've graduated, I've learned that I don't need to be scared. One thing I remembered was when class of 2009 graduate Ericka Furrowh approached me and said "T, you should never be afraid to do anything. Never be afraid to make mistakes because we all make mistakes, but it's up to you to determine what you do with those mistakes." In order to be better you must overcome obstacles and those obstacles are called your mistakes. With determination, heart and will you can become successful at anything you do. Everyone is entitled to the same amount of success. Always remember that today's preparation determines tomorrow's success.

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