**Motivational Mondays interview:**

**Molly Fletcher – *Airing* 05.31.2021**

**Max Irzhak** [00:00:02] Welcome to Motivational Mondays. I'm your host Max Irzhak and joining us for part two of her interview is Molly Fletcher.

If you haven’t already listened to last week’s episode, I encourage you to start there.

Molly taught us how to negotiate with confidence, why it’s important to lean into failure, and why the *best* athletes thrive on change!

After spendingnearly two decades as one of the *only* female sports agents in the business, she represented some of the greatest athletes on the planet.

Now, an author of 5 books, and a keynote speaker to Fortune 500s — she’s sharing the secrets that helped her thrive in a male-dominated world to rise to the top and then leave it all behind to become a successful entrepreneur.

**Max Irzhak** [00:00:41] The right mindset lives at the root of every transformation.

One of the things I loved hearing you say is that “the best-of-the-best dont play *not to* *lose*, they play to *win*.” The difference sounds subtle, but the impact is actually massive.

Can you explain what you mean with that quote?

**Molly Fletcher** [00:01:00] Sure, I mean I saw it in my own life as an athlete. When I would go out on the tennis court and go “God, I hope I don't lose”. When I'd stand there and get ready to hit the serve and think “don’t double fault, whatever you do, don’t double fault”. What happens? You double fault. If you’re standing on the tee box and there’s water to the right you say “just don't hit it in the water” … you’re going in the water, right? So when I see athletes all the time at the professional level, that self-talk, that story that we tell ourselves is key. So if we’re playing not to lose, in my opinion it’s a mindset of being tentative. It’s a mindset of holding back. It’s a mindset of not going for it. It’s not playing to win. And there is such a difference in the way in which you show up, and the way in which you do what you do. It brings a whole layer of tentativeness to every conversation, every moment, every meeting. And certainly to the way that you’re performing in those moments.

I think about a guy that I love and that I represented forever, is John Smoltz. He didn't step on that mound not to lose, he stepped on that mound to win. He didn’t step on that mound to go “God I hope maybe i’ll just get a couple guys hitting singles and doubles today and then i'll be fine.” he stepped on that mound to strike them out, to send them back to the bench as fast as he could — never thinking a couple doubles or singles, he wanted to sit them all down. That’s the mindset I think we all need.

**Max Irzhak** [00:02:34] What’s your advice for introverts for whom confidence may be a struggle or even unbearable?

**Molly Fletcher** [00:02:42] Yeah, you know I am a huge fan.. Susan Cain wrote a book called ‘Quiet’. I read it and had an opportunity to interview her as well on my podcast Game Changers. And it gives you a whole new perspective in this very loud world where extroverts at some level — the world would say, have an advantage. I believe that introverts, and the book is incredible for anybody who is in fact self-diagnosed or maybe diagnosed as an introvert — read that book, it’s a powerful book.

But my advice to them is be who you are, it’s okay, there is room and opportunity clearly in this world for introverts. In fact there’s a ton of data around the impact that they have on the world which is profound. And so be who you are, don’t try and be anybody else. That’s your competitive advantage; nobody else can be exactly who they are. So lean into that. Now I say that and say whether you’re an extrovert or an introvert, it doesn’t mean that we can’t be adverse to change. I mean extroverts deal with challenges too, right? I mean they maybe need to zip it a little bit in a meeting at some level and listen a little bit more, right? And so those are things that they’ve got to dial back, you know, maybe an introvert’s sitting in a meeting and they’re hesitant to speak up — well, what an opportunity to get a little bit uncomfortable; maybe have that courage to ask a question here or there. So we all have to sort of feel that discomfort, recognize when we need to lean into it and go for it.

**Max Irzhak** [00:04:13] As you were evolving through your own career, did you have mentors who helped guide you; and those who changed the trajectory of your life?

**Molly Fletcher** [00:04:23] Yeah for sure, I mean certainly I think mentors and sort of sponsors are different. I had a little bit of both. I had certainly mentors like my parents who were remarkable mentors for me because of the character by which they showed up and served the world. And then as I progressed in my business life, there were certainly lots of different mentors, men and women, who I was eager to always lean into and ask for advice, and get really really curious. I think one of the best things we can do as young people is just be insatiably curious. I have a podcast too, and one of the things that I without question — Max you might see this too — that I see is that some of the leaders out there… I've interviewed entrepreneurs, athletes, actors, and they’re all curious; they’re always curious, they’re always digging and peeling back, always trying to get better, always trying to learn. And so one of the best things we can do early in our journey both in college and beyond is stay really curious, stay curious. Listen to podcasts, read, ask a lot of questions, be a sponge, and then take it all in and filter it through who you are and then show up in the world the way you want to show up.

**Max Irzhak** [00:05:45] It’s interesting because if i had to boil success in life to two main traits, it would really be natural curiosity and being confident. If you can apply those two things, you will rock almost any situation that you encounter.

**Molly Fletcher** [00:06:01] You know it’s funny that you say that. I remember... we have 3 daughters, they’re now 17, 17, and 18 — but when they were really really young, i'll never forget they were playing on the beach and i was standing there with my mom who i have a ton of respect for, and we were talking and i said “mom what do you think is the one most important thing that all of these girls have when they leave and walk into the world?” And she said “confidence”. She said “Molly, they are confident they can navigate a lot of things.”

And that stuck with me and is something that I've leaned into as a parent over the last 18 years.

**Max Irzhak** [00:06:36] Tell me more about character. What do you look for in the people that you hire?

**Molly Fletcher** [00:06:42] Curiosity, absolutely is a big one. Energy. I want to be around people who have great energy. I interviewed a gentleman the other day and one of the things he talked about was the “airport test” ... would you want to go on a trip to meet a client with him? Can they kind of pass that airport test or that get a beer test, right? So do they show up with good energy? Are they positive? Are they a half-full person? I think there are so many things from a skill perspective we can teach. So if there’s a skill gap but I love their energy, I love their passion, they’re insatiably curious, they want to continue to learn and grow — those are the kind of people that I'll pull onto the team in a heartbeat.

**Max Irzhak** [00:07:29] And if people want to learn more about you, and learn to embrace confidence… where should they go?

**Molly Fletcher** [00:07:35] You know Max, it’s been fun, about a year ago we created a community — Game Changer Leadership Huddles. So for people that want to gain more confidence, right, that want to have the tools to help navigate opportunities in their careers, we actually created a special discount code for you and for your members to get $10 off the monthly membership. But they can go and join the huddles, they go to training.mollyfletcher.com and then use the code NSLS for $10 off every month. They'll be part of an incredible community, they'll be pushed and challenged — and then the byproduct of that is an opportunity to gain confidence as they continue to navigate life’s demands, and certainly their careers.

**Max Irzhak** [00:08:16] To close this out, Molly, it’s been a privilege and a huge thank you for teaching us that greatness is within all of us, and that the right mindset, energy, and confidence are the true keys to success.

**Molly Fletcher** [00:08:28] Thanks so much Max, it was a treat to be with you!

**Max Irzhak** [00:08:30] We’ll see you all back here again next week for Motivational Mondays.