<<WATCH OLYMPIC FINAL>>

-nerve-wracking every time!

-what most people don’t realize is that that was actually my 5th race run of the day.

-(explain skicross format)

Thank you SO much for having me – it’s really nice to be able to speak in my hometown!

I LOVE your conference theme.

I may be biased, –but… I feel like Whistler is the best place in the world to truly discover what you’re made of.

-it’s i**nspiring** (everything from the scenery to the people will make you feel energized and inspire **you to strive for excellence**)

-there is literally no end to the awesome activities and things you can do to **detach** from your regular grind**, forget your worries**

and experience life like you’ve never experienced it before… well **beyond your comfort zone**

-You’ll be forced to face your fears and **drop labels** you have assigned to your weaknesses... a lot of these things will get your heart pumping, your palms sweating... your **stress** repsonse will get kicked into high gear!

Now each I’ve just mentioned each of the points I’m going to bring up in this talk, but first

I’m going to take you through my **background**… and the **lead-up to our 2010 Olympic Games**, right here in Vancouver/Whistler, and then of course, I’ll share the **details** of my Olympic experience.

I’ll include some **“frequently asked questions”...** Because with how frequently they come up, they really must be what everyone wants to know...and

If I *still* have your attention after that,

I’d like to discuss **5 of the key differences** I’ve found between *my* approach, and that of my teammates and other athletes I’ve come across,

...who were not able to win their own Olympic medals.

We’ll do a quick Q & A once I’m done, so think about what you’ll want to ask me!

I’d like you to keep in mind that skicross is an *individual* sport, but we all **work together** to improve our overall team performance...

- We **help** each other.

-We have **fun** together.

-We do what’s best for our collective group so that the funding keeps pouring in, (haha),

...and so that our superiors continue their unwavering commitment to supporting our growth and betterment as a team.

I assume it’s kind of like your situation,

-where you all **run your own individual businesses**, techinically

...but you are part of **this umbrella support system**....

this **team**...**Vow Financial.**

We are going to explore *what it was* that allowed *me* to discover what *I* was made of (*still am* made of? haha)...

Because I certainly had no idea I was capable of winning the Olympics before implenting these strategies!

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

I **grew u**p in Whistler

-**started skiing** before the age of 2

-🡪-parents were always all about **keeping it positive** (hot chocolate)

-**Dad** had been a **ski racer**… so I got the **competitive genes** from him...

He *prentended* we was just trying to **provide** us with the **opportunities** that he didn’t have... But really

-Wanted to **live vicariously** through us! (haha)

**<<CLICK>>**

One of the *most* frequently asked questions from is media is

**“When was that moment… when you knew you wanted to be an Olympian?”**

and I think they expect me to say “oh it was watching... Whoever... Compete in... Whatever... In the 1988 Olympics”, but

**-**that’s not my story...

....>>I didn’t have any specific role models who were household names.

Olympians seeemed **superhuman** to me**...** (couldn’t relate to them on any level)...

🡪 I was **more inspired by** the **people within our community** who exuded this **genuine LOVE** for what they did.

🡪The people I was surrounded by in this community were here to pursue their passions... ***That’s* what I knew I wanted to do from a young age.**

**<<CLICK>>**

**BEFORE I’D EVEN STARTED ski *racing***, I’d broken my leg skiing. ...

....by the time I became a professional skier,

I had spent 1/5th of my life either

-**on crutches**,

-**in a sling,** or

-otherwise **incapacitated**. (that doesn’t include the **months** on months of **physical therapy** and **rehab** once i got out of my cast or shed the sling!)

-WMSC (ages 13-16) top of my age group…

🡪 Focussed on **what I LOVED about it**. And

🡪 **never put too much pressure on myself.**

But I *definitely* felt that **overbearing drive** to *BE THE BEST.*

The beautiful thing about living in one of the world’s best ski resorts is that it attracts the world’s best athletes and therefore, coaching staff.

The **expectations were high**,

and for me…. my **teammates**, the o**lder kids in** our ski club, and my **coaches** were the people who inspired me to strive for excellence, always. (as did my parents)

I always did my best to become my best, in everything I did,…

**as long as I was enjoying it.** …

🡪 which meant I was often skipping the organized gate training to go ski powder, or to race my buddies

- from the **top** of the mountain to the **bottom**

**....** through **gullies** and off **jumps** & **cliffs**...

because that was more fun, to me.

