

Thank You Integrity

One win and 19 losses, a record that no one wants. Unfortunately, that has been the outcome of my senior basketball season.

To me, the definition of integrity is being honest and true to your morals and principals. I think it takes integrity to stand up for what you believe in and what you know is right even when no one else around you agrees. To watch someone drop 20 dollars and return it to them instead of keeping it, that's integrity. To continue to have a positive attitude even when the going gets tough, that's integrity. Never giving up, and believing that failure is not an option, that takes integrity too. Throughout my life, integrity has helped me to face my toughest situations by guiding me in the right direction in everything I do.

This basketball season I have had to continuously use integrity both on and off the court.

Seven months ago my world was turned upside down as I lay on the operation table with a torn ACL and meniscus. My senior season shattered into pieces, knowing I might not be able to play again. To some it may seem miniscule, in the scheme of things it was "only a sport," but to me it was a tragedy. I had spent the last 16 years of my life perfecting my game in preparation for what I hoped to be, the best season of my life. Unfortunately, I had to be honest with myself and face the fact that there was nothing I could do to change my situation. I had to have the integrity to support my team and continue to work hard, no matter the circumstances.

As my season neared, I continued to train and rehabilitate my leg with the hopes of a miracle. However, the games came faster than I had hoped. Though sitting on the bench was not

the way I wanted to be “participating”, I knew I had a responsibility to my team to continue to encourage and uphold a positive attitude no matter the outcome of the season.

I believe we remain committed to things, not because it is our responsibility but because we have the integrity to know it is the right thing to do.

I believe it takes integrity to be a strong leader.

This season I was humbled by the fact that my team nominated me as one of our captains. It was an honor knowing that no matter my situation, it was evident that I was going to have the integrity to consider what was best for my team. Being at every practice and every game with my team, was without a question a responsibility that I took on as being a captain. Maintaining a positive attitude throughout my time on the bench was never easy, but the integrity that has been instilled in me helped to make the situation more tolerable.

This season has been nothing but ups and downs. What once was my favorite sport was diminished to something I hardly understood. Not only was I dealing with my injury, but my team was facing the worst season we have ever had. This year has been an emotional rollercoaster, but in the face of adversity my strong moral principles have helped me deal with this experience.

Two months ago, I was able to start playing with my team again. Though being a leader is a lot easier when you are on the court, I have also adapted to being a leader off the court, and my integrity has helped me appreciate each and every moment with my team.

Looking back, I realize my situation was truly not the end of the world. I have shown integrity, through my hardwork and dedication this season, and as we play our last game I am positive that my integrity will once again be apparent not only to my teammates and coaches, but hopefully to spectators from the community.

Although our record doesn't show it, I am confident that I will still be able to look back on this season and be proud, knowing how my experiences helped shaped me into the person I am today and prepared me to have the integrity to make the best out of any tough situation.