

WINNING SPIRIT

Softball Workbook

Journal Your Inner Game



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How to Use This Workbook

It is a good idea to have a workbook so you can record your athletic progress. A softball workbook is a place for you to write down your goals, hopes, dreams, successes, achievements and even your losses and setbacks. It works best when you use your workbook along with the book, *Winning Spirit Softball*.

The questions and practices in this workbook are designed to help you develop your mental edge and get you thinking more deeply about softball. As you spend time writing, you will begin to understand yourself better as an athlete and expand your inner game.

You are your most important project, and your athletic journey is worth recording!



Love The Game

I love this game! I give it everything I've got.

When thinking about practice and working on your game, eliminate saying “I have to” and start saying and “I want to.” Write down a few examples:

I want to ... _____

I want to ... _____

I want to ... _____



Your Home Team

My home team is a huge part of my success.

Make a list of every member of your family and others who support you and your dreams. Then write each one of them a thank you note or card. Use the space below to set up your list.

Family or Friends Name

Their Role



Compete with the Best

Playing against the best... Brings out my best.

Who are the toughest competitors you play with or against?

Players' Name

Why are they tough?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Why do you like to compete?

What kind of a competitor are you?



Power of the Pen

Writing down my goals helps me know what I want.

What is my #1 goal for this season?

What will it take to make this happen?

Ask friends and family members what they like about you the most.

Did anyone say anything that surprised you? What was it?



The Inner Game

There is more to softball than the final score.

List some words and short phrases that describe winning.

Write a personal victory statement. Become really clear about what winning means you.



Practice Time

I practice with a concentration and intensity.

Write down the two areas in which you want to improve the most:

What do I want to improve?

How will I do it?

1. _____

2. _____

What would your coach say your attitude is like in practice?

What motivates you to practice extra hard?



Feel The Flow

I feel the flow and rhythm of the game.

When do you feel the most creative on the field?

How does being in the flow help you play better?

OK! Let's put your creativity to work. Write a quote about your game—
then draw a picture or logo to illustrate it...





A Coach's Dream

I work hard to earn the confidence of my coach.

Choose three coaches you know and ask them to tell you about a player they coached who was a coach's dream.

Coach's Name:

What they said:

If you were a coach, what kind of player would you want on your team?

Are you a coach's dream? Explain...



Breaking A Sweat

I strive to be the hardest worker on my team.

Go to the field or park and observe which players work the hardest. Notice how they warm up, practice, and focus on improving.

Player's Name:

What I observed:

How do the players you observed stand out? Why did you choose them?

Would other players choose you as a hard worker? What would they say?



Free Your Mind

I picture a perfect move in my mind.

Find a place where you can be undisturbed and fully focused. Get into a comfortable position. Take a minute to print a word or short phrase inside the flame on the next page. Then concentrate the word or phrase, allowing your eyes to relax. Don't stare and blink as often as you need. If your mind wanders, gently guide it back to the flame. Continue your breathing as you settle into a relaxed focus.

Write words or phrases to put inside of the flame:



Confidence From Within

Trusting in my skills gives me confidence.

When do you feel the **most** confident?

When do you feel the **least** confident?



Welcome Pressure

I love the pressure Bring it on!

Describe how your body feels before a game.

What do you think about when you are in intense pressure situations?

What do you enjoy most about pressure situations?