🡪 by the time I was 16, I was sick of the structured, boring old alpine racing that had become a **60hr/week *minimum* commitment.**

->my **heart just wasn’t in it anymore**. I loved *some* components of alpine ski racing, but the *required commitment* limited my ability to pursue the side of skiing that I was truly passionate about. **<< ADVANCE SLIDE>>>**

Have you ever noticed that when **your heart’s not in it,**

**your head’s not in it**… and that’s when bad things happen?

A few more injuries, and then came the **“career-ender” (**or so I thought!)

I broke my leg so badly at the age of 16 that I managed to use it as an **excuse to quit ski racing**. (ha.. Fooled them!)

-looked at it as an opportunity to focus on my new passion…downhill mountain biking, and of course on my school work,

and I Graduated from High School with good grades and took off to travel Asia!

**The following winter**, I was going to school at the **University of British Columbia** andI found myself wanting more.

-> I had all of these **skills** that **I’d devoted my childhood** to developing,

…. and I had **quit** before I had realized my full potential.

🡪 I *knew* that would frustrate me for the rest of my life if I didn’t do something about it.

🡪 I didn’t want all of that hard work to go to waste.

Ihad **set my classes at UBC up** so that they were **3 days/week** (Tuesday was a 14hr-solid day!)… so that I could continue to live in Whistler and ski the other 4 days/week. I was finallypursuing my passion for the wild side of the sport… freeskiing... in the winter, and mountain biking in the off-season.

**One stormy day** in 2002, I was up on Whistler Mountain with some of my ski buddies watching some **X Games coverage** of this relatively new sport… skicross. There were 6 women racing head to head, off huge jumps and I was convinced (through peer pressure) to try skicross.

One of my friends said “you should race skicross. You’d kill it”

🡪 and thus, my skicross career was born.

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

BACK THEN, SKICROSS WAS NOT AN OLYMPIC SPORT, and you had to go over to **Europe** to compete on **the World Cup circuit.**

There was **a pro tour in North America** –

it had a bit of a **renegade feel** to it,

with **music blasting** in the finish line

and big **wrap up parties** at night.

🡪It was like this **magical combinatio**n of everything I’d loved about alpine ski racing,… and everything else I’d been doing for fun my whole life, growing up heeeeere...wrapped into this cool new sport.

THERE WERE NO NATIONAL TEAMS and I would have to **fend for myself** when it came to

-managing **costs**,

-**logistics**, and

-**training**

….. so the pressure to perform (and win prize money), was **on**.

**X Games** was the biggest event in the world, because all of the World Cup racers would come over to compete for the large cash purse.

**\_-> It was my one shot each season to impress sponsors with big budgets.**

But for some reason, I **did poorly** every time I raced the X Games.

There was always a follow-up ‘**US Open’** race that all of the good athletes would stay for, and

🡪 I’d somehow manage to beat them there

…but I **couldn’t pull it together** for the big race with *crazy high viewership.*

I *always* **let the pressure get to me.**

I remember telling myself **“I just don’t do well under pressure”.**

I was *convinced* that, even though I could compete with these women the **very next week** at a**n event nobody paid attention to,**

…I didn’t stand a chance in the **Olympics of Action Sports–**

**aka, the X Games.**

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**The *next* experience** that added to my own belief that I couldn’t **perform at my best when it mattered most**, was the 2007 World Championship.

🡪 I broke my back.

\*\*It wasn’t until the World Championship in 2009 when I was finally able to change my own mind... and *stop* thinking I was bad in the high-pressure situations. (but we’ll get to that in a sec)\*\*

**<<CLICK>>**

**By 2007, I was 23,** and I had quit racing (again) because I just wasn’t having enough fun to justify spending so much of my hard-earned money travelling around**, all by myself.**

**Then, the announcement came that SKICROSS WOULD BE ADDED TO THE OLYMPIC PROGRAM for 2010.**

🡪 the Olympic **debut of my sport**

**🡪 at home**, in BC

🡪 in **perfect timing** for me to be at the pinnacle of my career.

🡪 Suddenly, I knew that ***this* was the opportunity I’d been working toward that whole time**,

and I was in a good position to make the most of it.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

A SELECTION PROCESS FOR A NATIONAL TEAM was established,

-🡪 and I remember thinking about how badly I wanted to make that team,

...and feeling like **I was *made* for this event**, but...

