



The Heart of a Coach



Recently, I had an experience with my 12 year old son that completely broke me down and caused me to evaluate (again) some things in my life. I was not in a great mood on a certain night and was giving my son a hard time about small things like buttering his bread with his fingers and having really poor aim as he went to the bathroom...with the seat down...again! I gave him a lecture on these things and other important things like clothes on his floor and his drawers not being pushed in all the way, finishing the "talk" with telling my 12 year old to grow up!

Twenty to thirty minutes later, with my head buried in my laptop looking at emails and the next day's practice schedule, my wife tells me that my son was really upset - to the point of almost crying. He told my wife that for the past month, all I ever said to him was negative comments. Rather than ever focusing on the positive things, I drilled him on the smallest of negative things in his life.

So I had my son sit down to talk with me. As he said to my face that I had been riding him hard and being really negative with him the past month, I realized he was completely right. I felt horrible, but at least knew what the problem was - or so I thought. If I would just be more positive with him, not worry about little things, everything would be better. I told him I would try to do better in this area. But there was more. He said there was something bigger, but he didn't have the words to explain it. He wanted to tell me but was struggling to figure out what to say. Finally, he said this..."Dad, I love you so much. You are the greatest dad in the world and I love being with you, doing things with you and spending time together- no matter what it is. I know you have been busy with the start of your season lately, and I have been busy with sports too. But I think the biggest thing bothering me, is that we haven't had time together lately. I know when you correct me on things around the house, it is part of being a dad. That doesn't bother me that much. It is more that I just want to spend more time with you and do more things together. I miss that we haven't been able to do that lately."

His comments hit me right in the heart. For someone who always talks and even prays about keeping priorities in line, my son was telling me that I needed to do a better job of living it out. His comments were from his heart and filled with love. God was using my son to teach me a lesson and for that, I am extremely grateful. As coaches and parents, we are extremely busy people. My son's message to me was that we need to continually make time for those we love. Material goods, trips, or other gifts, while nice, do not build deep and lasting relationships. Giving our time and ourselves to others is what can make the lasting difference in our relationships. Again, I am thankful to God and to my 12 year old for this timely reminder in my life!