

Eddie OConnor edieted CHL

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SPEAKERS

Dr. Eddie OConnor, David Sandstrom

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 00:00

This episode I'm talking with Dr. Eddie OConnor. He is a licensed psychologist and a certified sports psychologist. And we're talking on this episode about mental toughness. This episode is a little longer than usual. So I encourage you to listen to the whole thing. It's about an hour long. But it's really a great episode he talks about the difference between mental toughness and positive thinking, which is not what you think a lot of what he has to say is very counterintuitive. Welcome to the Christian Healthy Lifestyle podcast where I help Christians over 40 maximize their health potential, so that they can age gracefully, live abundantly, and be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Alright, so let's jump into my conversation with Dr. Eddie O'Connor. Today we have in the show Dr. Eddie O'Connor. Dr. Eddie is a licensed sports psychologist who specializes in helping people remove barriers to reach their peak performance. He's a certified mental performance consultant, and a member of the United States Olympic Committee sports psychology registry. He's appeared on Fox News, Sirius XM is Dr. Radio, and he's committed to helping people reach their full potential in life. Dr. Eddie, Welcome to Christian Healthy Lifestyle.

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 01:16

Oh, thanks so much. I'm really excited about the conversation we're about to have.

D David Sandstrom 01:19

Yeah, I am, too. You know, the regular listeners of the show will know this here at Christian Healthy Lifestyle we seek to maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's natural design for spirit, mind and body. And that's why I wanted to get you on the show because you're an expert on the mental emotional component of, of what we who we are. And I believe that plays a big role and offer an often underappreciated role, and how that can impact our healthy pursuits, as well as anything else in life, really. So I'm really excited to talk to you today. Awesome.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 01:52

Yeah, I really am looking forward to reaching the people out there. I'm sure that they've got questions about, you know, anxiety, and, you know, is this normal? Is it okay is even is it sinful? Sometimes probably, where is God and I found in my life, and they might struggle as well? How much do I depend on God? And how much is my responsibility? And how do I work in tandem with him to live this best life that he wants for us?

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David Sandstrom 02:18

Yeah, that's those are great topics, I want to dive into those for sure. But before we do that, let's so let's hear about how you got into doing what you do and give us a 35,000 foot view of how you got started in mental toughness coaching.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 02:31

Sure, um, well, it started really, I was always interested in psychology, like in high school, I was reading analysis of dreams by Freud for fun. So I kind of geeked out kind of knew that's where I wanted to go. And so I went right into a major psychology and had no idea really what I wanted to do. I was also a runner in high school, and I had a mental block, my senior year wanted to run, break 2:10. So you can in a half mile, which isn't very fast, but so you can tell it was more I was a good mental athlete more than physical.

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David Sandstrom 03:03

So pretty fast to me.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 03:06

It meant a lot to me is really part of my identity. And my senior year, I kept coming across the finish line, not tired. Feeling like okay, but not tired and being like, oh, gosh, I just push harder, I could have done better it coming across into 11. Right, just just missing it. And then going off to the side and throwing up as if I was exhausted, and didn't figure it out. And until later on after grad school and stuff where I realized that the desire to win and break 2:10 was so big and so important that my mind unconsciously sabotage me to protect me from that failure. By giving me an excuse or a reason. It wasn't that I couldn't do it. It was just oh, I just didn't run fast enough. And so it kept hope alive race after race after race. So there was some psychological protection. But listeners, you're probably thinking, Yeah, but you're still ran to 11, you still failed. And I wish I realized that, because my parents still love me. My coach still accepted me and coach me, my girlfriend didn't break up with me. And my friends and teammates were all supportive. And I never let that sink in to actually give my full effort. Could I run a 2:05? Can I've broken two minutes based on my practice? You know, there's there certainly was in the realm of possibility. Now it ended well, because it 209 is my last race. And I don't know if the coach is a little fast on the phone with a clicker or whatever. But I'm going to assume that that I actually did break that. But again, how big so I went to graduate school and I

didn't want to stick with clinical, like the pathologies and I thought, Well, why do athletes suffer from the most and so I specialized in injury and rehabilitation in particular, as well as performance anxiety, which is really the sweet spot of where my my practice is now. So once you Graduate School did all the training for that and to become a certified mental performance consultant. And then did a lot of work in chronic pain and applying sports psychology to chronic pain and, and obesity. And now again, I'm specializing with my success stories community and my online telehealth practice on the performance psychology and performance anxiety as well.

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David Sandstrom 05:23

That's fantastic. You know, when I wrote my book, *The Christians God Holistic Health*, I used to call the mental emotional component our mind, which is really synonymous with the soul a lot of the times in the Bible, but I really feel like mental toughness sums up what we're talking about here better. So if you could, could you just define for the natural nation for the listening audience? What is mental toughness?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 05:47

Yeah, they we all know it when we see it right. And sometimes people have been challenging to get to the literature for sports, psychology has defined so many different ways. But here's my favorite. Mental Toughness is the ability to be better and more consistent than your opponent in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control under pressure. And what I love about that definition is that you're not either mentally tougher you aren't, because in competition, it's relative to your opponents. And so there's a matter of, you know, this competition, and you have to, you have to do it more than the other person. So I remember working with a pro football team, once I walked in there like, Doc, like, everybody's mentally tough here like this is, you know, and I was like, Yeah, I know. But are you more tough than the guys in the other locker room? And that kind of helps set it up? In the sense that, you know, we could always be more, in the same way that we could always be stronger and faster, you could always be more mentally tough to handle bigger and bigger challenges.

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David Sandstrom 06:43

Yeah, I get that for sure. So mental toughness and positive thinking kind of sounds similar, but they're really different. Right? Could you could you explain this a few words to that, what's the difference between mental toughness and positive thinking?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 06:58

