

Eddie, The Collegiate Sophomore

Mr. Frazier's Motivational Speech

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Before the team heads out to the track for today's practice session, Mr. Frazier addresses his team, "in our last meet, as a team, we did not perform quite as well as we could have. Some of you, as always, delivered a world-class performance. A few others, according to our statistics, could have done much better than you did. Before we get out on the track today, some of you need to hear what I am going to say. Much of what you are about to hear I have said before. You may have heard what I am going to say several times but, this time, I want you to listen and take it to heart."

Mr. Frazier reminds his team, "the divisional meet is coming up in one week. Is there any reason why this team can't walk away with the gold medal in every event? No! There's not! There is absolutely no reason why we can't walk away with all of the gold medals! In fact, there is no reason why we can't walk away with all the medals! If you're up against someone who has beaten you in the past, do something! Mess with their head! A little psychological warfare might just be the difference between winning and losing! We, as a team, are going to have to do everything we can if we are going to emerge as the clear and undisputable winner of this year's divisional meet!"

Beginning his talk in a way quite familiar to the team, Mr. Frazier exclaims, "let me remind you of something we all need not forget. In any race, there is only one winner! In the Bible, in the book of First Corinthians, in chapter 9, verse 24, the scripture reads, 'Do you not know that those

who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.’ Make no mistake about it! There is only one winner! Whoever comes in second place is the first loser! If you come in second place, learn something! Work harder, learn from the situation, and figure out what you need to change to do better next time!”

Conceding the point that second and third place are worth something in a track meet, Mr. Frazier explains, “and, yes, I understand that they give medals for second and third place. That is how they keep score. Honestly, though, where in the world did that ever come from? But, that’s how they’ve organized track and field in the world. So, we have to play by their rules. So, if you come in second place, your goal is to come in first place next time! If you come in third place, your goal is to come in second place or better! If you did not place, learn whatever you can from those who did! And, if you were the winner, you’d better not let your guard down because there are dozens of athletes out there who want to knock your ass off the first-place tier! If you came in first place, understand this! Your competition does not like you! They may act like they like you, but they don’t. Remember this. When they are training, they are training so that they win, not so that you win!”

Rehashing one of his favorite stories, Mr. Frazier tells his team, “many of you have heard this before, but some of you need to hear it again. When I was in my early teens, it was very stormy outside, and my father was watching a track meet on television. As you know, track was my sport, so I watched along with him. I remember that day quite well, as if it were yesterday. My race, the 100-yard dash, came up. I carefully watched what the runners did before they got into the blocks. I watched them as they were waiting for the gun. I watched very carefully when the gun went off and they left the blocks. And, I watched every step as they raced toward the finish line.”

Explaining when he first heard that there is only one winner in any race, Mr. Frazier continues, “once the race was over, it was clear to my father and I which runner took

first place, but second and third place seemed to be a tie. While we were waiting to find out who came in second and third place, I asked my father, 'who do you think came in second?' My father turned to me and said, 'George. It doesn't matter. They both lost. Only one person wins the race. Everyone else is a loser.' I told my father, 'but, they give medals for second and third place.' He replied, 'so what. They still lost.'

My father wanted to teach me a lesson, so he told me, 'George, go and get your Bible.' I returned with my Bible, and my father told me, 'open your Bible to First Corinthians, chapter 9, verse 24, and read it to me.' I read, 'Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.' My father looked me straight in the eye, and said to me, 'George, there is only one winner. Everyone else is a loser. It's that simple.' I saw the deep conviction in his eyes when he told me that. His conviction was unmistakable! There is only one winner!

My father didn't stop there. He asked me, 'George, when you play football in school, and your team loses, do you go around boasting to everyone that your team came in second place?' Before I could answer him, he told me, 'of course you don't! Second place is nothing to be proud of, especially if there are only two teams playing!' If there are two runners in the race, or eight, there is still only one winner! There are many professional football teams. Only one team wins the Super Bowl! There are many professional baseball teams. Only one team wins the World Series! No one ever boasts about coming in second place!"

