



BOOST CONFIDENCE

A HANDBOOK TO HELP YOUR CHILD

It's Possible

What if I told you there was a way to boost your child's confidence on the basketball court? That by understanding a basic reality and employing two simple habits that can be completed in about 5 seconds, they could overcome slow starts, referee calls they don't agree with, derisive teammates, and non-supportive coaches (which don't exist at Runcorn)?

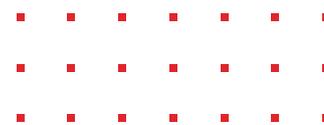
Well there is a way. I know because I went through it myself, and it completely changed my career for the better. And I want you all to benefit from it too.



Written by Matthew Hodgson



The Perspective



Let's start off with a basic paradigm shift:

- There is a massive gap between what people think being great looks like, and what being great actually looks like.

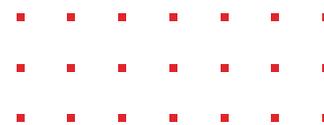
This gap has been widened by the prevalence of watching basketball highlights rather than watching basketball games.

Highlights create a false image that is hard to unsee. It makes it out like these players are making highlight-level plays every play, every game. It creates an impossible standard that young players think is the reality.

But the actual reality is shown when you watch full games, and follow your favourite players across an entire season. When you do this, you will notice a few helpful things.



The Realities



1 Even the best players aren't immune to periods of struggle. At time of writing, the NBA's MVP (Shai Gilgeous-Alexander) shot the following from the field across his most recent games: 8-22, 11-16, 12-18, 8-22, 8-11.

Two of those games are exceptional. Two of those are dreadful. And while the 8-11 looks like a good percentage (it is), how was one of the league's best players held to taking only 11 shots? On some nights, no matter what you do, the opponent just has your number.

2 Just because someone averages 20 points per game, it doesn't mean that they *actually* score 20 points each game.

A five-game stretch of 10, 7, 35, 18, and 30 points results in a 20 point per game average. However, they all show a remarkable difference in output from game to game.

3 When you watch the full game, you will see players have slow starts, tough calls, get dunked on, dribble the ball off their foot, airball a shot, and STILL finish the game having played exceptionally well.

You will also notice that they do the basic things really well, not just trying to end up on the highlight reel every play.





When you realise this, you also realise that:

You don't need everything to go
your way to play well.

All you need to do is just mentally ***stay in the game.***



The Habits



#1

Understand that the 'inner critic' is normal.

We all have a voice in our head that relentlessly criticises us. Everyone, and I truly mean everyone, has this voice.

The best and most confident players have simply learned not to listen to it.

I can break down the actual psychology behind this, but it's better to understand this – **your best bet is to teach your child to accept the voice instead of fighting it or ignoring it.**

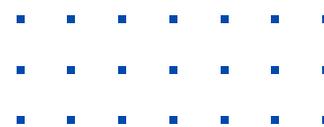
The voice isn't going anywhere, no matter what. So instead of hoping that it does, just accept that it's there and learn to laugh it off:

"It's just that thing again."

This changes the relationship that your child has with this voice, and this loosens the stranglehold that it has on them.



The Habits



#2

Practice an in-game 'reset' strategy.

This can be done in about 5 seconds, and it follows this sequence:

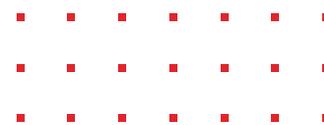
- Recognise
- Interrupt
- Refocus

Recognise when you are mentally drifting during the game. Everyone will have obvious triggers: complaining to refs, getting quiet, staring off into space, etc. Instead of seeing them as a sign of failure, see them as a point of information. They let you know that you're drifting.

Once you know that you're drifting, interrupt the thought pattern with a physical action. Clicking your fingers, punching your hand, clapping are all examples of actions that jolt your attention right back into the moment.

After the interruption, you have a split second to decide what to refocus on. The best thing to focus on is executing your *key strength*. Everyone has something on the court that they excel at: aggressive drives, tight defense, running the floor, supporting their teammates. When you turn your attention back to just executing this one action, it creates emotional momentum. You feel a sense of accomplishment, and that snowballs over to other areas of the game. If you keep this going, you will be back in the drivers seat and playing well again in no time.





It really is that simple, the trick is to ***remember to do it.*** This is where parents can be really helpful.

If your child can employ these simple strategies, I can *guarantee* that they will experience less stress, more confidence, and better performances.



Performing Under Pressure



Matthew Hodgson is a former professional basketball player who competed across Australia and internationally, including a preseason with the Dallas Mavericks and multiple selections for the Australian Boomers. He also holds postgraduate qualifications in psychology.

This combination of lived experience and formal education gave him a rare lens: he doesn't just understand how people behave under pressure — he knows how to perform under it, and what separates organisations that succeed from those that don't.

Matthew now applies this lens across both sport and business.

He founded People Performance Advisors, an organisational advisory practice focused on execution under pressure: removing the constraints that block the ability to deliver when it matters most.

Alongside this, Matthew advises athletes and sporting organisations on what it truly takes to be elite: helping juniors and professionals alike perform to their capability in competition, not just training.

If you'd like to connect about athlete development or organisational performance, Matthew can be contacted via email at:

matthew@peopleperformanceadvisors.com.au.

