

When you can't control what's happening, you challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what's happening. That's where your power is.

- Anonymous

Neutralize your emotions. That is what I just heard while watching Sunday Night Baseball. Nothing can be more of a true statement. When you lose your emotions, you lose everything. As a coach, as a player, a parent or a student; it is all the same. The best advice I ever received, and I do believe has helped me a lot in life, is that those who can control their emotions will always put themselves in a good place to succeed. It is not so easy for everyone, especially a child with autism who struggles with controlling emotion. That is why it is with great pride we give the April Athlete of the Month Award to Aidan Manning, a young man who has challenged himself every day to control his emotions and become the best all-around person possible.

In 2015, the Manning's moved to Massachusetts from Washington D.C. It was soon after that Aidan made his way to the baseball club. Very early on mom reached out to us about Aidan. She expressed his passion for the game and his talent level, but that handling difficulty and tough times was a work in progress. Aidan's passion for the game was noticeable right away. He loves the games and works just as hard as anyone else. In the beginning, there were some emotional times. However, I am very proud of my staff, especially Coach Berman and McGrath, and Aidan himself, in how they handled every situation. The coaches always remained level headed and had a good talk with Aidan. Aidan, in his part, always responded with an apology and a commitment to improve upon his reaction to obstacles. Just like Aidan promised, he has delivered. Every day, Aidan's reactions have improved. They improved so much that this past year he believed he was ready for AAU ball and we were very excited to have him. Coach Twohig would tell you that he has been excellent for his team. Sean stated "first game of the year Aidan threw 6 innings 68 pitches, complete game. Then he broke his wrist the next weekend but it hasn't stopped him from being at every game and every practice. He has actually worked hard on fielding with his right hand and then flipping the glove off to throw with same hand. During games he has been up on the fence for his teammates, very valuable to our chemistry." Tom Miller, his little league coach and teacher at South Middle School reiterated that "Aidan has been great in school, all good grades and great attitude. For town ball you would think the broken wrist would have been very hard for him but he has really challenged himself to become better with it. He also shows up every game in full uniform, he does the book for us and also catches for me in warmups. Absolutely awesome reaction to a tough break." On the day that I write this Aidan played with a broken wrist. He had three hits swinging one handed.

I admire everything about Aidan this year and how he has improved greatly with his emotions. Two years ago I don't know how Aidan would have reacted to a broken wrist. With all his hard work and support at home in working with emotions, he has shown everyone just how determined he is to improving as a person. Aidan has also taught us that you have to look for the bright side to everything. Aidan broke his wrist and made no excuses; he found in the situation a way to improve. When are we going to stop making excuses and find a way to improve?

Thanks Aidan for everything you have taught us

Coach Joyce