This triggers me because if you see any of my videos, or anything that I've written, I don't like positive thinking, Now, I've learned that I have to back off because it takes off a lot of people, and it actually sends them this message. That, you know, positive thinking is bad. And there's a whole research about positivity. And when it works, it's fantastic. And it's true when we believe in ourselves. And we are, we're thinking the helpful thoughts. They help, you know, when I believe I can do it, when I am thinking good things about myself and other people it works. The challenge, however, is is that we can't always force the positive thinking, and this is where I

specialize. You guys have all been out there. And you've probably done it when you really are fearful or scared or you don't think you can do something and you try to tell yourself that you can't. Or sometimes people will kind of distract from the negativity and say, just focus on the positive. That actually biologically hurts us. Because if there's a bear in front of me, and you're just telling me just don't worry about it think that he's friendly? Well, that's positive thinking. It's gonna get me killed. Right? I mean, it's a very real example. Because when we try to do it in athletics, you just believe that you're going to win, am I supposed to go to a tournament of 50 teams, and give this wonderful presentation on positive thinking and tell everybody just believe they're gonna win? 49 of those teams are gonna think that I'm terrible. Because only one team is going to win that tournament. Right? So adversity, the mental toughness, this is where, again, I feel I'm very different than when everybody else is. I see excellence as overcoming the obstacles that get in the way. And it doesn't mean that we have to change the obstacles. I mean, Jesus said, in this life, we will suffer. So if you're gonna do that, we know that we're already going against his plan, that suffering is a part of our purpose in life. Here's another big spiritual question that ties into this for me. God could do anything. So why did he choose death on the cross is the way to save us it? Couldn't you save this anyway, he wanted? Like he had a question. He to put Jesus through all this pain, betrayal by his best friends, the death of Lazarus and the sorrow and his own death, and the crows living his whole life knowing that that was coming. Yeah, he didn't have to do it that way. So I don't like pain. But I still kind of feel like there's something of great meaning that we as human beings can't understand of what this pain does. And I still think it even goes beyond just bringing us to him. Because of course, when we're in our most pain is when we tend to say, Hey, God, I'm back. Can you you come back into my life.

D David Sandstrom 09:29

Right? Right.

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 09:30

So that background of positivity, when it works, going back to psychology now, by all means do it. But when it doesn't, I help my athletes and high performers find out a way to interact with it differently to let it be and then get back refocused on what it is that they need to do with the willingness to feel what they must in service of their goals.

D David Sandstrom 09:50

Yeah, I like that. You know, I'm thinking about the show American Idol. You know, there's a lot of singers that come on there and they kind of make you know, a lot of a lot of entertainment value comes from this but You know, somebody maybe is told by their friends or family that they're a great singer, and they get on the show, and they're not a great singer. And, you know, but they, they really, truly believe that in their hearts, they believe it. So I think that's a good example of the positive thinking got arie, you know, it doesn't really always work for us, does it?

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 10:18

Well, I'm the one who doesn't always get the results. But in that scenario if they're going to go on American Idol, and if they passionately sing their song to the very best of their ability, and they lose, I still say that the positive thinking there was helpful, because it had let them put forth their best foot. Now, if they went there, and you know, Simon says, You're terrible, you need to do this, are they there along the path, I've been getting other feedback where it's negative, and they take that positivity, and they're like, oh, no, like, I'm gonna be fine, I'm going to be good, I'm going to be optimistic, and they ignore the feedback that could have gotten them to actually be better. That's when I think the positivity doesn't work. It always gets translated not on how do you feel, but what are the results or that you're getting? And so it could be either one and I, again, a lot of the work that I do is very, we call contextual, like, what's the person in that moment at that time, like, he's big rules don't really work. There's absolutely times to be positive. And there are absolutely times to, I don't want say be negative. I don't know if that pessimism works, but at least excel in reality, and be realistic objective. You know, feedback is really important in our life. And being able to absorb that becoming comfortable, comfortable, being willing to experience the mistakes and the feedback on the mistakes so that you can continue to strive for excellence. That's that's really the mantra.

D David Sandstrom 11:39

Yeah, yeah, I like that. You know, when I was a flight instructor, when I first got started in my flying career, many years ago, I was teaching people to fly in little two seat Cessnas. And I found that offering information, good information was not always enough, those students often needed to be motivated. And I found the same thing in my my health coaching practices, I provide some great information on healthy eating. But a lot of times people lack the motivation to really, truly implement. So this really ties into what we're pursuing here with the pursuit of health. So can you talk a little bit about how an athlete or someone who's pursuing excellence in any area of life, how do they, how do they tap into their inner motivation?

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 12:22

Sure. So that's, this is the second big topic that I sometimes fight with people on because I'll start off with, if you're going to depend on motivation, you're going to fail. Because whatever pursuit it is, that you're going after, is just going to be too hard. And you're going to eventually hit something that you're not motivated to do, you're not gonna want to get up at five o'clock and do that workout, you're gonna get hungry and not want to stick to that diet, it's going to be one business failure after the other, you know, not getting funding, you know, you name it, and you're gonna have to do what you know, is right, and do it anyway, in our spiritual walk. We love God. We don't want to follow the Bible a lot of the time, we're not motivated to do it. But why do we do it? Because we have a value of being a son or daughter of God, it's part of our identity. Why do I want to go ahead and do all these things and get up in the morning go workout is because they value that championship, or I have a character of hard work. So if you really want to be motivated, the best motivation comes from having a very crystal clear idea of who you are, what your identity is, and what your values are. To a second degree, what do you want to do, because again, everybody wants to be in shape, or to win that championship or to get that outcome. But sometimes the pain becomes too much, and you don't care as much, but when you tie it into, but this is who I am, I endure, I'm honest, I'm generous. When you know who you are and your values, then even through the adversity, you can display that. And if I could give you a quick story to help maybe illustrate what I'm talking about. I had an older

gentleman come into my practice a number of years ago, with a lot of anger. And he had a lot to be angry about. He wasn't getting along at work, his health wasn't great. So anger, anxiety, some depression. And we did a lot of work around his values. And as we working together, he lost his job. His health got worse that his diagnosis was like it's going to be terminal. And shortly after that, we discharged with positive like, and his depression was down. His anxiety was down. He was laughing more. He was engaged and and one was like, well, your life is a lot worse. Like how like, how are we and I kind of knew the answer, but this was earlier my career and be like, I said, Well, why are you doing so? Well? He's like, Hmm, is it because I'm living my values? I was like, I think so. Because he taken things like his sense of humor and these other things that he really valued. We kind of narrowed it down to his top five and we said how do you apply it into your health situation? How do you plugged into your work situation, into these relationships into the relationship with your wife? How do you take active steps to take these values that he had abandoned? And was caught up in anger and other things? How do you get back to who you are. And even though his life was significantly worse, he was significantly better. And I think that's a beautiful illustration of the power of identifying and living your values and what that can do particularly in adversity.

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David Sandstrom 15:23

Yeah. So understanding who we are, you know, really, will help help us focus in the right direction, I think is what you're saying. So it kind of leads me to ask, you're kind of tapping into your why. So you could say, oh, I'd like to lose a few pounds. Well, why do you want to lose a few pounds? Do you just want to look better? Or do you want to avoid a chronic disease down the road? Do you want to be able to play with your grandkids when you're older? You know, why is it that you have this short term goal? What's the long term goal? Would would you would you say that's, that's accurate?

