

Ice Hockey Systems Question

What advice would you give to every single goaltender out there, not matter their age or skill level?

Justin Goldman Answer

One thing that I really want to stress to all goalies at all levels is the difference between... so, let's say you had a really bad game, or you played well but you still lost because your team didn't score enough goals or just didn't have a great effort...

There's a huge difference between coming off of the ice angry and coming off the ice upset or unsatisfied.

The way I explain this is, if you come off the ice angry or upset, that is going to become an emotional drain on you and it is going to take you longer move past that and get ready for tomorrow. If you come off the ice unsatisfied, now you are willing yourself to work harder tomorrow and the next practice.

This is how goalies start to distinguish and understand how they have to manage their mental and emotional game, because that is 75% of goaltending. You have your 25% which is the physical and the technical side, but none of that is going to translate to consistency and success if you can't manage the mental and emotional side.

Goalies, if you are out there and you had a really bad game or just gave up a terrible goal, don't allow yourself to come off the ice angry or upset. Don't allow the negative circumstances of a game follow you around like a shadow off of the ice. Because what happens when you come off the ice upset? You are upset at your coach for no reason, you are pissed off when you are driving home from the rink, you are not going to focus on getting your school work done and be pissed off the next day. It's going to follow you around like a shadow.

If you come off the ice unsatisfied and knowing that you could have done better and will be better tomorrow, now you are motivating yourself to work harder the next day and that's the kind of mindset a goalie needs and that is the type of mindset that all of the best goalies in the NHL have. They can be angry but they usually leave that anger on the ice, they don't allow it to follow them around after the game's been played.

I think that is a really important distinguishment, something really important for young goalies to distinguish, the difference between being angry / upset and being unsatisfied with your performance and knowing that you can be better, and having the ability to work hard tomorrow.