I *also* remember thinking about **all of the other things I would** **get to do** if I didn’t get selected for that National Team.

I knew that if skicross didn’t work out**, I would be alright.**

**I made the team, though.**.. So the following 4 years were all about skicross.

**<<CLICK>>**

**SUDDENLY, I HAD THIS ENTIRE SUPPORT SYSTEM IN PLACE:**

-funding

-physios/massage therapists

-coaches

-ski techs

-and a really **talented group of teammates.**

**From there, it was GAME ON.**

-Had some **good results**...

-Raced **all over the world**, (and trained at Mt. Hotham) --

-Consistently **on the podium**, (but rarely on top of it)

**MY FIRST SEASON on the National Team** got cut short because I dislocated my shoulder while winning the semi-final of a World Cup race in France…

and we decided I should head home to have it operated on,

so that I would **be ready to go for the entire season before the *Olympic* season**.

**WHEN I CAME BACK**, I was **stronger than ever**, and i’d had a **nice break.**

🡪 I’d done a whole bunch **of fun stuff with my friends**, and I was actually **excited** to be back on the circuit.

* **The PASSION was reignited!**

Then, about **one year out from the Olympics**, we got to come home to BC to race a World Cup on the Olympic track.

IT WAS THE Olympic Test event, in Vancouver

(dinner with my Mom on Granville Island)

🡪There were times when I **wanted to quit**, and this was one of them.

There is something you live with, in environments like that…

where the **pressure is on** you to perform,

And **the stakes are high**...especially in a **dangerous sport.**

.... that’s **hard to put into words.**

It’s like this **dark cloud** hovering about you, and you can **rationalize** all you want,

but **it’s still there**,

**lurking**,

trying to **creep into your thoughts**.

It would be so much easier… so much more pleasant... So much more comfortable to just **STAY HOME** (which is why I was always a bit relieved when I did get hurt!)...

**I REMEMBER TRYING TO EXPLAIN THIS TO MY MOM.**

She looked at me and said “no problem! -- You can **stop** anytime and **go back to university**!”

**But I was committed.**

I **couldn’t just bail** on all of these people

who **had put so much into seeing me succeed**.

I felt a bit **stuck**, at times, but s**taying home** would have been so much **less rewarding**.

I just **got to the point,** about a year before the Olympics, where I was SO SICK OF ALWAYS LIVING **BEYOND MY COMFORT ZONE.**

I did a really good job of convincing myself that I was **having fun**, and that I was **okay**, but looking back...

MaNNNNn that was a lot of work to just stay positive!

It was **scary**.

I had to train my nerves to stay cool, and it was **hard**.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------

🡪 I remember thinking that I really **didn’t care** about the Olympics...

... I thought it would be amazing to **represent my country**, but I really, honestly was just out there because it was **fun**..

And **the fun was being sucked out of it as things got serious** as everybody **geared up for the Olympics**.

-- I wondered if the sport had **changed so much**, with its inclusion in the Olympics, that

🡪 it had **become all of the things**

**I’d hated about alpine ski racing,** in the end.

I was really struggling with how little i cared about what seemed to be the be-all-end all for the people I had surrounded myself with.

Was my lack of determination going to negatively impact my performance?

Surely, my competitors were a lot more devoted to the cause.

**I WONDERED IF IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.** I **loved my life** outside of skiing. I **missed my friends** at home, and I **missed skiing for fun**. I **missed Whistler**.

**Looking back now,** and watching the next generation of Whistler kids go out there and **dominate**,

....I know that that **fun-loving**, **free-spirited attitude** is what SETS US APART.

Being just a little bit **less attached** to the idea of winning,

and knowing that **THIS IS THE LIFE** you get to come back to if you are not spending all of your time competing around the globe,.

...actually makes you a lot **more likely to win**.

(we’ll talk more about that a bit later too! Dettached focus)

Shortly after this talk with my Mom, my belief that I was bad in the big races started to shift.

(I blew out of the course...discovered that an Austrian girl had missed a gate up top.....ended up 2nd)

(in the Olympic Test Event, on the Olympic track!)

**<<CLICK>>**

The next big event was …

**WORLD CHAMPS**

(tell World Champs story\_\_\_)

**From there forward,** I knew what I needed to do to **perform well** in the **important races**:

I 🡪needed to **convince myself that there was no pressure**.

**Simple as that.**

... I had *permanently* **altered my perspective** on my ability to perform when it really mattered.