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 15:59

Yeah, that's a beautiful summary, you did it much more efficiently than I did thank you, it's been able to being able to whittle it down. And then to help those that are listening to help you execute it. It just because you write it down on a piece of paper, once, it doesn't mean it's going to stick. So again, the adversity is always going to be in the forefront of your mind, because you're going through that pain now. And that value of who you want to be as a choice that you have to make, and the outcome that you want is even further away. So it takes a real development of this skill. Yeah. And yes, your motivation will go up. But under the adversity, you need to combine that motivation, again, with the commitment, or in other words, to say, the clarity and the willingness to know that again, you will suffer that there will be pain in the way. And so when you lean into the pain that you're suffering, whether it be the hunger, cravings, or the adversity, even the experience, the negative thoughts, and the fear that you have to keep tying it in and say this is a part of the process. I'm willing to do this, keep moving forward. Don't listen to the negativity, but keep moving forward. And bringing that along with you in a committed way. Again, there's a committed idea that I'll do it no matter what, yeah. And that because it's who I am starts, right, it starts with the motivation. But you also need to combine it with a commitment in order to actually get the end result. Because again, the motivation no matter what, no matter what your path is, it won't last. So please don't feel like you have to depend on it. At the same time, again, I don't want to push it away, by all means, do what you can to stir it up, surround yourself with positive people, people who are going to

encourage you people who believe in your mission, you know, take take into your heart, the positive feedback. I don't have any listeners out there like me, but I get positive feedback and it bounces off because I'm so focused on mistakes, you tell me something negative, I absorb it, and I take it in personally. And it adds, that's another dynamic that I've seen with people. Again, we can go in 12 different directions. Yeah, turn it over to you.

D David Sandstrom 17:52

Well, I'm kind of curious, I want to spend a little more time on this. And that is, feelings can come and go. Right? They certainly do in a relationship and a long term committed relationship, you might have highs and lows. So is that what you're kind of talking about here? How our motivation can come and go? It's not gonna it's not gonna be durable enough to get us through the tough times? We need a little something more it? Is that right?

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 18:17

Yeah, again, thank you for your succinct and hitting the targets, if we want to talk about relationships, this is, this is a big place for it to go. And I know in my life, people kind of make it an either or it's like, well forget how you feel because you're married, and you made a lifetime commitment. And people can often say that sometimes I think in anger, or with this, like hard, fast rule like well, you don't have the option stop. And meanwhile, the person might be suffering with, you know, wanting to retreat or might be turning to alcohol or might be thinking of having an affair or like all these things, they kind of cope with the emotional difficulty that they're having a feeling lonely after 20 years, or whatever it is. Yeah. And the idea that well, I just have to, you know, married so it's the rule. That doesn't work well with us. Yeah, we don't like we don't like the shoulds the half twos and lack of choice, tons of research goes into it that when we when we lose our choice, we lose our motivation.

D David Sandstrom 19:08

Yeah, the way I put that, go ahead.

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 19:11

Well, to cap it off of what you're saying. So the idea is that when you bring back into who you are, like, Does my word mean something when I gave it 25 years ago? Yeah. Again, in God's eyes, you know, what is it? Like I said, I was gonna love this woman forever. And now she's in pain, and she's suffering and she's not helping, how do I to lean into that in a loving way? It comes out of my character not to have to, even if I don't want to, even if it's bad, been hurt for 10 years. It's not really even about her anymore. It's about Well, who am I as a human being and as a man? Yeah. And these are the questions that can really then kind of motivate you through that difficulty because the marriage at that point, for example, might still be terrible. But that's how you come out on the other side of it, is by upping your character being a man of God, not because you have to, but because you've been baptized and because that's who you are? Yeah, because this is the trial that God has for you. These are where the spiritual

questions come from and for the motivation, why does God have me in this? What does God want out of me? How can I become more like Jesus? Right? Not because I have to. But because isn't that what I want to do?

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David Sandstrom 20:14

I love it. I love it that that is just hit the nail on the head right there, Dr. Eddie, you know, I looked at my relationship with my wife in that way. And that is, I don't have to love my wife, but I get to love my wife. Right there. There's something there's a totally different looking look, we're looking at things. And you know, one of the things often saying the podcast is that God loves us enough that when he tells us to do something, it's for our benefit. And if he gives us a prohibition or some type of restriction, it's for protection. And if we believe in that, then we're not, we're not following a set of rules, we're actually just taking advantage of the guardrails that God has put up for us, and we get to operate, we get to drive our car between those guardrails and safety. And, and there's benefits in that there's always a benefit attached to being obedient to the Word of God. And, you know, again, what kind of is kind of a subject for another episode really, you know, sanctification, if you will, or a surrender to God's loving kindness is always a good thing. But I think that kind of ties into to what we're talking about here and the mental emotional component of, of finding that motivation, finding the grit, when it's, it's slippery.

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 21:27

Yeah, yeah. And it does tie into the mental toughness, because while we're talking about performance in our spiritual context, in our spiritual walk, it's the same process because we have these thoughts and feelings that get in the way. Yeah, we have selfish motivations. We have negativity from, you know, brutal coaches, or whatever it was, like, there's just adversity in everything that we do, and sports psychology. So I had a crisis. And I also wanted to let the listeners know that I was debating whether, I was gonna say this or not, but like, I'm not preaching at you, I'm divorced. And the consequences of sin is death. And I can testify to that. So I'm not sitting up here being like, oh, sports psychologist, and I'm Christian, and follow these rules. And here's how to do it. I'm telling you, like, Guys, I messed up. And I had great losses. And I need like, I needed to change my life and learn these lessons. And I'm thankful because, you know, in the end, I'm a better father than I would have been. I'm engaged. And, you know, my hope is that, like, I'm gonna have a better partner than I was the first time around. Yeah. And God's interventions that are even the consequences of the sin and the warnings at a given about how do we live? And how do we love others? You know, to your point, David, it's, it's like, yeah, that like, the fruits are there, it still doesn't mean that everything will be perfect, because I'm a long way from being as good as I am. Now. I'm the best man I've ever been. I'm still a long way from even being close to who Jesus is. And so again, it says in the Bible, that he's going to keep working with us until we achieve that. So that means we're on this forever, because nobody's close. Yeah. So that means that this adversity will still come. Yeah. And when, when you know that, that's it. And when you truly understand the Scripture in those ways, it doesn't want to tell you, it doesn't make the path easier. I, I feel like I'm better, and I have purpose, but I still have very low points, I still have difficulties that I don't like, I still have directions that God wants me to go to be more like him that are very, very difficult. Yeah, you know, I don't know about you guys out there. But sometimes I get this breakthrough. And I become either more generous or more faithful or more this or more that. And, and it's like, oh,

