

Courage

Leaders have courage to remain positive in difficult situations.

This lesson will illustrate the value of courage when we experience difficult times. When things are going well we tend to relax and believe that they will continue. During this time our confidence is high and we are open to many opportunities. However, as problems arise and our “luck” begins to change we become cautious. Caution causes us to close down and miss opportunities. Caution can quickly grow into panic as we shut down and try to hang onto what we already have.

For this lesson you will need \$10 to \$20 in quarters and a bath towel. The towel is used to catch all of the quarters.

Coach: Who knows what courage is?

Encourage and affirm all answers.

Coach: Those are great answers. A real smart man once said, “courage is being afraid and going anyway.” In other words, you know that something is going to be tough and maybe even scary but you do it anyway. I want to show you something really cool.

Pick one player to come up to help with the lesson. Spread out the towel on the ground. You and the player kneel down on the towel facing each other. Ask the players to stand up and gather around so they can all see and hear you.

Coach: (Speak to the player that volunteered but speak loud enough for everyone to hear.) Can you open up both of your hands and hold them out like this?

Demonstrate by holding your hands open wide with your palms facing up. Grab a handful of quarters with one hand.

Coach: That’s great. Did you ever have a day when everything seemed to go well? You woke up happy and everything seemed to be going your way. (Each time you say something positive drop a few quarters into the players open hands.) **Your favorite breakfast was ready and waiting for you. You got an “A” on a test in school. You played your favorite game with your friends and did really well. One of your friends told you that you are the best friend ever.**

The player should have several dollars in quarters in his or her hands. I try to fill his or her hands so there is no room left.

Coach: Oh yeah! What a great day! It looks like the longer you keep your hands open the more quarters you get. Uh oh! Things are starting to change. You lose your favorite toy. (Each time you say something negative take a few quarters out of the player’s hands.) **You strike out. You get a bad grade.**

The player will be disappointed that you are taking back many of the quarters.

Coach: How do you like it when I take the quarters? Did you like it better when I was giving you quarters? (Take a few more quarters but be sure that there are still a few quarters in each of the player’s hands.) **Do you want me to keep taking them? Do you want to stop me? How would you stop me from taking more quarters?**

LESSON TEN



The player should close his or her hands tightly so you can't take any more quarters. If the player does not, give a few hints to get him or her to do so. Have a handful of quarters ready in one of your hands, but be sure not to show it to any of the players.

Coach: That's exactly right. When things are going well we have our hands wide open. Everything is going our way and we are ready for it. But when things aren't going our way we start to panic and close down; we close our hands real tight and try to hang on to what we already have.

In one swift motion, drop all of the quarters in your hand right over the player's closed hands so that they all fall onto the towel.

Coach: OOPS! It looks like you missed the big payday! That is exactly what happens to all of us. When things are going well and everything is easy our hands are wide open waiting for more. But when things are going wrong we close our hands real tight in fear. The only thing we accomplish when we close down is that we will miss out on the good things yet to come. Courage is when you keep your hands, your minds, and your hearts open even when things are tough and it seems everything is going wrong. Your courage can lift your team. When a leader keeps his or her hands open others will do the same and our team will be courageous together.

Take a few moments to assess comprehension and answer questions. Then, move on to a summary statement or prayer that references and reinforces this lesson.

Reaffirm the APIVEO commitment with the team cheer.

Coach: Ok, are you ready? I want to make the ground shake!

Start the cheer in a normal tone and get louder each time you ask the question.

Coach: Always play for who?

Team: Each other!

Coach: (louder) ALWAYS PLAY FOR WHO?

Team: (louder) EACH OTHER!

Coach: (really loud!) ALWAYS PLAY FOR WHO?

Team: (screaming loud!) EACH OTHER!

Coach: Stand up with authority and yell "[TEAM NAME] ROCK!

Following the cheer, I will always talk to each player after every practice to thank them for "bringing it" to practice. This only takes 10-15 seconds per player, but is worth its weight in gold. There are a few players that will be headed for the parking lot before the cheer is done, so you must be intentional and act fast. I typically get right in front of the player and, then, get on one knee, look him/her in the eye and mention something positive about his/her performance in practice and how glad I am that he/she is part of our team. You need to be quick to respect the parent's time, but you also need to be sincere.

Be intentional and remember, Always Play 4 Each Other!™