I **dropped the label** I had previously given it...

And it was **NO LONGER A WEAKNESS.**

**IN THE OFF-SEASON BEFORE THE OLYMPIC YEAR**, I worked harder than i’D ever worked before.

🡪in the gym **5-6 days** a week, **4-5hr** sessions

🡪it was my **final push** toward the goal that was suddenly very **clear**, and **within reach**. (at that point, I just wanted to represent my country well... I still didn’t realize an Olympic medal was a realistic goal, even though I was ranked #2 in the world going in!

🡪 I felt like I needed to **train the way** those SUPERHERO OLYMPIANS in my mind **did**.

I’d **beat myself up** if I couldn’t finish a training session,

... or if I’d opt to go for **a fun mountain bike ride** instead of heading into the **stale**, **dark** gym on a gorgeous sunny day.

If I **gave into the desire** to do something **social**, i tried to make sure it was **valid cross-trainng**, or I **did my best to make up for it in some other way,**

but i’ll admit.. **These things happened**… and i **still won.**

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

(OLYMPIC GOLD)

So let’s talk about **THAT BIG WIN…** the **2010 Oympic Games**… right here **at home.** (in Vancouver)

One of the most **vivid memories** for me is the **moment that training ended**, a couple of days before our race.

I couldn’t believe the way I just **instantly relaxed**.

I remember thinking “**that’s it! I’m done**. There is nothing more that I can do to prepare for this race. All I need to do now is just **see how it all unfolds**.”

When I woke up on race day, I felt like it **was MY DAY.**

I convinced myself that every single thing that happened...

was a sign that it was **MY DAY.**

->> (go through entire day)

-BUTTERFLIES

---DEEP DOWN... felt so **calm**... So **at ease**

🡪emotions/nerves/energy in the start gate

🡪that seemingly **superhuman** strength, poise, power.... I’d seen on TV as a kid...

**<<CLICK>>**

Another question I get asked a lot is “What was that feeling like... When you crossed the finish line and you knew you had won the Olympics?”

(so relieved... That i hadn’t let everyone down, and that Whistler could be proud of my performance.)

(**It takes a village**.) ☺

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

People often ask me: “what was the best part of winning an Olympic medal?”

The **incredible people** I’ve had that *honour* of meeting since, just because I have that Olympic medal.

Generally speaking, what **fascinates** us most about **people** (specifically athletes)

are the **factors** **within** **the** **process** of **achieving** **success**

which we can **relate to** and **apply** to

our own day-to-day life…and **our own goals**.

I’ve had the honour of **sharing the stage** with some **amazing athletes**, and their stories are always inspiring, but

once they are done speaking, I

have trouble recalling the key messages

….and therefore, it’s a bit of a struggle to **effectively implement any strategies I may have learned about**.

**NOW THAT YOU HAVE HEARD MY STORY**, I’d like to **break it down** a bit for you, into **relevant**, **palatable** bits of information to **apply** to **real life… and business.**

They are called the Olympic “**Games**” for good reason...

and their **true worth is not maximized** unless we are able to **step back** and **peel the emotions out** of each story to **reveal** what’s really a **series of metaphorical situations that we can learn from**, in order to improve our quality of life.

(There is more to life than sport -- I hope we can all agree that you are not going to take what you’ve learned here and go try to win an Olympic medal!)

**BUT** -- I also hope it is going to make you **reevaluate the depths of your capabilities and your own approach to goals and success**.

The ***real* value of sport** is its **ability to act as a *medium* to teach us life lessons.**

**WHEN I FINISHED THAT RACE**… and even my career,

I **hadn’t taken the time** to **look too deeply** into

the **factors that went into achieving** what I’d have surely thought just a few years prior, was **unachievable**.

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

**NOW THAT I’VE HAD SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON MY OLYMPIC EXPERIENCE,**

**--** and talk to so many **other athletes** about **what works** and **what doesn’t**, I’m able to **recognize** the valuable lessons I’ve learned,

which can be applied to other areas of life.

Back then, I was **just doing what I do**, and it was **difficult to notice the recipe for success**…

***What was it* that allowed me to come out on top, in the highest pressure situations I’d ever find myself in?**

And furthermore,

Why did my teammates, who **I worked so closely with**, who quite honestly **worked harder** and **wanted it more** than I did, *not* realize their goals?

(I spent a lot of time feeling badly for them!)

