



# Intention

This is the first in a series of monographs on the subject of how to achieve excellence in athletic competition. They will present tools and techniques developed through many years of trial, error and acute observation by HiLevel Coach Brad Yates.

# Introduction

*"Don't forget, tryouts for club are tomorrow morning."*

This is the voice of a girl from Punahou School reminding her friend to be at practice the next day. The scene is the main gym at Kamehameha Schools Kapalama Campus. It's Saturday night and Punahou has just won "States" for the first time in forever.

The year is 1993.

I remember thinking back then that the comment seemed extreme. We hadn't even celebrated the victory that we had worked four years to get and the topic of conversation is "club"?

Well, since that night I've learned about the dedication required to be competitive in volleyball and the importance of "club".

Simply put, volleyball demands quality reps with complete intensity and focus. To develop your skills at this level you must be able to relax under pressure and get your feet to the ball with just the right blend of speed, quickness, power and touch. In short, you have to master "present moment awareness," performance breathing and have the fitness and skills needed to pass and hit with accuracy in competition.

In this regard, I'm grateful to be working with Ka Ulukoa, a program that has so much respect for total-person education.

## The Base

Over the course of the next six months, I will present *The Base*.

These are the principles upon which Ka ulukoa is built: **Intention, Leadership, Support, Team and Completion.**

The purpose of these articles is to establish "same-page awareness," for everyone in the program to share a common intention and accept and contribute to the overall effort to lead, support, build team, and experience a sense of completion.

### 1. Intention

In the words of Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Begin with the End in Mind*. We want everyone involved to have a clear awareness of and be committed to the primary functions of Ka Ulukoa.

**Reflection:** *We want to identify the mission, accept the challenges and get the job done!*

### 2. Leadership

The ability to separate the process of what needs to be done, with expected outcomes, and to maintain this focus.

**Reflection:** *We want to enjoy the hard work and find the value in it!*

### 3. Support

The ability to establish cooperative relationships in the context of helping and coaching the players to give their best effort.

**Reflection:** *We want to learn, record the growth and move forward.*

### 4. Build Team

The ability to "tighten the circle," build trust and debrief the results.

**Reflection:** *We want to contribute to team and share in the satisfaction.*

### 5. Completion

The ability to hit refresh and maintain the energy, process and feeling of team.

**Reflection:** *We want to ensure the integrity of the program, to incorporate the concept of Ho-oponopono and make it pono: the act of setting it right, very right!*

Traditionally, *pono* is part of Huna, the ancient wisdom of Hawaii. In this sense, the purpose of *pono* is to bring closure and healing to negative energy and emotions. As it relates to Ka Ulukoa, *pono* is defined as the ability to create positive energy and build team, and to operate in a manner that honors the feelings and well-being of all of the people we employ, work with and compete against.



Brad Yates, MSED Ed Psychology  
HiLevel Performance Coach  
HiLevel Coaching Service  
808.295.2136

# Intention

What follows is a statement of **Intention** as established by the HiLevel Advisory Board:

In the words of Stephen R. Covey, "Begin with the end in mind."

This is based on the principle that all things are created twice.

First, there is mental creation. The ability to visualize what you want and where you want to go.

The second part is physical creation — where you put your plan in action and make things happen.

The statement of intention that follows allows everyone involved to be part of the first creation, and then to choose to be clear, aware and committed to being an integral part of the physical creation of the desired outcome.

## Clarity

As a program, we want to prepare student-athletes for the next level of competition by teaching them how to relax under pressure and give their best efforts. We want to build a program that is built on the concept of total-person education that promotes the development of the mind, body and spirit.

We want our athletes to have the mental toughness to be confident.

We want them to have the physical and emotional fitness and the intelligence to focus.

And we want them to have the spiritual strength to follow through.

**Reflection:** *The players will be expected to perform community service, maintain their academic eligibility, and express their passion for volleyball.*

The guiding principle for the program is to be competitive at the highest level, obtain national recognition and become a standard for club sports in Hawaii and beyond.

## Awareness

As a program, we need to develop knowledgeable and effective coaches that are able to teach the skills, build the required level of fitness and establish the proper focus.

We need to emphasize and support the development of teams for boys and girls at all levels.

We need to build and model the process of establishing cooperative relationships.

We need to respond to any and all issues and concerns, and work toward solutions.

Most important, we need to create an environment that nurtures togetherness and growth.

**Reflection:** *The players will need to maintain "present-moment awareness," a positive attitude and physical engagement at all times. The guiding principle for players is that they need to be open to feedback, eager to learn, able to enjoy and find value in the hard work and always ready to increase the intensity and to build team.*

## Commitment

As a program, we will be transparent about our intentions at all times.

We will ensure integrity and create a support structure that focuses on team (not individual) development.

We will seek grants, sponsors and be active fundraisers.

We will build continuity into the philosophical and technical aspect of our team program and partner with experts in a variety of disciplines.

