



The Competitive Edge

Get The Edge!

January - March 2015

Register NOW for the 2015 Summer Program

On – Ice Training

Monday - Friday

7am to 1pm

Off- Ice Training

6:30am to 3pm

Adult Strength and Conditioning Classes offered!

Mondays and Fridays
@ 8:30am

New Yoga Class!

Wednesdays 8:30am

Contact Us:

Website:

<http://www.ceskating.com>

Email:

icejen9@aol.com

Mailing Address:

Competitive Edge Skating
38273 Remington Park
Farmington Hills, Mi 48331

President Jennifer Matras:

248-752- 4470

EGO and One's Performance

By: Jennifer Matras, Owner of Competitive Edge Skating, Inc.

Happy New Year to all of you! This is always a great time in our journey to stop and reflect on the past year, not only to see what we can improve but to also acknowledge the positive moments of the last 12 months. As many of you know I have been teaching skating skills to hockey players for over 15 years. It's what brings me joy, energy and is what is in my DNA. In reflection of 2014, the summer program was the absolute best one I have ever experienced. Some may think it was due to better kids in the program. Maybe. Some could say the talent was better. Sure. But ultimately it was due to the growth I saw before my eyes in many of these players. Growth in their skills? No. Though many of them did get faster and stronger with their skating, it was ultimately their growth in their character, mental toughness and humility that blew me away and made 2014's summer program the best few months I may have ever experienced in my life. I will explain why.

We all want to be successful in life. In Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, he quotes John Dewey, a philosopher stating, "the deepest urge in humans is the desire to be important." I don't disagree with these statements per se, but I think it breeds something in people, young people especially, which can inhibit them from truly being successful or reaching their full potential. Over the years with teaching players, especially those at higher levels, it takes them several lessons to finally break down the wall they have put up and to trust what I am asking them to do in a certain drill and what to correct. This has frustrated me for several years. I have lost students only after 1 or 2 lessons, wasted people's money and time and have even lost sleep or shed tears questioning what I have been doing wrong that I can't get players to open up faster to the demands of the training.

After a semester at Moody's Theological Seminary in the winter of 2014, along with countless hours in books, sermons, and time with mentors, I finally figured out this past year what has been the problem and what we aren't acknowledging enough to our youth in order to help them become more successful. After 3 weeks of the summer program, I asked players a question I have never asked anyone before in my life. "Do you need an EGO in order to become successful in hockey (or in life)?" To my amazement *everyone* said yes.

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CES is helping Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Livingston County!

Every year we stuff back packs with back to school supplies for kids in need! We are always collecting the following supplies which are in need.

We hope you can help!!

Backpacks

Notebooks

Binders/Folders

Calculators

Pens/pencils

Highlighters

Glue

Erasers

Protractors

Rulers

Hand Sanitizer

If you are interested in helping with donations, please contact Jennifer at 248-752-4470 or icejen9@aol.com.

Why Bench Pressing Shouldn't be Encouraged

By: Jim Mckee, Head Strength and Conditioning Coach at CES

At CES, we do not have our athletes bench press. It is my job as a sport performance coach to help people move better. Adapting the human body to repetitive bench pressing does not help one actually move better, is an unathletic application of strength, can impair skating mechanics and may cause permanent damage to the shoulder joint if overemphasized (2, 3, 4). Despite the fact that we openly discuss this with all of our athletes and their families, many of our young athletes unfortunately continue to bench press on their own time.

Why is bench pressing so popular amongst grown men and teenage boys? Why is it that my attempts to educate CES athletes on this exercise have fallen short in getting them to stop doing something that is hindering the very reason they work with us? After reading up on some literature regarding the culture of men, it seems teenage boys are confused and probably struggling in two significant areas in their life: social identity and attracting women. I strongly believe that this is why bench pressing continues to creep its way into their workout routines, regardless of our students understanding that it can inhibit their athletic performance.

Social Identity – Being accepted or acknowledged is arguably one of the most essential human desires. We are social creatures and thrive on positive interaction with others. This may be being part of a team or group, or getting acknowledged for an accomplishment. For many young men the weight room has become a place for self-identity. Bench pressing is an easy- to-learn exercise that can yield quick measurable results both in body appearance and in numbers. Boys who make the record board at their high school are part of an elite group. Having a big chest is often a big deal for those who place their identity under the weight of a barbell.

Attracting Women – If lifting weights didn't change our appearance most people probably wouldn't do it. People often wish to change their appearance in an attempt to be more attractive to another man or woman, at least in their own eyes. The teenage years are often very confusing for men as their testosterone levels are extremely high, and consequentially, so is their sex drive. They're bodies are telling them to seek a mate but they still lack the emotional maturity needed to effectively make the connections girls typically seek. Although it takes time and effort it is logically easier for most boys to work out to build a more "attractive" appearance than dealing with their own emotions.