God, thank you. Like, I can feel that a bit. I'm gonna go out. I'm gonna do that. And he's seen it for a little bit. And then God's Okay, yeah, but what about this part of your heart? Oh, well, what about this part? And it's like, Oh, can't I stay in that? Like when? He doesn't keep you there? I'm sure he doesn't keep you there either. It's like, no, like, Yeah, you're good. And you're better and I love you for it, but not but and here's the next step. Yeah. That can get frustrating.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 24:17

Dr. Reddy, thank you for sharing that. I appreciate you getting vulnerable. And I'm sorry, you had to go through that. I really am. That's that's a that's a tough thing to go through. Nobody wins in divorce. I know that. And my wife and I have spent the last 20 years doing marriage ministry and helping to to pour it on people's lives and hopefully, you know, help them enjoy more relational connectedness and more intimacy than they thought was possible. And we've seen a lot of great, great fruit from that. But we've also seen couples that didn't turn things around and ended up in divorce. You know, it's happened. It's always sad when it does. So all right. I appreciate you getting vulnerable I really do. So is a couple other questions I wanted to get to here. It's kind of obvious to us that professional athletes need to coach you know, they need, you know, a mental toughness coach, they have to master their mental game, especially things like the game of golf, tennis, you know, basketball, you name it, those really intense sports. They, it's obvious to us that they need a coach. But it's not so obvious that we can use those principles, those mental toughness secrets, if you will, that athletes use and apply that to just about any area of life. So could you say a few words to that?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 25:34

Yeah, absolutely. That was one of my favorite first discoveries. When I was in graduate school. I think I mentioned that I worked with chronic pain. So during my clinical program, I've got these clinical things. I'm learning sports, Psych, and one of my first practicums was in with chronic pain and, and it was so cool. I was working in Chicago at the time where I could start to tell them, This is what Michael Jordan does. And I could see how this population that at first, and I had to practice because at first they were like, Look, I am Michael Jordan, I can't get to the mailbox, like I'm in pain here. What are you talking about? But once I kind of refined it, and let them know that Yeah, but you still have this challenge. And that your context of what you want to get done, you know, your rehabilitation, you know, getting back to work these other things, you know, especially for the former athletes, I'm like, when you were doing this in college, how did you work? Can you take those same principles in the process that you use to get from A to B. And understanding that the context is just different. Whether it's, you know, to become an Olympian, whether it's to open up a business, whatever it is, the process is the same the skills of as we had said, for mental toughness, to learn how to work with your motivation, how to get distance from the negative thinking, when it's moving you in the wrong direction, the willingness to feel in service of what you want to do. The confidence that you can build the self talk skills, what do I say to myself in an intentional way, distancing from the things that automatically pop up? Yeah, focus, we can train our focus, like, Does this mean that that's only good in football? or would this help us in just about every area? So I found that it was a much more hate the word positive, like I'd said, but but a much more encouraging framework that instead of we're going to help us not be sick anymore. It was like, Hey, how do you want to excel? And this is what Michael Jordan does, and what can we learn from this. And then I

started to apply it into obesity. And I've just found that over the years, it's worked in every context, I've worked with actors and actresses, I've worked with, again, business people in leading teams, I've worked with musicians. If you have something that you want to perform, and do, this is a framework that so easily translates. And it's not exactly the same, of course, the context, we got to say, you know, but even within sport is different. You know, the golf culture is very different than the football culture, you need different, you need different arousal regulation skills, for example, you want to the golf ball, like a defensive lineman, it's not going to work. And you better not be on the defensive line with the attitude of a golfer, because that's going to get you get killed. So, of course, you want to tweak it, but ultimately, the mental toughness, absolutely generalizable.

D

David Sandstrom 28:07

Yeah, well, you know, you touched on something there that I'd like to hear some more words on, and that is the self talk, you know, when we when we fail, let's say we fail at anything, you know, I wanted an A in this course, I ended up getting a D, I had a feeling got to take it again. I wanted to, you know, lose 20 pounds for my New Year's resolution, and I lost three pounds, and now I've gained five. And it's easy to beat ourselves up, I found that when we fail that, you know, those negative thoughts start coming along, and they usually directed at our identity. And I'm just I'm a failure. I did I failed at this, therefore I am a failure. It's a slippery slope. So could you speak to that a little bit on how we bounce back from failure, and not be victims of our self talk, but actually have our self talk serve us instead?

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 28:57

Yeah, so this one is rich. This is another one where I could say, a whole podcast on this. So I'll hit some highlights go deeper where you like it. Okay. First and foremost about the idea of mistakes. We have to change our relationship with them. Because we know that mistakes have to be made in order to get better. I like to use the example of how did you learn how to walk Did you Did you just observe your parents for two years and then pop up and walk? No, of course not like you. You fell hundreds of times stumbling and trying to do it. Yeah, or do you watch a video to learn how to swim? No, I got in the water and I sank a bit and drank you know drink a couple gallons on route to like learning how to dog paddle. Yeah, what about riding a bike? You know? Did you just get a tutor and study that really hard and then get on there? No, I've got scuffed knees and I felt like we we learned by doing those things and when we're young. We're encouraged during all of that right our parents or grandparents or friends are like cheering us on and you know, we even when we're learning how to draw I How many times have you had a read that really ugly artistic thing and that your parents are putting it on the fridge so proud of it like you can't draw, you're in first grade. It's like a bunch of scribbles. So we at first had this environment of an acceptance of mistakes. But then somewhere later on, that drops, particularly when kids are getting into high school, the tolerance for mistakes is unfortunately, zero, like the pressure on the grades, that constant negative march, which they have to I mean, we have to get it, we have to know we're wrong. But we've got parents telling us what to do. Sometimes they've got coaches, and then sometimes the coaching can be like, focused on what we're doing wrong, and you have to do it better, and the pressure to succeed. And there's really not a lot of grace anymore. There's not an appreciation for the mistakes that are required in service of learning. And so I challenge you all out there to say that, look, I'm not going to tell you mistakes are okay, I hate when people say that too, because you and I know