Explaining the value of time, Mr. Frazier tells his team, "there are 365 days in a year, 7 days in a week, and 24 hours in a day. No one can tell me there isn't enough time to train. How valuable is your time anyway? What is the value of one year? If you really want to know the value of one year, ask anyone who has been in prison for a year. What is the value of one week? If you want to know, ask a family who is looking forward to a well-deserved one-week vacation at the beach. What's the value of one day? Ask

someone who is not expected to live more than a day or two. What's the value of one hour? Ask someone who flew into town, and can only see his wife for one hour before he has to fly out again. What's the value of one minute? Ask a football player whose team is down by six points with one minute left to play in the fourth quarter. What's the value of one second? Ask the runner who comes in second place in the 1,500-meter run. And, what's the value of one-hundredth of a second? Ask the runner who came in second place in the 100-meter dash."

Addressing a common problem with collegiate athletes, Mr. Frazier explains, "for some of you, the reason that you do not win has nothing to do with your training or abilities. The reason you do not win is because of that thing between your ears they call a brain! Someone has programmed your brain, and told you that you can't win. What bothers me is that some of you actually believe it! Why are you listening to what they have to say? If you convince yourself that you cannot win, no matter who or what you are up against, you will never win! Your competition on the track is nothing compared to your own mental obstacles! Get this through your head! The clock that's timing you and the person running next to you is nothing compared to your own mental obstacles! Do not, and I repeat, do not let yourself get in the way of achieving your goals!"

Addressing the subject of success, Mr. Frazier explains, "I am now going to tell you how to succeed at anything you do because some of you seem to have forgotten it. Whether it is on the track, in the classroom, or at your job when you graduate, the one principle leading to success is the same! Most of you have already heard this. If you forget anything else I say here today, remember this." Mr. Frazier pauses for a moment, then exclaims, "the one, and only one, attribute that will determine your success at anything you attempt is you must attack the challenge you face with no fear! Did you hear that? No fear!"

Citing a few examples, Mr. Frazier orates, "they said no one can run a mile faster than four minutes. Roger Bannister did not believe that for a second! They said a

man is physically incapable of running 100 meters in less than ten seconds. Jim Hines did not believe that for a second! No one thought that the shot-put could be thrown farther than 22 meters. In 1976, Aleksandr Baryshnikov threw the shot-put using the discus technique, and did exactly what everyone said could not be done! They said no one can run 400 meters in less than 45 seconds. Otis Davis did not believe that for a second! They said no relay team is capable of breaking three minutes in the 4 by 400-meter relay. Robert Frey, Lee Evans, Tommie Smith, and Theron Lewis did not believe that for an instant! What's stopping you? What's in your way? Whatever is in your way, if you want to win, you must get rid of it!

What do all these athletes I just mentioned have in common? These athletes have in common the one, and only one, attribute that will determine your success at anything you do! They attacked the challenge they faced ahead of them with no fear! Roger Bannister. No fear! Jim Hines. No fear! Aleksandr Baryshnikov. No fear! Otis Davis. No fear! Robert Frey, Lee Evans, Tommie Smith, and Theron Lewis. No fear! If you are to win, you must do the same! You must attack the challenges you face with no fear!"

Mr. Frazier then asks the athletes, "I have a question for all of you. Who is the fastest sprinter in our division?" Eddie raises his hand, as a few athletes answer, "Eddie." Mr. Frazier chuckles, and informs the group, "well, maybe he is, and maybe he isn't. It depends on what race he's running." Getting very serious, Mr. Frazier continues, "but, I can tell you this. All of you seem to agree that Eddie is the fastest sprinter in the division. Anyone who steps onto the track and is up against Eddie has already been preprogrammed to believe that they will be up against the fastest sprinter in the division! If anyone believes Eddie is the fastest sprinter in the division, when they step onto the track next to him, at best, that makes them second best! They've already lost! When you believe that you are better, faster, and stronger than your opponent, then you will win!"

Reminding the team of Eddie's high school career, Mr. Frazier explains, "speaking of Eddie, when Eddie was a freshman in high school, Eddie won the silver medal in the 40-yard dash at the State invitational meet. During the following three years at the invitational meet, Eddie won the gold medal in the 40-yard dash. And, Eddie won the gold medal in the 100-yard dash at the Spring State invitational meet for four consecutive years! But, here's what you may not know. Eddie put all his gold medals in a box, where he couldn't see them. Left out on his dresser was Eddie's silver medal, where it served as a constant reminder to train harder. Second place was not acceptable to Eddie! Second place should not be acceptable to any of you either!"

