



Crystal Dunn: Face the Facts and Keep the Faith

“You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end, with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality.”

That sums up what’s known as the Stockdale Paradox, named after Admiral Jim Stockdale—who was the highest-ranking officer held as a POW for 8 years during the Vietnam war. It refers to the mental gymnastics of being completely realistic about your circumstances, but resolving to never give up hope. In the end, Admiral Stockdale’s REALISTIC yet hopeful perspective is what kept him alive and made him a stronger person once he was released.

Although Crystal Dunn—a 5’1” powerhouse women's soccer star—wasn’t facing a life-and-death scenario, she did have to come to terms with a reality that was devastating to her dreams. Let’s take a look at where she is now.

With the 2019 World Cup Finals behind us, Crystal Dunn is considered a New York hometown hero as well as being dubbed one of the world’s most versatile soccer players on the planet. But her recent success was not earned without going through an extremely tough disappointment in 2015 when she narrowly missed making the U.S. World Cup Team.

The overwhelming feelings of failure caused her to question herself and her motivation for playing soccer. There was no sugarcoating it. She wasn’t chosen because she wasn’t good enough -- YET. But her best friend Pierre, encouraged her to work through those unpleasant feelings. While the World Cup was being played in 2015, Dunn disciplined herself to watch the games and become a fan of the game again.

She faced the reality of her disappointment head on. And that was the turning point she needed. With encouragement from Pierre, Dunn began to create a NEW storyline. She chose to believe that 2015 was just one part of her life, but it didn’t define her future. She became a better player and a stronger person because of it.

Like Jim Stockdale, she faced the reality of her circumstances and was determined to remain hopeful about the future. The hard work that followed that mindset paid off. Now 4 years after what could have been the defining moment in her soccer career, she’s celebrating a World Cup Championship.

What’s the brutal truth about a circumstance your athlete is facing right now? And in spite of the facts, are you encouraging him to have faith in the future story that has not yet unfolded? Share Crystal Dunn’s story of triumph over disappointment, and challenge your child to create a new storyline going forward.





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Discussion Guide for Parent and Athlete

1

What are the brutal facts of a circumstance your child must face at this moment?

2

Based on unwavering faith, what is the new storyline your athlete can write in order to move forward in spite of the facts?