

FOREWORD

The mental preparation I did every day for 12 years as a Major League Baseball player was more important than my batting practice. Don't get me wrong. It was not a substitute. I practiced my swing, but reading and re-reading Harvey Dorfman's words in *The Mental Game of Baseball* in the clubhouse before every game allowed me to consistently perform close to my potential. It was my ability to create good habits and slow the game down that allowed me to become a 3X All-Star and career .302 hitter.

The mental discipline of elite performers is abnormal. I have seen countless talented players over the years who don't know how to control their emotions and focus. The great ones not only have a plan, they also put that plan into action. We can all benefit from a coach or mentor who can help us understand what to do and do what we know. Once I understood what a mature approach was all about, I still needed reinforcement after reinforcement. I don't think this is unusual. I was fortunate to find Harvey's books and after I had been in the majors for a while, I also got to meet and work with Harvey. So often, I knew what he was going to say, but it was great to hear him say it anyways. And this was in addition to reading an excerpt from one of his books every day!

Someone else who got to know Harvey first through his books, and then in person is Aaron Weintraub. Aaron didn't play professional baseball, so as a young college coach who wanted to learn from the best, he put himself in position to meet people in pro ball as a minor-league clubhouse manager. There weren't too many of those with degrees from Emory University! He tells me he hit the jackpot when he met and got to know Harvey. Harvey wrote about Aaron in a few of his books, but I can really tell from this book that the two spent a lot of time together. Harvey's relentless style and clarity are on every page.

What you have here is a book that summarizes and expands on Harvey's work. Aaron is bringing you a mental toughness game plan that combines the work of John Wooden, Tony Robbins, and others while remaining true to the simple truths of Harvey's approach. I recommend you get *The Mental Game of Baseball*, too, but you don't have to read the chapter on Mental Discipline as often as I did, because

you'll want to read and re-read Aaron's chapters on a healthy perspective and the one about confidence, too. This book shares so many of the best practices I've found about how to lead by example, and then it takes it to the next level of leading others, too.

Leadership, to me, is a requirement of a great teammate. I always wanted my guys to feel like they were bigger than life. Baseball will beat you up as an athlete, so you have to find a way to stay positive yourself and make your teammates better, too. You have to connect with each person, getting to know them and helping them meet their own needs and tap into their personal power. This helps you, too. *Leadership Training for Baseball* clarifies the specific goals that will help you get what you want from baseball, and it provides strategies to achieve these goals. I was always pretty instinctive about this, but I certainly wish I'd had this resource earlier to speed up my process of being the best athlete and leader I could be.

Here's the reality: it's an advantage for you if you have the resources to hire someone like Harvey or Aaron as your mental skills coach. If you are diligent, however, this book can serve as a superb substitute. There are useful ideas and clear strategies for how to control the controllables and play your best one pitch at a time in every section. Aaron has provided you with everything you need to get yourself ready for the most important pitch in your life...the next one!

Sean Casey