*Since* then, I’ve done a lot of research.

I have collaborated with experts **in psychology**, … in **neuroscience**,… and in **other (slightly more hokey) fields** too,…

to **translate** the patterns from

our sporting experiences and those seen in academic research

into **practical strategies for health, happiness and success.**

I’ve had some **interesting realizations** that I’d like to share with you:

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

**Willpower & The Art of Detached Focus**

**The Law of Detachment** (Deepak Chopra’s *7 Spiritual Laws of Success*)

or **otherwise referred to** (quite commonly, to my surprise!) as “the **art of detached focus”**)

(kind of about **focussing on the journey**, not the destination/end result)

**🡪 “In order to aqcuire anything, we must relinquish our attachment to it.”**

\_-> this is **not to say that we are to give-up intention and desire,** we **simply give our attachment to the outcome up.**

\_\_> brian stemmle story (time permitting)

I never got too attached to the idea of winning Olympic gold. (and I know *two* teammates who did.)

🡪Alleviated the pressure

-I was **so focused on keeping it fun that I often opted to do what was best for me right then and there,** even if *anyone* could see that it was **not what would help me get closer to winning an Olympic gold medal.** I’ll admit, I **skipped workouts**, and I stayed out late at night, here and there (although I only did this ONCE on a night before a mandatory gym session with our trainer… that was enough to decide “NEVER again!”) (Marnie McBean)

-I chose to go for **mountain bike rides** with my friends on beautiful days, as opposed to sweating my butt off inside in the gym. I went out on my **dirt bike**, or **ouT wake surfing**, or to **fancy events** sometimes, when I theoretically should have been working out or focussing on what was thought to be more ***relevant*** training,

(or exercising as much ***self-control*** as my closest teammates were. )

But **in retrospect**, *these* decisions were what allowed me to continually **ENJOY** my sport.

* and really, a lot of these recreational activities were actually *more* *effectively* preparing me for that race than another gym session would have.

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So…neuroscience refers to our *one* brain having *two* minds:

-one that **acts on *impulse* for instant gratification**,

-and an other which ***controls* our impulses** and **delays gratification to fulfill our long-term goals**.

Our **willpower** is challenged when these two minds have competing goals.

Everything you will ever read on this topic is about **curbing the temptation for instant gratification** in order **to** **achieve long term goals.**

*I’ve learned* that **in order to be successful**, you must find the ***appropriate*** **balance** and that **must** include being somewhat **detached** from the idea of the end goal being your be-all, end-all,

----because at the time, **it will feel like you’re making risky decisions**.

The **positive**, **fun-focused** environment that I created for myself as an athlete training for the Olympics…abd

... this is the one thing that I did differently from all of my (overly?) dedicated teammates…

....allowed me to **rest easy**,

with **confidence that I would still be happy if I didn’t accomplish my Olympics goals,**

because I’d been **having a blast along the way** (for the most part)…

---and as I mentioned, **that alleviated the pressure**... which, in turn ....**allowed me to win the Olympics**. (self-fulfilling prophecy)

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

SO: DISCOVER WHAT YOU’RE MADE OF by *effectively* managing your own willpower.

-this doesn’t mean resisting ALL temptation for instant gratification (have fun!)... It’s about **balance**.

-relinquish your attachment to the end goal, and focus on the journey

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

**(NEED TO ADD PHOTO!)**

“85% OF THE THINGS WE WORRY ABOUT NEVER HAPPEN”

**Why worry about things that may never happen?**

One of the things most **common regrets** people have in life is the

**amount of time and energy spent worrying about things** that they shouldn’t have been worried about.

Studies show that **most of the things we worry about never actually happen**,

and that **even when they do**

, we are actually much more **able to handle them** than we had worried we would be.

This is because we’ve ***progressed*** along the way,

so unforeseen advancements in our ability to overcome whatever we were worrying about come into play.

**Every time I felt worries about how nerve-racking it would be** to compete in the Olympics creeping in, **I found a way to distract myself.**

Remember how I said that the race run we watched was my 5th race run of that day?

On my Olympic race day, I **didn’t allow one ounce of energy to be consumed worrying** about how I’d feel going into a race run that I may not have even made it to

I didn’t wake up that morning, and worry about how nerve-racking it would be to stand in the start gate and compete for an Olympic medal.

(I didn’t think about the giant Swedish girl, Anna, who had beaten me out of the start every single time I’d faced her that season.