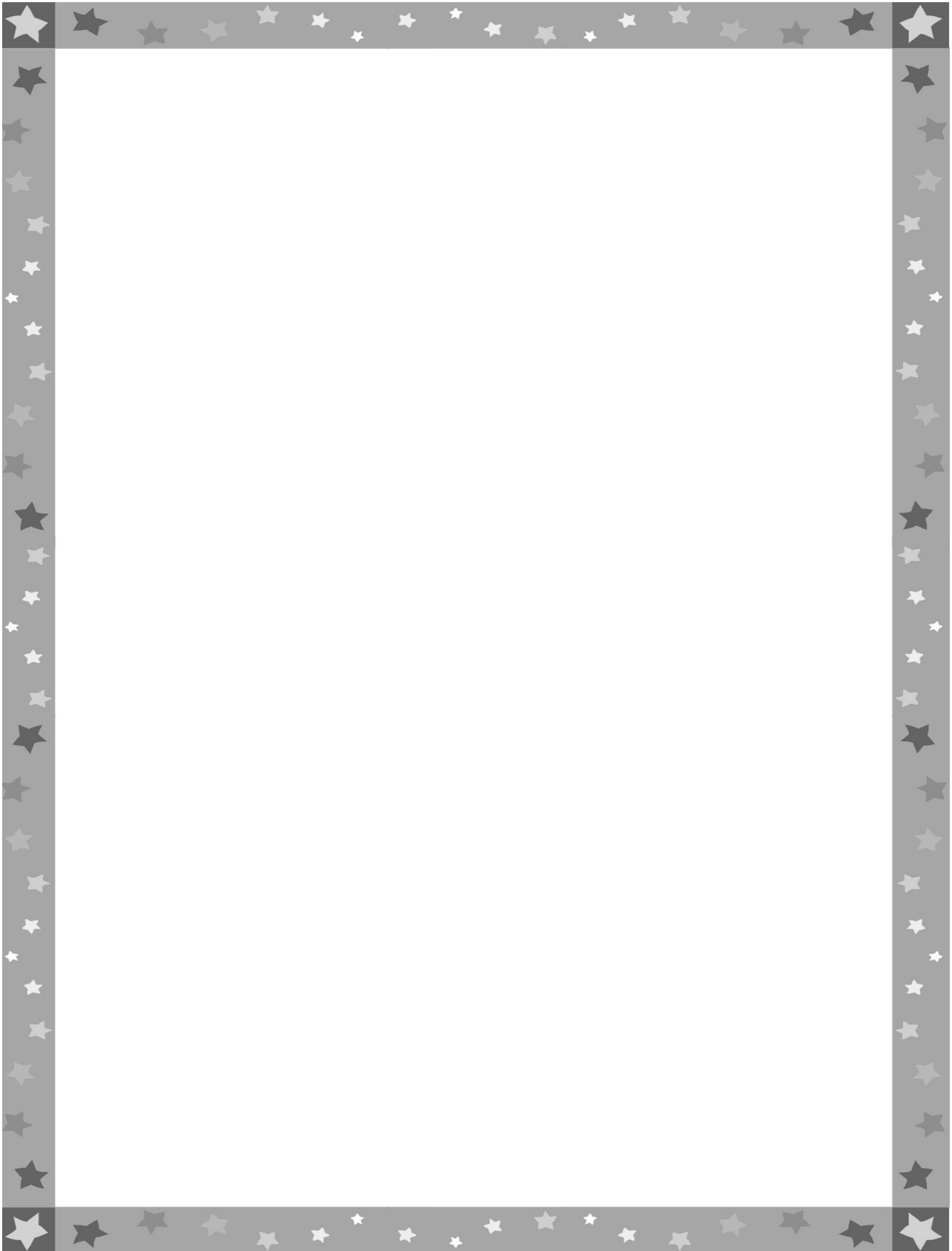


Free Your Mind

My mind is open. I love learning new things.

Recall some early memories of playing softball?

Draw or paste a photo that shows the kid in you.



What words do you want to eliminate about yourself as a softball player?

What are the most powerful words you can say to yourself?



Talk With Your Coach

I let my coach know what is going on.

