

India Vs England -AN Eye Opener

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: OUR BOYS NEED TO EXECUTE IN THE FIELD

By Shaveta Nayyar

Rohit Sharma, our Captain said, “We just did not turn up with the ball. You cannot go and teach people how to handle pressure. Lot of these guys play under pressure in IPL and some of them are able to handle that. When it comes to knockouts, it is about keeping calm. We were a bit nervy the way we started with the ball.”

As rightly put by our Captain, ‘Mental Pressure’ today has become the elephant in the room. Our lifestyle, our thought process, our relationships, our jobs- all are creating stress that needs to be addressed with more sensitivity and insightfulness. No doubt our players are guided through various aspects of cricket like game skills, anger management skills, personality development skills etc. It is clearly an amalgamation of skills that any cricketer carries on the field and displays. However, yesterday’s match has raised many questions about the mental & emotional health of our players. This despicable exit from the T20 world cup is a stamp on the low morale & emotional management of our players due to various factors that need to be investigated.

Whether it is a job or a game, it is more about responding to the situations. The word “pressure” is heavy anyways. It takes on a toll at all levels irrespective of designations or seniority. The fact is all skills learnt when put to practice display the learning outcomes. Seeing yesterday’s act on the field, the learning curve vs the effect has a huge gap. A lot of physical as well as emotional factors contribute to the final output like environment or playing conditions, overseas exposure, cultural acceptance, individual’s emotional management skills etc.

In Indian team, its not about yesterday’s story with a ten-wicket loss against England, it is also about last year’s ten wicket loss against Pakistan. The story repeats itself this year as we did not learn from our mistakes and played without motivation. In yesterday’s match, Jos Butler and Alex Hales dominated the Indian bowlers with ease. Indian bowlers remained clueless till the end with complete lack of confidence.

So, the question is where our we heading? What is it that really needs to be changed at the core level? How can we make a difference in the game? What is it that we need to reorient, rethink & reinvent in the team?

As a trainer, I personally feel it’s not about spending a huge amount of money on hiring the right coach, or providing assets to various players or conducting fancy events etc. Not that it is not needed, surely it adds on to building a team. But now it is time to approach to each & every player at their conscious level to address their fears, their incapacabilities, their restraints & blockages.

I have often heard commentators & various ex cricket players saying that when the stakes are high, mental pressure is also high. The players need to deal with not only balancing themselves & the game but with pre opinion polls, judgements, criticism, harshness etc. With many views & verdicts coming on yesterday’s match, Anand Mahindra, Chairman of Mahindra Group tweeted, “It’s not the losing that hurts, but the manner of losing...The shifting winds of sport can be cruel...Well, we’ll look at it as just another

opportunity to Rise..." Shashi Tharoor, an author, politician, and former international civil servant tweeted, "I don't mind India losing: victory & defeat are part of sports. But I do mind India not showing up today."

The common disheartening factor was that it was the way Indian team lost yesterday, the way all of it happened that disappointed many cricket lovers and I guess players themselves. A teary-eyed Rohit Sharma was speechless at the way this match unfolded. Fans across the world expressed their anger as no one expected such a huge loss.

All of it shows, how much the players need to be aligned & balanced to play every game as the winning game. Therefore, 'pressure' or 'burden on the shoulders' as described by many commentators is much more on the players.

Keeping all the factors in mind, today, it is time to train differently & share the feelings with sensitivity. Sports is not only about winning or losing, it's also about togetherness & oneness. Therefore, team players need to understand the importance of Emotional Intelligence as a part of their growth. It becomes a valuable aspect and a critical skill while managing the game on the field too.

It is no doubt time to unlearn & unswag & face the reality consciously with a different training approach. As Emotional Intelligence incorporates various aspects of self regulation & awareness, it is the needed to be put it into practice regularly. Daniel Goleman says, "In a very real sense, we have two brains- one that thinks & one that feels'. Consequently, we need to consciously train with sensitivity taking care & working on the 'feeling' to redefine the spirit of the player & the game.

It's time to work at a deeper level with our players nurturing Emotional Intelligence skills to handle pressure with more awareness, to perform with resilience & a happy heart & attitude.

“न कदापि खंडितः” means never broken. Thus, let our players have the spirit of the unbreakable by awakening & nurturing their Emotional Intelligence. TIME FOR INDIAN TEAM TO REFLECT!

By

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