that they're not they're not okay. There's consequences, whether you whether you do it when you're in third grade, or eighth grade or, and the bigger you, you get the bigger pressure moments, there is more consequences. You lose the game, your parents might be disappointed your teammates certainly will be upset. So of course, you're going to feel bad about these things. So step one, though, is understanding that if you're giving full effort, like if you're not giving full effort, then like you kind of deserve some of that like, Okay, you got to be better than this. But if you're giving full effort, you're making those mistakes. You don't have to love it. But you do have to encourage you to accept that this is a part of the learning process and then respond to the mistake. Here's the key. What did what happened in this mistake? Why did it happen if I just I just had a bad day? No, I can't stand that or letting my athletes do that. You didn't just have a bad day. There was a reason you might have had a bad day. But did you not go to bed early enough the night before? Have you been behind on your nutrition or, or your hydration? It was a hot sunny day? Did you were you unfocused you know? Were you unmotivated? Were you distracted, there's something else going on in your life that's impeding on this. This this this goal that you have in sport and you're distracted, there's a reason for everything that happens. And when a mistake happens, it's saying, Hey, look here, what could I have done differently? You know, now, maybe not. I mean, in certain competitive sports, for example, you know, I was playing football on Sunday, and I fumbled. Right, well, Was that my fault? Well, I don't know the guy came in and punch the ball out in the snow. Now wasn't happy about it. But on the next leg straight. So was it my fault? Well, yes. And no. Sometimes there's a good play. What can I do better? Well, a couple plays later, I gave him a stiff arm and knocked him into the ground. But as I ran to other guys came at me, and I remember the fumble. And so I put two arms on the ball as they came in. Right? Because it was like, had I done that the first time and maybe protected it better, I would have had a better chance you got to learn from the mistake. Right? The self talk I can if I could continue on my little rant here.

D David Sandstrom 32:57

Yeah, go ahead. I just want to add one quick thing. And that is, there's no such thing as failure. If you look at it as a learning experience.

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 33:06

Yeah, yeah, that's a good way to put it. And speaking of self-talk, like words are different. Like I don't. I want to give a gentle pushback on that. Because there's nice the right perspective to take it. But it still feels like failure. I still fumbled the ball. I still hate it when they talk about it. Because he's still talking about it. Yeah.

D David Sandstrom 33:24

Actually, what I what I just said hints, a little bit of positive thinking, doesn't it?

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 33:27

It does. It's the thing that irks me, is it? I don't want it to invalidate the pain that we go through. Yeah, I did make a mistake, I fumbled the ball. And there was the potential to lose possession. It was a mistake. It was a failure. The difference though, maybe I'll switch gears is to what you

it was a mistake. It was a failure. The difference though, maybe in 50 years is to what you had said. But that doesn't mean I'm a failure. Yeah. I'm not what I do. Right? I'm a child of God. And what I do is in service of him, yeah. And sometimes it's sinful. And sometimes it's not my best effort. And sometimes I've made mistakes, who don't have the skill. But this is what I will do throughout my whole life, I will act and behave, but it is not what I do. Like, I'll say, I'm a sports psychologist, but I don't have that as my identity. I'm like, or at least not a lot, or hopefully, at least not in the center. Right? Like that's the thing is like, we can have multiple identities and we can say these things, but it does get fishy. I'll tell you, that's why I suffered in high school because I was a runner. And that was wrong. I was a child of God. And I had a lot of other roles but running who likes run, right? Yeah, I put all of it into their three seasons all during the summer. Like, that's all I did. And all my worth was in that and that was what was dangerous. That's what was slowing me down. I can't run with that kind of weight on my shoulders. Yep, fail at who you are. Because then like my identity would disappear. Especially with my elite athletes. This is a big thing that we had talked about. And you'll notice that a lot of the Christian athletes will talk and how they've had like Si Young Seasons and things of that nature. When they say, Hey, God gave me this gift, he's at the center. And I give thanks all the time. Yeah. And it lightens them up to, to do their mission and to play the game.

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David Sandstrom 35:12

Yeah. So by all takes the pressure off, too, doesn't it?

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 35:15

It really can. I know, again, talking about my divorce and coming back to yours. Submission was not my thing. It took me five years, my pastor kept saying, why won't you get baptized? I'm like, I don't know. I just couldn't. And he's like, why won't you accept the gift? I don't know. I mean, submission was not easy for me. Yeah. And then once I did, and I realized, Okay, God, I'm giving him my life. It's not my responsibility anymore. There was this wait, because it wasn't my plan. Now it was his. And yeah, if I succeeded or failed, it wasn't 100% on me, it was partially on me. Yet it might have been because God didn't want something or he had something better.

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David Sandstrom 35:55

Yeah. Yeah, that's great. That's really good. You know, just to expand on his self talk a little bit more, a little bit deeper. And that is, in Philippians, four, eight, the Bible encourages us to dwell on whatever is true, noble, lovely, praiseworthy, impure think on these things. But you say, yeah, that's easier said than done. Because first we have to unhook from the opposite thoughts. Can you say a few words to unhooking?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 36:26

Yeah, thank you for this. So this gets back to a perfect segue back into the whole idea of the self talk in the different kinds that we have, I would say that there are two types of self talk that goes on, there's the automatic and the intentional. And for many of us, we're not very intentional about what we say to ourselves, we're kind of assuming that the automatic self talk

that comes in is what I think and, and we kind of justify it or defend it, and we attach to it, we hook into it, we believe it. Because that's our experience. And it's there all the time. And I want to encourage you, and to say that it may or may not be true, it may or may not certainly may or may not be helpful. But it's a product of our programming, when you were born, you had no thoughts you were a blank slate. So as much as people say, Well, this is my truth and what I think and they kind of really double down on the automatic stuff that goes on, I want to caution against that. Because while you may own it, it's just been constant programming from your environment, what kind of culture you're in, where you've lived, what you heard in TV, what music you've listened to, you know, the way you've ruminated on particular thoughts and cultivated this, like we all are now this program, and it's been a lot of it non intentional. And so, rather than when we think of something, well, let me back up back in the day, when I first learned this in grad school, it was all about you, that's bad, you gotta don't do that. Do this, instead be positive. And I argued with my professors in school, because I was like, I've tried that. I don't know if you guys have to, I've tried when I thought I couldn't do it to do it. When I was being teased in fifth grade, I tried to feel it, you know, try to think that I was okay. But when I was getting picked last, and the other kids were teasing me about being overweight. Like they did a lot of damage. And I couldn't just all of a sudden go against it and just kind of think, well, I'm good. I'm okay. Like, that's a positive thinking. But I didn't believe it. And when I was thinking that I'm not good enough. I mean, that's part of what drove me to achieve. And honestly, to get my degrees and other things was like I had to prove it I had to achieve, so I could be worthwhile so I could get approval from people. I couldn't just say that I was worthwhile. I tried. So I argued with my professors. And I'm like, Well, what am I supposed to do? What doesn't the belief in this have to do with anything and at the time, we didn't have the science that we have now. So I want everybody to write this down? When you think something, ask yourself, Is this helping or hurting me? And ask it in a genuine way? Is it moving me towards or away from either the person I want to be or the goal that I want to accomplish? Because if it's moving you away? Why hold on to it? Why invest in it? Well, it because it's true. If I'm thinking that I'm overweight, or I'm lazy, that why it's true. Okay, if it's helping you to think that like sometimes I'll criticize myself and call myself heavier, whatever, and it has been put down the cookie or work harder in the gym, than that's functioning and it's working. So then I can call myself lazy, and or an idiot or whatever else. And people be like, Oh, that's terrible. I did this in the gym. The other day, I was kind of going in there. I was trying to lift I was going slow. And I started to kind of say, like, come on, like you do this, like quit being a wimp. And somebody that says like a sports psychologist aren't supposed to be positive. And I was like, first of all I'm saying with loving kindness. calling myself an idiot with loving kindness. Yeah, but second of all, this negative talk is having a positive effect. I went and I lifted and hit a PR. Yeah. On the flip side, if I'm depressed because I'm beating myself up, and I'm saying that I'm lazy, it's causing me to then put on Netflix and watch TV for two hours. Then even if it is true, why hold on to it? It's not serving, that doesn't mean then you be positive and say, Well, I'm not lazy and lie to yourself. That's where the positivity doesn't work. Yeah. But you move back to that learning that we had said earlier. Okay. Well, I don't like when I'm when I'm beating myself up. It's because we don't like what we see when we're shaming ourselves. What's the functional purpose of that? It's your head saying, Hey, we're not who we want to be. We're not living our values. We kind of think that this is this is this pathological thing, and you got to stop being so negative, but it might be just screaming at us and saying, Look, I value my health. And I'm calling myself fat and lazy, because I don't like the way that I'm living. So understand the function, the purpose of that negativity, and rather than say, that's who I am and have the shame, it might be appropriate to have the guilt and say, be honest with yourself and say, you know, what, I, I'm not working out. I'm not working as hard as I can. I'm not as generous as I want to be. Like, there's there's a light being shined on this, this weakness or this sin, and we don't like it. It it hurts our ego. But that negative self talk might just kind of be like,