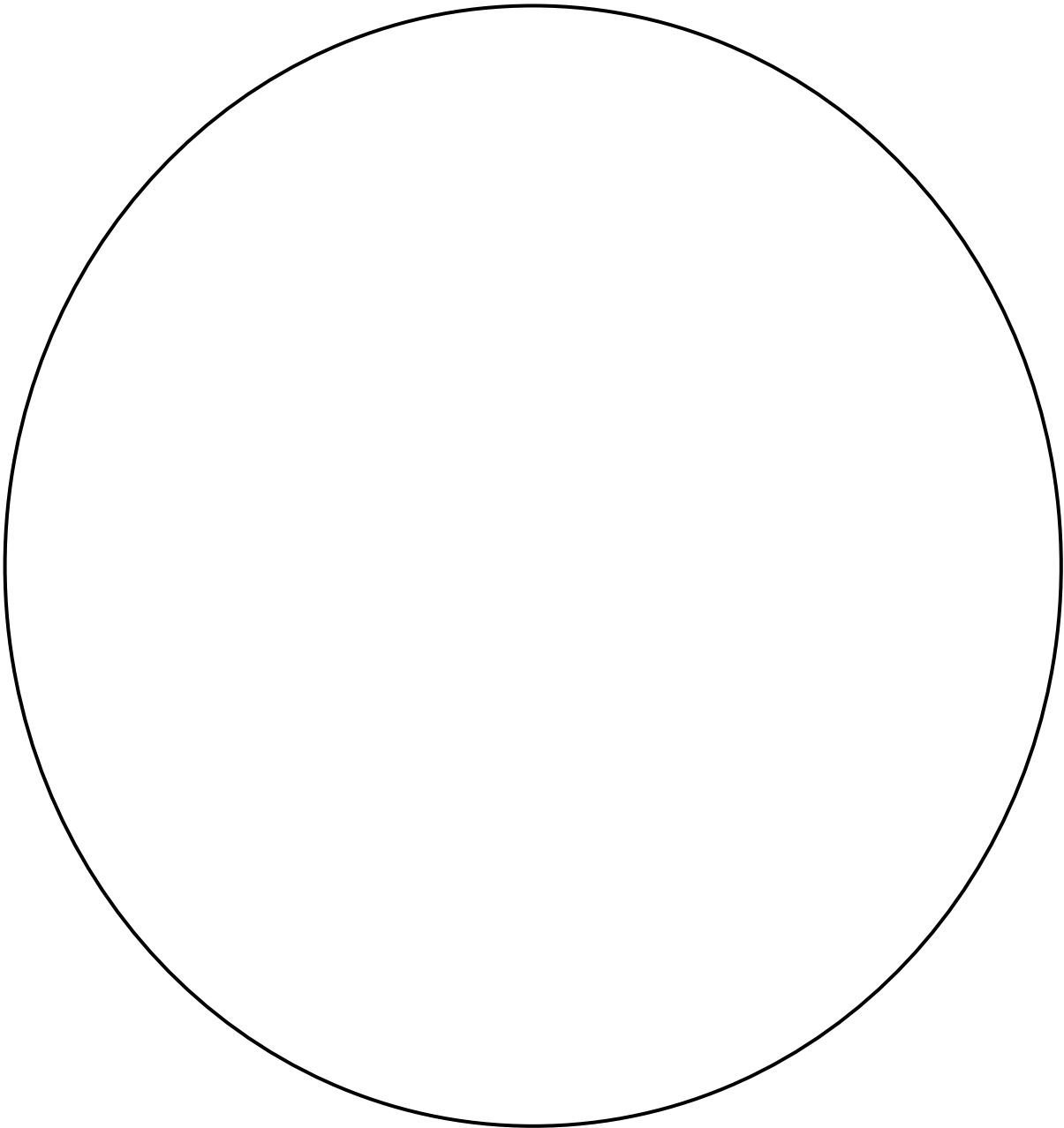
The next time that you feel concerned or confused about something that involves your coach, ask for some time when you can sit down and talk. You may want to write down your thoughts before the meeting so you will remember everything you want to say. Be truthful and honest when you talk, but also be respectful.

Is there anything you want to talk with your coach about? What is it?

Are you ever afraid to talk with your coach? If so, why?

Is there anybody else you need to talk with? What do you want to say?

Fill in your inner circle and write a few words about who does what...



Emotions Are Real

Emotions are an important part of being an athlete.

When was the last time you were extremely emotional about softball?

What was going on?

When was the last time you laughed really hard and had a great time?

What were you doing?

When do you find yourself distracted or pre-occupied and not able to focus in the moment?

Think of ways that you can bring yourself back to the here and now?



Have courage

I deal with tough situations head on.

What situation or person in your life is difficult to deal with? Why?

What are you doing about it?



Express Yourself

I am proud of who I am.

Put on your favorite music and sit down with this journal. Write about everything that you like about yourself as a softball player. Include your accomplishments. Really get into it. Don't feel embarrassed or shy about how proud you are. Express yourself!



Have Fun

Playing softball is one of the best feelings in the world!

When is playing softball the most fun?

When does softball not feel fun?

Did you ever play really good, but not win the game? How did you feel?

Can you focus on playing your best and not worry about the final score?

Fear as an Advantage

I face fears head-on and use them to my advantage.

One good way to cope with fear is to face it. The following exercise will help you better understand what your fears are:

My fear:

How I can use this fear to my advantage?

If you are afraid of losing, what is the advantage of looking at your fear head on?

After facing your fear, why is it important to go back and imagine a positive outcome?



Protect Yourself

*I protect myself.
Nobody can steal my confidence.*

Get in a comfortable position and begin to practice a few minutes of deep relaxation. Make sure that you pay attention to your breathing, allowing your breaths to become slow and deep.

Then, using the power of your mind, begin to imagine that a shield of light is surrounding your entire body. Visualize it encircling and protecting you.

The next time you are in a situation when something has a negative effect on you, use this technique to protect yourself. Imagine that the shield of light is blocking out everything that is not helpful so that you can remain positive and confident.

How does it feel to be surrounded by your shield of light?