We will build relationships with established community service providers and build a network of college coaches at all levels to help with the recruiting process.

**Reflection:** *The players must be devoted to the ongoing process of identifying the mission, accepting the challenges and getting the job done!*

## Keep It Simple

Ka Ulukoa is a serious volleyball club that is built on a base of simple principles. While the principals are simple, applying them in the moment will require everything you have to give. In truth, if you are up for the challenge and you love the game, the process will give you back a new sense of your self and your ability to play volleyball.

## Intention: Parents

Your child has the opportunity to establish his or her intention for each season, and to maintain this clarity, awareness and commitment from moment to moment. How you choose to support your child in this process is a function of your intention and the nature of your relationship. In a later column, I will address the importance of support as it relates to all involved.

## Intention: Players

The process of defining your intention will, as Covey points out, enable you to mentally create the clarity (vision), awareness (feelings) and commitment (devotion) to perform at your best. The physical actions become a reality when the clarity serves as direction, the awareness helps you get better and the commitment allows you to get the job done.

The following definitions will allow you to establish the clarity, what you want to accomplish; your awareness, what you need to do to make this happen; and your commitment, what you will do to produce these results.

**Clarity:** "Vision" is a source of energy that allows you to see and feel at the same time. To perform at your best, you need to be able to see and feel the results you want to produce and understand what aspects of your performance need to be improved.

**Awareness:** Interpret and act on the physical and emotional feedback that you receive from yourself and others. To perform at your best, you must seek an evaluation of your present skills, incorporate this feedback and allow your body to get the message.

**Commitment:** Devotion allows you to produce results and to respond and follow through with the appropriate choices needed to perform at your best. To do this, you need to have a plan, work hard and have fun.

As you define the clarity, awareness and commitment you have for your game, please consider your present skills, fitness, and focus.

**Skills:** The ability to get a ball up, pass, hit, block and serve.

**Fitness:** The conditioning to get your feet to the ball, to jump, to hit with accuracy, to play with fire, to stay in the point and manage your emotions.

**Focus:** The mental toughness to relax under pressure and give your best effort.

**Keep It Simple:** The ability to establish your intention to play for Ka Ulukoa is crucial to your success. The resulting clarity, awareness and commitment will allow you to create this success in your mind and then achieve this success on the court.

## Sweet "Lou"

In writing on the subject of intention I'm reminded of Lindsey Berg. Lindsey or "Lou" as she is known to her friends, family and a huge network of "cousin-support team," was recently selected as the 2008 USA Women's Indoor Player of the Year.

"Lou" was one of the two setters and co-captain on the Olympic Team that won a silver medal in Beijing. In the words of her coach, "Jenny" Lang Ping, "She pushes her teammates to work hard and stay focused. She is a smart, experienced player who brings great insights. During the Games (Olympics), every time she came to the court she made a positive difference with her energy and determination."

I can "speak" to Lou's intensity, courage and ability to lead, having known her since elementary school. In my language, Lou is a "player." She is naturally intense and competitive by nature.

One of the tendencies for someone with her performance profile is that occasionally her intensity works against her. When injuries in high school kept her from playing full-time or giving her best effort, she had to learn not to put so much pressure on herself. I can still see her serving in "States" her senior year. With both knees heavily wrapped and barely able to jump, she was able to get on a run and serve out a critical match.

"Lou" has pushed on through the injuries, the down years on the National Team and the long road from college to finally winning the silver medal in the Olympics.

Off the court she is unassuming and quiet, on the court she takes charge and pushes her teammates to work hard and stay focused.

In all, Lou's intention, set back when she first started to play the game, is what has enabled her to play so well on the world's biggest stage.

In her words, "I have always wanted to be the best individual and team player at every level. I was raised with the idea of always working to be aware of what I need to do to get better and maintaining my devotion to the game has always seemed right to me. I simply love the game and I love the competition."

As she recently explained, "My life has taken me to many different places but Hawaii is always my home. I miss it, but there is too much out here for me right now to stop and go back."

The too much is volleyball. We know for sure that she will continue to "identify the mission, accept the challenges and get the job done!" Thanks Lou, that's HiLevel!

# The HiLevel Process<sup>©</sup>

## MAINTAIN CLARITY, AWARENESS AND COMMITMENT

### Clarity:

"Vision" is a source of energy that allows you to see and feel at the same time. To perform at your best, you need to be able to see and feel the results you want to produce and understand what aspects of your performance need to be improved.

1. I want to...

2. I want to...

3. I want to...

### Awareness:

Interpret and act on the physical and emotional feedback that you receive from yourself and others. To perform at your best, you must seek an evaluation of your present skills, incorporate this feedback and allow your body to get the message.

1. I need to...

2. I need to...

3. I need to...

### Commitment:

Devotion allows you to produce results; to respond and follow through with the appropriate choices needed to perform at your best. To perform at your best, you need to have a plan, work hard and have fun.

1. I will...

2. I will...

3. I will...