well, then what do I do about it? Going back to that question, how can I help myself? Well, then maybe let me take that walk. Let me put down that doughnut? Let me make that phone call. Let me give to that charity, let me like there's something that I could do that if I don't like how I'm beating myself up. I have to feel bad as I do it. This isn't about feeling better. It always goes back to the action. Yeah, they can do something and take that one step. Yeah. And that's the best way to interact with your your self talk.

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David Sandstrom 41:47

I liked that a lot. So if this thought that I'm having at the moment, is it serving my health building pursuits? Or is it taking away from it? And if it's not serving me, then it needs to go? And and of course, I'm thinking of the first second Corinthians 10:5, we're taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. So we need to take these thoughts captive, right? We're the ones in charge, were the ones that with the agency, we're the ones with the God given free will that get to choose it, we get to choose the thoughts that we ruminate on. So if that thought is not self, it's not serving our efforts, then it needs to be rejected. And it's very biblical. It's, it's a it's I amazed sometimes that how concise and powerful the Word of God can be in just a few words, there is so much deep meaning and implications to that passage. It's amazing.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 42:35

It really is. And so I told you, I'd gotten baptized. And soon after that I had a crisis because I was like, gosh, if God's in the center, everything, and God is everything. And here I am in promoting the performance excellence guy mental toughness, you got to do this. And it's all on you, for about, fortunately, was only for about two weeks, because I was like, I need to become a pastor. Like, what am I doing with all of this? Sports Psychology stuff? Yeah. The bigger this God quickly intervened and said no, like, this is where I want you to be. I want you to help people with anxiety. And I made psychology to is what he told me. And I was like, That's great. Yeah. And I started to really see and you did a beautiful job, David, have the best sports psychology or psychology principles will be consistent with scripture. It might be phrased differently, you'll give it a different theoretical, taught orientation or Yeah. But it won't conflict. And I've loved in I'm in fact, I'm doing a presentation to coaches next week, where I'm taking this one verse, And I'm breaking down the one verse in these four components about communication, and it ties in beautifully to the Positive Coaching and communicating to athletes. And I'm gonna take a whole hour on it and one verse, So you're right, if we can unpack these things in that first that you would get there. Every thought take every thought that the Bible doesn't exaggerate. That's right. take every thought captive. And in my experience, that's what I found. Because every thought that pops up, can be automatic and be defensive, it can come from a sinful place. It takes work and please respect that. A lot of people don't a lot of people didn't even know that we could do this kind of work.

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David Sandstrom 44:18

Right? Yeah. I really love that. You know, you mentioned anxiety and I'm glad you brought that up. Because I know for I didn't really didn't do sports when I was younger. I always had jobs, but my kids doing sports, and I see how anxiety about their performance. Or you know, maybe my daughter's play softball. She has a strikeout, and then she starts beating herself up and I

can see the look on her face. She's not she's entertaining, entertaining thoughts that are not serving her. And oftentimes that anxiety can get in the way of our peak performance. It might be in sports, but it might be in any other area of life might be in relationships, it might be in a performance at work, or especially if you're in sales. So could you talk a little bit about how If we can handle our anxiety, embrace it, and help it to have it help us to accomplish our goals that we have in mind.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 45:10

By all means. So again, I'll give you some quick tips and band aids. Again, I want everybody to appreciate that there's work involved to develop these skills. But with that being said, I think you can get immediate benefit from this one understanding. In my experience, your anxiety is because you care. It's not because necessarily, there's a real threat or likelihood of a threat happening. I often like to say I have among the highest performers. In my practice, people are trying to win state or national championships. Yeah. And they're anxious about their performance. They don't want to make a mistake,

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David Sandstrom 45:44

Understandably so.

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 45:46

Yeah. But why are they so anxious? Why am I not working with the person who's worse on their team? Why don't I have a bunch of people who are losing all the time? Because they're the ones who really should be more nervous about making mistakes? Because they're making them much more frequently? Right?

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David Sandstrom 46:01

Yeah, yeah.

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 46:03

That high level of anxiety in my high performers comes not from their objective skill set or likelihood of making a mistake. I had students, for example, with 4.2, GPAs, 4.5 GPA is coming in with anxiety over their grades. It's a reflection of how much we care. Please understand this, if you're sitting there listening to this, think about the things that are most important to you. In your mind, just list what are the top three things that are most important to me? Maybe it's my family, my sport, my career? And then let me ask you, what do you worry the most about my family, my sport, my career. And the reason for that is because if I care so much about something, and I don't get what I want in there, and I care about my sport, and then I lose, it's going to hurt me. And this is what our mind does. It's our survival instinct, our mind is built to actually look out into the world 24/7 and anticipate what could go wrong, like a warning system. And we have to appreciate that that's never gonna go away. And we can't stop that.

It's certainly not bad. But that also doesn't mean that just because it's sending us a bunch of warnings, that everything is going to happen. It's not predictive. So there's many things like an easy example is I hope, David, before you go across the street, what's the first thing that you do?