Find a favorite picture of yourself playing softball, make a copy of it, and paste it on this page. Then, draw the shield of light around you that you imagined. Be sure to add color.

List a few times when you have helped someone:

Player's name:

What they were going through:

Player's name:

What they were going through:



Evaluate Yourself

*Knowing my strengths and weaknesses
makes me better.*

In all honesty, answer the following questions:

What are my strengths?

Where do I need to improve?

Am I a coach's dream?

Do I practice with intensity?

What kind of shape am I in?

Do I love playing under pressure?



Play in the Moment

I am aware of what is happening on the field.

How does it feel when you are playing with full focus and concentration?

Describe the sensation of hitting a softball.

Do you ever get distracted when you play? Explain.

How do you bring your attention back into the moment?



A powerful Imagination

I see it in my mind and achieve it on the field.

How does using your imagination help you to play better?

Can you imagine what you really want to achieve on the field?



Relax

When I relax, my body and mind recharge.

Slowly, (like when you first learned to write) copy each sentence. After each sentence, take a few gentle, deep breaths and move on to the next line.

I love playing softball.

Take a few deep breaths

I play with intensity and desire.

Take a few deep breaths

I am a creative player.

Take a few deep breaths

I enjoy playing under pressure.

Take a few deep breaths

I make my teammates better.

Take a few deep breaths

I have confidence in my skills.

Take a few deep breaths

I play with poise and under control.

Take a few deep breaths

Never Give Up

I fight for my dream and never give up.

Recall a time in your life when you faced a big challenge. Possibly, the odds of success seemed to be against you and others didn't believe you could succeed. But you knew that you could do it—and you did! Somehow you tapped into the spirit of determination.

What was the challenge you faced?

How did you tap into your power?

What big challenge are you currently facing?

How will you tap into your powerful spirit to beat the odds?

Appreciate It All

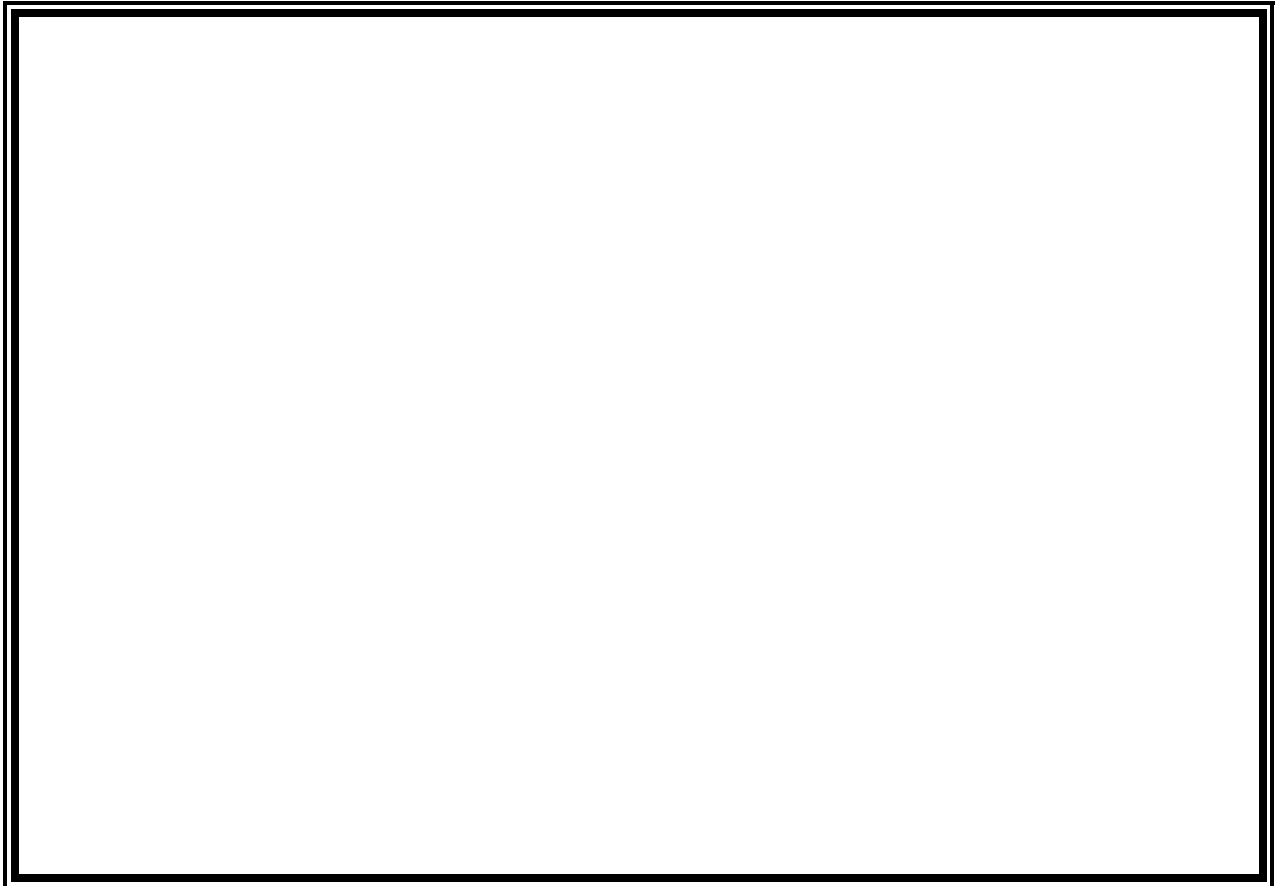
I am fortunate to have softball in my life!