Specifically addressing the seniors, Mr. Frazier tells those who will be running in their last divisional meet, "now, for some of you, this is the last season you will be running for this University. Congratulations to all of you who are graduating this year. In a sense, you will be crossing another type of finish line in just a few weeks. Over the last four years, you sat in classrooms, did homework, took tests, performed lab experiments, solved problems, wrote papers, and did whatever else they have you do around here. When you've taken enough classes and passed enough tests, what do they do? They give you a piece of paper, called a diploma, that tells you that you've taken enough classes, and passed enough tests! For all the work that you've put in over the last four years, you will receive a degree in the field of your choice. For some of you, that degree will be in exercise science. For others, your degree may be in science, the arts, communications, mathematics, history, or some field that you plan to work in when you graduate."

Addressing the seniors regarding what they have done in the classroom for the last four years, Mr. Frazier explains, "regardless of your chosen field, I will share with you today exactly what you need to know to succeed when you graduate and hit the working world. But first, let's back up a little bit. There are only three types of degrees offered by any college or university. Those three degrees are a degree in memorization, a degree in problem solving,

or a degree in the arts. A degree in history is nothing more than a degree in memorization. A math degree is nothing more than a problem solving degree. A degree in music is one example of a degree in the arts. Many degrees, however, are a combination of the three types of degrees that I just mentioned. The only difference in the three types of degrees are the field of study in which you memorized information, solved problems, or developed your artistic skill. That would be the name of your degree that you will see on your diploma when you graduate in a few weeks.”

Mr. Frazier then exclaims, “nothing they teach you at this University will determine whether you succeed when you graduate!” Mr. Frazier continues, “you already know how to succeed at anything you do once you graduate! I told you just a few minutes ago! Whether it is in sports, in the classroom, or at your job when you graduate, the one principle leading to success is the same! You must attack the challenge ahead of you with no fear! No fear! What have I been telling you all year? Whether it is on the track or in your job, the same principle leading to success is the same! You must attack the challenges you face with no fear! That includes the challenges you will face in the divisional meet next week, the challenges you face when you graduate, and anything else you do in your life!”

Moving on to the subject of success, Mr. Frazier continues, “now, when you graduate, society has programmed you that you measure success by how much money you earn. You don’t measure success by how much money you earn! You don’t measure success by what kind of car you drive! You don’t measure success by the size of your house! It is of no value to wake up in the morning and drive to a job you hate. It is of no value to drive a luxury car when you really want to drive a Jeep or British roadster. It is of no value to live in a mansion in the suburbs when you really want to live in a bungalow at the beach. The only measure of success is how well you follow your passion and do what you love!”

Addressing the subject of passion, Mr. Frazier explains, “when you watch a professional football game, every player

on the field has been told at one time or another that they'll never make it in the NFL. The same holds true for any sport, such as basketball, baseball, boxing, and so on. When you listen to music, every musician was constantly told that they will never make it in that industry. Some athletes, musicians, or whatever, have deliberately chosen to ignore all the negative talk, follow their passion, and chase after their dreams and goals. They are the ones who succeed! They have followed their passion, and attacked the challenges they were facing with no fear!"

Giving a real life example, Mr. Frazier tells his team, "I mentioned earlier to you that whoever comes in second place is the first loser. I am going to take that premiss and apply it to the real world that a few of you will be entering in just a few weeks. Some of you, when you graduate, will be in the sales field. If you put together a sales presentation, and get the customer to sign the sales contract on the dotted line, congratulations! You won! You came in first place! Now, let me ask you this. What does the salesman who comes in second place get?" Mr. Frazier pauses for a few seconds, then exclaims, "nothing! Absolutely nothing! In sales, there is only one winner! Second place counts for absolutely nothing! Do you finally get it? There is only one winner! The winner puts food on the table! The loser winds up flipping burgers at a burger joint!"

Wrapping up his presentation, Mr. Frazier finishes, "now, we're all going to head out to the track and start our session today. When you get out there, I want you to train as if you are the salesman competing for that contract. I want you to train as if track and field is your passion. I want you to train as if first place is the only thing that matters. And, remember, there is absolutely no reason why we, as a team, can't walk away with all the medals. Okay! Let's get out there and get some work done!" The team gets off the bleachers and heads out to the track, highly motivated by Mr. Frazier's speech.