I knew I may not even have had to face her in the head to head racing.

**What if I never made it through the first run?**

I’d sure feel stupid for **wasting** that energy **worrying about competing in the final**! )

All I thought about when I woke up was getting to the hill with all of my gear.

Then, I gave myself a pat on the back and **celebrated that small victory.**

It wasn’t until I’d finished one race run, that I started thinking about the next… but I was already on fire from how well it had gone, so I wasn’t the least bit worried about anything...

**<<CLICK>>**

**When things *do* go wrong:**

**Are we really any better off if we’ve spent time worrying about them?**

**Does worrying = better preparedness? No.**

**(**There is a difference between preparing for the worst/saving for a rainy day, and worrying about those rainy days. )

I used to **stress SO much** before races... I’d **get so worked up** that I remember thinking **“why did i let myself get into this situation AGAIN?”...**

**“** i have to quit before I’m in this horribly scary, nerve-racking situation AGAIN”...

...As i’d think about **all of the things that could go wrong** on the race crourse... The main one being a **bad result**.

A teammate once said, a few days before a race that I was worrying about “**you can’t think your way to a better race sitting here right now”** –

i thought “hmmmm... That’s probably true.”

i started **allocating** very **specific times** to **think about the race**...

During **training**, **video**, and **inspection**.

That was it.

Other than that, i made sure my mind was **consumed** by other **work** or **pleasant thoughts/entertainment.**

People say that the mental component is more crucial than the physical, when it comes to performing at your best in the Olympics. So if you consider all of the time you spend worrying, and eliminate 85% of it (just cause that’s a good number!), that’s a lot more time to dedicate to useful mental prep.

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

* + - DISCOVER WHAT YOU’RE MADE OF by focussing on the positive
* -steer your thougths away from worrisome *possibilities,* and gain energy from your ability to handle stressful situations when they do arise.

So... While we are on the topic of being able to think your way to a better race, or not...

I want to talk about neuroplasticity and our ability to rewire our brains to drop the negative labels we place on what we perceive to be our indisputable weaknesses.

Becuase you *can* think your way to a better race.. But the time to do it is not 3 days out.

Here is a little video on neuroplasticity. It explains why repeated outcomes... drilling ideas into your brain over an extended period of time can create automatic responses, and that, with some work, you can steer your brain’s response to where you want it to be.

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>> (to video)**

**Do you have some things, that you *just know* you aren’t good at?**

-Maybe you think you are bad at being on time,

-or that you aren’t good at schmoozing with colleagues at events like this (maybe you think you need booze to do so!),

-or maybe you think that you’re **bad at crunching numbers** (but I think you’re in the wrong industry, if that’s the case!)…

- maybe you think you aren’t the least bit creative.. or

-Maybe you tell yourself face to face meetings are too nerve-wracking for you, so you try to do most of your business over the phone/email

-Orrrr, maybe you think you are bad at getting any work done anywhere other than your office

We all have these stories we tell ourselves about our **strengths** and **weaknesses**.

We **LABEL our weaknesses** so we can keep telling ourselves about them, over and over again, **concisely**.

Because of my **poor results in the X Games**, **year after year, I decided that I had a weakness when it came to high-pressure situations**.

I had myself *convinced* that I did not perform well in the big races.

My brain automatically seized up in high-pressure situations.

**This became part of the story I told myself, and I’m sure it negatively impacted my performance in big events**. …for a while.

Then came the Olympic Test Event & World Championships.

**I proved those pathways** that used to say

“you should respond like *this* to pressure” **wrong**.

-as “luck” would have it, i had encountered a couple of situations that **permanently steered my mindse**t on my ability to perform in high-pressure events in the right direction, AND FROM THERE, THE PLASTICITY OF MY BRAIN TOOK OVER.

But you don’t need to run into a situation like this to stop telling yourself the negative story.

It’s just a **shift in thinking**, and it will take **practice**.

**Think about any weaknesses you openly admit to having.**

**Start telling yourself you are actually good at them,**

By the time i got the opportunity to compete in the Olympics, I had **rewired my brain.**

After years of **learning about the ideal mindse**t, and then **implenting strategies** to **stay positive**, I had actually **developed new neuropathways** that made it all feel like **habit**. They were like neurosuperhighways!

This is why Malcolm Gladwell says it takes 10,000 hours to become an expert at something... This is what training and repetition is all about... So that w**hen race day comes,** the right **physical** and **mental responses** are **habit**.