Think about all the good things that have come your way because of softball. Feel how incredibly fortunate you are: the physical skills that you have developed; all your accomplishments, both big and small; the friends you have made; the joy you have had playing. List some of your treasures below:

MY TREASURE CHEST:



Create a collage of some of your personal treasures. You can paste in photos of your home, family, and friends. You can also cut and paste some of your favorite words.



36

Ask For Help

I ask for help from people I trust.

Ask yourself if there is anything going on that you could use some extra help with. Are you struggling with an aspect of softball? Is anything else going on in your life that is causing you to lose some of your direction and motivation? Do you need some help?

If so, identify people who can help. Have the courage to ask for advice. When you do get sound advice, make sure that you really understand it. Then, put this advice into practice and see what happens.

What advice did you get?

Was it easy for you to ask for help? Explain.

How can getting help from others make you a better softball player?

Write about achievements in other areas of your life other than softball that depended on teamwork.

What are your favorite ways to celebrate your success with teammates?

Giving back

I share my skills and knowledge with others.

Find a few younger or less skilled softball players who really want to learn more about how to play the game. These could be beginners with little softball experience. Once you are together and you can see their level of play, teach them the basic softball skills that you know well.

What would you show them?

Who are the best **coaches** you've ever had? What made them so good?

Who are the best **teachers** you've ever had? What made them so good?

WINNING SPIRIT NOTES

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Tom Mitchell, Ph.D. has spent his adult life coaching and teaching others how to discover their unique, greatness within. His passion for exploring the boundaries of performance excellence began as an athlete in his native Pennsylvania. His avid study of sport psychology, motivation, and leadership, has led Tom to a richly varied career as a college coach and professor, motivational speaker, NBA sport psychology counselor, business coach and team building consultant.

Using many of the mental training practices that are found in athletics, he skillfully integrates sport psychology principles into business. Speaking passionately about the intangibles or "soft skills" found in highly successful teams and leaders, Tom teaches us how to practice these intangibles and create a winning culture.

Based on these success principles and proven practices, Tom co-founded MVP Performance Institute, bringing his speaking and coaching to a wider audience.

In 2005, Tom and NFL legend Joe Montana, co-authored an Amazon #1 Best Seller, "*The Winning Spirit, Sixteen Timeless Principles that Drive Performance Excellence.*" He also co-authored "*Winning Spirit Basketball*" with NBA Hall of Famer, Chris Mullin.

Charles L. Darr

Editorial Consultant

Charles spent his professional career teaching writing, literature, and humanities at the university level. His love of teaching, interest in book design, and promotion of self-awareness in his students, eventually resulted in his collaboration with the author as the editor of 13 books. Charles generously dedicated his time, editing every book in the Winning Spirit Sports Series.

Winning Spirit Sport Series

The Winning Spirit Sport Series grew out of a book and a journal, originally written for my two young daughters 22 years ago, who were (and still are) athletes and performers.

Having been a coach my entire adult life, I felt it was important to give them something that would guide them in their athletic journeys. I wanted to provide a way of encouraging them to strive for excellence in their sport while having balance in their lives. I wanted them to have a better understanding of the habits and behaviors that are at the heart of an athlete's success: good communication skills, an outstanding work ethic, and the ability to focus and concentrate.

As a coach, my mission is to help athletes better understand themselves as well as improve their performance. My goal is to present universal character-building concepts in an easy-to-understand format, that can be put into everyday practice.

It is my hope that the material will encourage and motivate readers to achieve rich and fulfilling lives, both as athletes and as human beings.

— Tom Mitchell
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