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Podcast Review: Mary Lake | Growth, and Getting out of Your Comfort Zone

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Podcast Review-Mary Lake, Growth and Getting out of Your Comfort Zone

By Jamie LeSueur

Every episode of Measuring Success Right answers the thematic question “How do you measure success?” but no answer has been so applicable to the times as Mary Lake’s. In this episode, former BYU volleyball player and Marriott School of Business graduate Mary Lake explains the key to perpetual success, advice relevant to the times of the current COVID-19 pandemic that’s caused the entire world to take a couple L’s.

As a former NCAA athlete, Mary knows about high expectations. During her four years starting for the BYU Women’s Volleyball team, external pressure to perform on the court came from coaches, fans, and teammates, not to mention the high expectations she held for herself. “As a college athlete, your whole life is an expectation,” she laughs.

Mary also describes herself as “a little fish in a big pond.” How does a “little fish” resist the crushing pressure of expectations? For Mary, the answer includes bubble baths, scented candles, and scripture study. She established this routine of self-care during her junior core for the Marriott School of Business accounting program, which is when she realized the value of prioritizing. Mary says that success came by “putting those things that I needed to put first and then finding time for myself to recharge.”

But for Mary, bubble baths aren’t the sole cure for overwhelming expectations. The key is Mary’s definition of success: “Success is growth.” This is a principle her dad reiterated to Mary before she coached her very own youth volleyball training camp earlier this year. Mary was “equally excited as [she was] throwing-up nervous” in anticipation for the event, but she

took courage knowing that, if nothing else, it would be a learning experience. Mary preaches, “You can mess up and you can fail as long as you’re growing.”

Mary also shares a remarkable insight she learned playing volleyball about how to achieve true success. “The most valuable lesson that I’ve learned with volleyball would be just how important people are.” To Mary, no athletic skill or volleyball win amounts to the success of a person who touches the life of another human being. “If I can look a young girl in the eye and tell her that I think she’s important and that she needs to be confident at that stage of life, like, that’s so much more valuable.”

Mary Lake is one of the great winners to come through BYU, but it’s not her athletic or academic recognition that makes Mary successful. It’s her philosophy that growth and people are more valuable than winning that makes it impossible for Mary, and for all who adopt her philosophy, to really ever fail. Listen to the full podcast to let Mary’s advice change your take on success!