Going into the Olympics I had **less fear, more optimism**, and with that, **confidence was second nature.**

* + **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**
* DISCOVER WHAT YOU’RE MADE OF by rewiring your brain to disprove weaknesses you may think you have
  + train your brain to respond the way you *want* it to, naturally
  + **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**
* “Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity”
* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**
* “COMFORT ZONES ARE MOST OFTEN
* EXPANDED THROUGH DISCOMFORT”
* **To really discover what you’re made of,** you must push ***well* beyond your comfort zone**.
* If you do what you always did, you will get what you always got.
* And this is really similar to the idea of making stress your friend (so we’ll lump them together):
* how many of you feel like you are always multitasking…like you’re always way too busy, and you are just go-go-go-type people?
* how many of you have great ideas to grow your businesses, you see the potential, but you’re worried that you’ll fail, or you just can’t juggle anything more than you are already?
* how many of you often feel stressed out?
* do any of you ever feel like quitting? (DON’T put your hands up!)
* (those of you who didn’t raise your hands to the previous questions need to work harder!) haha
* again…no need to raise your hands... But think back to the biggest deals you’ve ever done... Did you feel nervous walking into the meetings? Have you ever felt your palms sweating and your mouth drying up as you tried to close a deal that would make or break your career?
* I want to show you a video about the science of stress, and the power of our minds to thrive in high-stress environments, *IF* we are able to channel our natural stress response into a positive energy…
* I hope it will inspire you to feel good about working harder, playing harder…doing it ALL!
* **BUT FIRST…**
* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**
* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE TO VIDEO>>**

THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM A VIDEO of psychologist Kelly McGonigal explaining the positive impact that *viewing* stress positively can have

[https://www.ted.com/talks](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend)

**Do you remember the way I viewed my body’s natural response to the pressure and the stress of standing in the Olympic start gate, about to compete for and Olympic medal (or 4th, haha)?**

[/kelly\_mcgonigal\_how\_to\_make\_stress\_your\_friend](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend)

(play video from 4:57 to 7:01)

* DISCOVER WHAT YOU’RE MADE OF by making stress your friend

**<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

“SOMEONE ONCE TOLD ME NOT TO

BITE OFF MORE THAN I CAN CHEW.

I TOLD THEM I’D RATHER CHOKE ON

**GREATNESS**

THAN NIBLE ON MEDIOCRITY.”

I say – DO IT ALL!

Work harder, play harder. Say YES to challenge.

Take more on.

Step outside your comfort zone every. single. day.

As it turns out… as long as you think it’s good for you, it’s good for you.

* .
* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

TO TRULY

DISCOVER WHAT YOU’RE MADE OF

YOU MUST:

0) STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE, EVEN WHEN YOU DON’T KNOW WHY OR WHAT FOR

BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES

1a) PRACTICE THE ART OF DETACHED FOCUS

1b) EXERCISE WILLPOWER, WHEN APPROPRIATE

GIVE YOUR MIND FOR INSTANT GRATIFICATION THE RESPECT IT DESERVES

2) SAVE ENERGY YOU MAY HAVE PUT INTO *WORRYING* FOR A MORE PRODUCTIVE THOUGHT PROCESS

3) DROP THE NEGATIVE LABELS

YOUR ‘WEAKNESSES’ ARE JUST AN ILLUSION THAT CAN BE FIXED BY REWIRING YOUR BRAIN

4) STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

EVERY. SINGLE. DAY.

1. MAKE STRESS YOUR FRIEND!

* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**

**I LOVE THIS VISUAL... BUT REALLY... IT’S NOT MAGIC.**

**We all need a solid dose of *normality* in our lives, and I want you to know that even competing in the Olympics, all i had to do was tell myself that I just needed to be a tiny little bit better than the next best girl at all of the departments we’ve covered... A tiny, little bit better than the next best *ordinary* person who had the potential to do something *extraordinary*... And that *my* *best* was good enough.**

* **<<ADVANCE SLIDE>>**
* “ORDINARY PEOPLE
* CAN DO
* EXTAORDINARY
* THINGS”
* **I’m living proof.**
* **Please think about these concepts and how you can apply them to your business, while they are still fresh, and feel free to ask questions at this point!**
* **Thank you so much for inviting me to be part of your Whistler experience!**
* **Have fun on the mountain!**