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David Sandstrom 47:35

Look both ways.

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 47:37

Right? Now, you don't sound anxious about that. But that's a negative thought I could get hit by a car. But because you've learned and you've practiced it a bunch of times, it doesn't threaten you anymore. Maybe the first time when you were six, or seven, and you were allowed to go across the street the first time and your parents washed and you practiced it. Like maybe it was like, look, look, look, and then you sprint across the street. Right? Because you don't want it you care about your life, but you've practiced it. And you've learned that, oh, I can. That's just a threat. Now I can do something safe. Now. Let me move on. And that's the way we want to do it with everything. When you get anxious about something, it's pointing towards something that matters to you. So rather than believe the anxiety, I work with my clients to say so then what do you do to ensure your success? Oh, my gosh, I'm really worried about that test tomorrow. Okay. I've said this to my son's you know, before my Did you study? Hmm, not really, well, then you should be anxious. Yeah, once you go study, I'm not gonna help your anxiety. Prepare. Right? And you can you can iterate that in anything that you're doing. If you're anxious. Maybe you didn't do everything that you can do to prepare. And if you did, like I've done a great thing. I'm nervous about the game tomorrow. What can I do? It's 11 o'clock at night? Well, there's nothing else that I can do. I've practiced as much I've studied the game plan. What's important now, if you want to win wi N, wink, wink, W I N, what's important now? Well, let me get my eight hours asleep. That's the thing that I can have control over in the moment to ensure that I have the best game tomorrow. And it doesn't mean that all those other negative thoughts or worries are gonna go away. But it takes the power out of it when you realize it, that your mind is just kind of working like a fire alarm. You've been in lots of fire alarms. Hopefully, most of them haven't signal that there's a fire but you would never ignore the fire alarm. If one went off between you and I right now or listeners if one went off wherever you're at. And I said, Oh, no, just It's probably nothing. Just keep listening to this podcast, we've got a limited amount of time. I don't think any of us would be comfortable to have our best performance in this podcast or be able to listen to what's being said, we'd have to check out the fire alarm, address what needs to be addressed. And if it's a fire, then we abandon our performance and we leave and we respond to it. But most of the time, we just have to kind of let it go off in the background. And and lean in and focus on what we're doing because we're safe even though it's annoying.

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David Sandstrom 49:56

Yeah. I love that this is such a good topic. I Few things I want to say here. I think it was. Oh, it was this David Great. orator these 1800 Sky. Mark Twain. So Mark Twain said, I've had a lot of terrible things happen to me in life. And some of them actually came to pass.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 50:19

Yes, I remember that quote.

D

David Sandstrom 50:21

So in other words, he's, he's, he's thinking about all these negative outcomes that could possibly happen. And the vast majority of them never happened. Right. And it you know, it applies to flying an airliner, too. You know, I flew for a major airline out of Atlanta here for 32 years. And a lot of times when people find out as an airline pilot, they say, oh, man, how did you deal with all the stress of having 250 people's lives in your hands every day? And we didn't choose to focus on that, you know, we could have, but that's not going to do us any good. Yeah, yoga is going to impair your performance a great deal, if you'd like, oh, no, we could come down. And we could be a flaming cartwheel down this runway, and 175 miles an hour at any moment. You could think that because it could happen. But it's not likely to happen, because we had the training, we're professionals we have, we've seen this before. And, you know, we get in and we choose to focus on the task at hand. And we don't have to worry about the disaster that could possibly happen. And I think we can apply that to a lot of areas of life.

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 51:21

Let me double down on that, David, because that's, that's exactly right. According to the sports sciences. Because if you're focusing on anything other than the task at hand, you increase the likelihood that you'll explode or have a bad performance, right? It ends up being this distraction. So while emotionally we're built to have this warning system, it's an unnatural thing, but something that can be trained to say, what's important now, what's the process, and you can, you'll have more likelihood to be able to engage that when you realize that if I focus on what I'm doing, and what I can control in the moment, it'll give me the best outcome, I still can't control the outcome. And where I find God is into it. Like if God if you want this to happen, whatever, but I'm going to take care of the process now. And I leave the outcome to you. It's one of faith. But it's also one of the only way for me to get the outcome that I want the safe landing to hit the ball is for me to focus on what I need to do in order to do that. And the more I go 100% into that the greater my chances are. So when we get caught up and negatively predicting the future in the what if questions, what if this happens, what if that happens, and but this is really important, and you got to understand why I'm feeling this way. It very often becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. And I'm afraid that I'm going to lose that distraction is going to contribute to me losing.

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David Sandstrom 52:40

Yeah, I got you. Yeah, for sure. So what was that acronym? The W I N acronym?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 52:45

Yeah. If you want to win, you have to focus on what's important now. Yeah, it's one of my favorites. Tonight. Nice, quick fix. I'm telling you, I tell myself this 20 times a day. And it's

helped me really move from it tend to be futuristic, and kind of saying where it where the future is going to go. And it brings me right back into the present moment, which is why it works when I say what's important now. I'm talking about right now. And for you, David, and for me, what's important right now is the question that you just asked me. Sometimes people will say, Well, what's important now is Oh, my family or, you know, my job and doing well on the have this kind of big thing. I'm like, no, no, that that's, that's too high level I'm talking about in a moment that you sitting, right, what's important now, right as you live it, because what was important two seconds ago is not what's important. Now. Now, I'm at a different point than I was two seconds ago. Yeah. If I make a mistake in this podcast, and I'm thinking about, Oh, man, I kind of started over there. If I'm thinking about, well, gosh, what's the next thing we're gonna think about? Or talk about, then I'm not gonna be able to maximize this answer. What's important now means what's right in front of you? And how can you bring yourself into that?