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Player:

Collin Adams



Congratulations to Collin Adams who is a long time Competitive Edge student who is Captain on the Honeybaked Midget Minor team this year and having a very successful season. He was drafted 49th over-all in the 2014 USHL Phase 1 Future Draft.

He has also been asked to play up for the USA National Development team and the USHL Muskegan team when their teams need additional players.

Collin began skating with CES at the age of 5 years old at KVIH and is now one of the fastest and strongest players in the program. He shows great character and encouragement to others in the program along with keeping a good attitude during demanding training sessions.

Collin has a very bright future ahead of him in life and in hockey!

EGO? (cont. from pg 1)

There was discussion about having confidence in one's self, their skills, or having a "chip on their shoulder" in order to play with intensity in their games. I went home over the weekend very irritated with these answers but I didn't know exactly why. I searched through many books I have in my library by world class authors such as Tony Dungy, Joe Erhmann, Napoleon Hill, Dale Carnegie, etc. Not ONE book had a chapter in it titled "Have an EGO and have more success in life." Actually, the books share quite the opposite.

I couldn't wait to share my new found understanding about success with these young athletes. It is our EGO which prevents us from growing, developing, or seeking others help in order to point out weaknesses, blind spots or bad habits in our lives. EGO is what causes us to be delusional and think we are better than what we are, which in turn ultimately stunts our growth and performance. In his famous book, *The Leader Who Had No Title*, Robin Sharma even explains that the bigger one's EGO the worse the performance. Wow.

Though we will never get rid of our EGO entirely, at CES we encourage our players to leave the EGO in the PAST. Not at the door because they will just pick it up again when they get off the ice or leave the weight room. Again, I have never seen more players become more humble, gain more mental toughness and grow as fast as they did after we realized our EGO limits our growth this past summer. To become more vulnerable, acknowledge our weaknesses and to seek others for help is what ultimately helps one reach world class status, not only in sports but in life.

Honors and Accomplishments

- Congratulations to Zach Diamatoni, a CES student, who showed impeccable leadership during the 2014 summer program which led him to win the Leadership Award at the JR/College level. He is now having a successful season playing Division 1 at Northern Michigan University. Keep being the great leader you are Zach and impacting the world for good!
- Congratulations to CES student, Kirsten Padalis, a Division 1 player at St. Lawrence University who was named ECAC player of the week in Oct. 2014. Way to go Kirsten! Keep up the great work this season!



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Inspirational Quotes:

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone."

~Neale Donald Walsch

"People who have achieved great success are not necessarily more skillful or intelligent than others. What separates them is their burning desire and thirst for knowledge. The more one knows, the more one achieves."

~ Robin Sharma

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Bench Pressing (cont. from pg 2.)

The problem: Author and transformational coach Joe Ehrmann writes, "External physical strength often projects a false image of internal maturity and can create unrealistic expectations". In the article *What Boys Want* author Rosalind Wiseman writes that boys "desperately want to maintain their social position among their guy friends, regardless of the cost to them or others." What is actually taking place in this all-too-common scenario is false masculinity. Young boys see older or stronger ones getting praised for their bench press numbers. They see advertisements of men with muscular physiques having attractive women around them. This problem is further worsened by coaches and boys who ridicule others for not having a strong bench press. What happens to these boys, strong bench press or not, when they learn that weight room numbers and physical appearance have absolutely NOTHING to do with leadership, self-confidence or being a good citizen?

The solution: "They (boys) hunger to be more open about their feelings, both with their families and with their male friends, though they exist in a culture that discourages such emotional openness", writes Wiseman. Being emotionally confused or deprived can lead young men to partying, addiction, using women for sex, bullying, depression and in some cases criminal behavior. Does bench pressing fall into this category? Of course not. What's significant here is that many teenage boys who we help are willing to compromise the very reasons they train with us for ulterior motives. These motives are powerful enough that no amount of explaining and caring on a coach's behalf has been successful to get them to stop an exercise that is hurting them. There is no easy solution to this, but it is important for us as coaches and parents to understand our teenage boys need our help. Not with their strength numbers or their appearance, but with their emotions and their identity in a broken culture.

As positive role models, we need to show them what a good person is through our actions such as being more open with our feelings of love, hurt, sympathy, empathy and encouragement. We need to be willing to help our young students seek mentors to confide in when they have issues they need to talk about. The younger generations are in need of far better role models, which involves much more than focusing on increasing one's bench press.

References

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- 4) Schibetta, Bill. <http://fitbitz.com/2010/08/17/bench-press-and-bad-shoulders/>
- 5) Wiseman, Rosalind. *What Boys Want*. Time. pp. 39-49. December 2, 2013