



# Habits Coach

## Leadership Conversation with Dr. Jason Selk

### 1. What role do core values play in the success of a leader, team, and organization?

Core values are the foundation of the entire organization. Values determine your thoughts. Thoughts control feelings and behaviors. Where you decide your values lie will determine how well you think on a daily basis. Core values are the foundation for success or failure.

### 2. What are some of those great outcomes that result from being aligned with your core values?

It's the alignment that's the important piece. Anyone can say they have values, but unless there's alignment with your behaviors, there's no integrity. When a person has integrity or alignment, that's when you can see true success. With integrity, results are slow, but consistent and steady. This is the real allure of not having integrity. When people violate or compromise integrity, they can often speed up the results. However, even when you can speed up results, it will be fleeting and highly inconsistent.

### 3. What are some ways leaders can better understand who they are?

The reality is that people don't think as much as they used to. People are so overwhelmed; technology has not helped. Taking the time to sit and think has become a foreign experience.

To figure out your vision, you have to sit and think. Self-assessment is vital. As a pattern, highly successful people force themselves to think by using self-assessment. Because thinking has become less and less of a habit, when you do ask yourself a question, it's difficult. Thus, the natural response is 'I don't know,' and saying 'I don't know' still isn't thinking. 'I don't know' is not an answer to a self-assessment question. It's actually the opposite.

Take 3-5 minutes daily to practice your thinking. To train my mind to think, I use the following self-assessment "Success Log" questions:

1. What 3 things did I do well in the last 24 hours?
2. What's one thing I want to improve in the upcoming 24 hours?
3. What's one thing I can change or adjust to help make the improvement?

That's the training ground for thinking. If you think on a regular basis, you develop the ability to think, which can then be used in more advanced application.

### 4. How do you ensure that you're thinking to the right conclusion?

Only about twenty percent of the population is engaging in self-assessment on a regular basis. Of

that twenty percent, eighty percent are doing it incorrectly. The normal way to assess is to say things like, 'What am I doing wrong?', 'What's wrong with me?', and 'Why am I doing it wrong?' That's very counterproductive because the focus is on the negative.

Expectancy theory states that what you focus on expands. Mental toughness can be learned. Train yourself to think correctly by focusing on what you're doing well and what you want to improve. That which you focus on will expand.

#### **5. How do you define mental toughness?**

Mental toughness is the mind's ability to focus on the positive (solutions), especially in the face of adversity. Mental toughness is your ability to control your thoughts, realizing that focusing on the storm itself will cause the storm to get worse. Mental toughness is our ability to shift our mind to the solution.

#### **6. What are some misconceptions that people have around mental toughness?**

That mental toughness is normal. That mental toughness should be easy. That you can be mentally tough without training. Your brain is a muscle, just like your bicep. For me to think that I can strengthen my biceps without doing bicep curls is totally naïve, childlike thinking. You don't become mentally tough by listening to a podcast or hearing a pep talk.

It's totally natural for us to focus on the negative. To overcome this biology, we have to train on a daily basis by answering the "Success Log" self-assessment questions or practice some other scientifically backed process that has been proven to train the mind for improved mental toughness".

#### **7. What are 3 top psychological traits that separate the best performers from the rest of the pack?**

The following are *learned* traits:

1. Tremendous accountability grounded in a no-excuse mentality.
2. Focus on things within their control versus things they cannot control.
3. In sixty seconds or less, the best performers focus on solutions, not problems.

Biologically, when your brain focuses on a problem, your brain releases neurotransmitters into the blood stream. The neurotransmitters biologically make it very difficult to perform at a high level.

If you can make that shift from the problem to the solution in less than a minute, you stay in front of those neurotransmitters.

#### **8. What are your key strategies for building personal confidence?**

1. Develop a process-goal mentality. Instead of judging myself on results, I judge myself on process. Winning is important. However, science proves that the #1 way to control winning is to focus on the process, not winning or losing. By focusing on the daily activities that will cause winning results, you put yourself in control. The process mentality is a total winner.
2. A 5-step mental workout I developed that keeps my mind focused and ready to execute on daily basis. Knowing that I'm mentally prepared really enhances my confidence.
3. The three "Success Log" questions. Answering these daily questions keeps my mind strong.

**9. Who is the most mentally tough person you know?**

I'm impressed with the military, particularly Bobby Gasoff, a Navy Seal Lieutenant Commander and former professional hockey player. To a group of CEOs I assembled, Bobby said, "We call the problems that you deal with champagne problems."

Compared to what military personnel see and experience on a daily basis, our issues (e.g., onboarding clients, losing a deal, etc.) are small.

Military leaders simply have a different level of mental toughness. If you mess up as a Navy Seal, you're talking life or death. The level of difficulty is much higher and the outcomes are much more intense.

**10. What quote best sums up your definition of success?**

Stephen Covey: "The noise of the urgent creates the illusion of importance."

Highly successful people never get it all done in any one given day. Yet, highly successful people almost always get the most important things done every day. The Skill of Prioritizing is one of the most under-rated skills of the world's most highly successful people.

Everybody is overwhelmed. The difference between the goods and the greats is that the greats are finding ways to get the top 2-3 things done each and every day.

© Vidal Training Group

Business Inquiries: [rene@renevidal.com](mailto:rene@renevidal.com)