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David Sandstrom 53:48

And we live life in we live life in the moment, don't we? We don't live in the past. And we can't live in the future. We live Life moment by moment. So yeah, I love that. You know, there's one one more question I have here regarding anxiety. And that is, for a lot of people, I believe that anxiety interferes with their sleep, and they're not able to let go of these worrisome thoughts. Therefore, it causes them to have trouble falling asleep and staying asleep. So is that are there any techniques do you can offer any low hanging fruit about how to master those types of thoughts? If you're looking for a better night's sleep?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 54:24

Well, it's interesting. Even in your question, notice that all that we've talked about, it's like, yeah, but now I have it in sleep and of the scenario, what do I do instead, we have this desire for this quick fix or to make it have happened. And I hate to kind of say it I'm like saying, but we already talked about it. So rewind the podcast, and go back to it because all the thoughts about surrendering to God, understanding that what you're worried about, is in service of helping you. Like, I respect that. There's not going to be for many of your thoughts as quick fix to get them out there. If your desire though, is to get rid of these thoughts. It's, you're actually going in the wrong direction. It's another version of that positivity. Like, if I'm not gonna be positive, but then how do I just get rid of it? It's an unwillingness to let the thought be there. So if you start fighting your thoughts, and you don't like it, because it's keeping you up, I'm not going to tell you how to distract from it even more. Because again, think about the bear analogy. No, you like, now it's at night, and this bear is still in front of me, I'm still scared of it. Um, how am I going to teach you even harder to forget about the bear? So lean into it, you might say things, I will help you in this way of taking the power out of those thoughts. Gosh, it's one o'clock in the morning, I got work tomorrow. These things do mean something to me, I am worried because I care about my kids or this project, or whatever it is, it's keeping you up. I'm going to carve out some time tomorrow to figure this out. Or even if you just say, I'm going to take, you know, nine to 10 o'clock in the morning and worry about it, then like, I respect this enough that I need to worry about it. It's not okay to me to just drop it. You might look at it in a way we've said the hurtful versus helpful question, gosh, this is just really keeping me up. Can I can I meditate on the idea that if I keep thinking this way, if I just keep letting my thoughts run, that it's just going to ruin my night, I'm going to be even more upset tomorrow. I hate the fact that I can't do anything about this right now. And I accept that I can't do anything about this right now. So let me put on some music to focus on that. And we put on a prayer that I could

listen to. And it's not for a distraction. But it's just so that I can hook onto something that'll be more helpful. Yeah. Admitting that there's nothing I can do about the worry, but not disrespecting the worry. That's where I think our anxiety stays up is because we try to be positive. We try to say we don't worry about it. We have an intolerance of of the distress that we're actually in. If you embrace it, it feels bad, but you'll suffer less.

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David Sandstrom 57:04

like it. That's great. That's a good word. All right. I've got one more question to wrap up. Well, actually, couple more. But what do you know today that you wish you knew 25 years ago when you first got started?

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Dr. Eddie OConnor 57:19

Oh, my goodness. Another podcast, but let me pick my favorite. What do I? What do you want the science or spiritual? Answer?

D

David Sandstrom 57:34

I didn't want to give you the open door. I just want to hear your thoughts. I don't I don't want to lead you anyway.

D

Dr. Eddie OConnor 57:40

Okay, so I'm just talking as a human being in all honesty, I wish I found God earlier. Like, there's just no getting around it. Like I knew God was it I was an altar boy, in a Catholic church. I was elector. I went to Catholic high school. So I thought I knew God and I prayed and I went to church. But he was never the center of my life. I didn't understand that he was a living being. And there was a relationship to have. Yeah, I just kind of pictured it as somebody distant off in the clouds that had some rules and regulations. And I had to follow these, follow them. And I remember there were years that I was like, I'm doing good. I didn't have to go to Confession because I didn't sin. Oh my gosh. But if I had got at the center of my life, I wouldn't have gotten divorced, I wouldn't have lived in thought I would have been caught up in my identity and running in high school or in my occupation, I would have been more willing in my activities to embrace my suffering, I would have had a different view of the world and my purpose in it. Yeah. And I would have had a different life. And you said 25 years ago, I think I still would have been a psychologist, I still think that God has put me to, to heal. But I'd have less suffering.

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David Sandstrom 59:11

Yeah, that's a good word. You know, out of all the things that you could have shared with from that open ended question that I just asked you, I'm really happy you chose to share that. Because what you just said is very much in line with my exhortation to people on this show. And that is that we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully, with God's natural design for spirit, mind and body. In order to align our lives. We have to surrender to Him. We

have to trust in God's loving kindness and his goodness, and things will work out if we do. You know, I've never heard anybody say, you know, I really regret doing things God's way. I don't think I'll ever hear somebody say that. But here you are. A PhD psychologist with a specialty in mental toughness. And if ever there was a person that could claim that they could figure life out on their own, it would be you. But you said that you wish you'd surrendered your life to God sooner. And if you had, your life would have been, you would have had far less pain and suffering, your life would have been different in so much better. I really appreciate the fact that you shared that. Thank you for sharing that. So I know that you have a coaching program that you do with people. Could you just tell us a little bit about that?

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 1:00:30

Yeah, thanks for the opportunity. So COVID happened. And I worked in a place for 20 years, things, you know, lots of layoffs, 400 layoffs and stuff. So I had a chance to pivot and it just came on me right away, that I wanted to help more people in the performance anxiety stage. And just without going into the full details, the way things came up as I was able to put together this success stories community and online community. And I believe it's going to help me impact more people. So what is the success story community, you still get to work with people one on one, it's a coaching program. But in addition to just the traditional see people weekly, this was a program where I've taken everything that I've learned a lot of things that you've learned on this podcast, if you want to go deeper into it. And I've put it into online modules, so that people can join the community. And they can get this one on one video instruction, and move at their own pace. And we can do everything from sleep, improving your sleep, to mindfulness meditations, to developing that willingness to the choice point that I call about teaching you how to unhook, really how to develop mental toughness. And I've loved this opportunity, because it allows me to help more people just to make a bigger impact. And again, you're still doing it with me, I'm still walking with you, we still have the monthly coaching. If you want more than the monthly, we can certainly do that too. But it's been so exciting to be able to now take this and help people too. And you don't have to be an athlete. I mean, there's a lot of athletes in it. I've got young athletes in high school and college. I've got master's level athletes that are in there. But I've also got people who are in the symphony. I've had people who are lawyers and psychologists working on their, their careers. So the idea as we said earlier, is that if you want to be a success story, if you want to overcome adversity that's holding you back. This is the place to be success the success stories community love it. And what's your website real easy. Dr.EddieOConnor.com, DREDDIEPOCONNOR.com Or sometimes there's misspellings, but DrEddieOconnor.com.

D David Sandstrom 1:02:35

And you don't put the apostrophe in there. No apostrophe you're straight through. Okay, great. Dr. Edie, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom with the Natural Nation. You You are a blessing.

D Dr. Eddie OConnor 1:02:46

Thank you. My, I appreciate you helping me do God's work here and like getting this message out. And I encourage the listeners that if you do like what it said, like I already asked David, if I could come back. We want to do something. You know, that hits you. So if you have questions,

if you want a deeper dive on something, you know, I'm at your service, and I'd be happy to come back. So let David know what you thought.

 Dr. Eddie OConnor 1:03:06

All right. Thanks again. If you're enjoying this show, would you go to my website, ChristianHealthyLifestyle.com/143. There you can copy the URL and send that URL to a friend of yours who's like minded. I'll bet they'll appreciate thank you for it. That's it for now. Thank you for listening. I appreciate you. I'll talk with you next time be blessed.