

May 20, 2011

“Echoes of the Heart”

Reflections on Life and Community Living

Trust and the Miami Heat. With the NBA playoffs in full swing now, every game is a big game. Tonight the Miami Heat take their 3-1 lead (best of 7 series) over the Boston Celtics into game five at the American Airlines Arena here in Miami. A victory tonight will move them into the finals of the Eastern Conference, probably against the Chicago Bulls, who are up 3-2 on the Atlanta Hawks.

All year, Heat head coach Eric Spoelstra has been talking about the need for the players to *trust* one another in the team concept. With stars of the magnitude of Dwyane Wade, LeBron James and Chris Bosh—Miami’s famed *big three*—such *trust* in one’s teammates doesn’t always come easily.

And yet, because basketball is fundamentally a team game, the element of *trust* looms large for the ultimate success of any team. Even the best NBA players—and Wade and James are two of the best players on the planet—cannot win games by themselves. They need the varied contributions of their teammates.

It is a simple truth in basketball that when players sense the *trust*, they play better. They play better because *trust* builds confidence. Trust comes when a player feels *involved* in the offense; in other words, when he feels needed, that he has a role to play. A player who feels needed performs better in every other part of the game: defense, rebounding, passing and intangibles like setting picks and going for loose balls.

Not infrequently, critical games are won because of the high *trust* level between teammates. Shots are made by role players that might otherwise be missed and, generally, levels of focus and intensity are more sustained throughout the game.

Trusting the process. Issues of *trust* are significant in all of life. At the end of the day, none of us can control all the variables of our lives. Whether it is trying to win in team sports, enjoying fruitful relationships with family and friends, or seeking success at the office and in the market place, *trust* is a critical factor.

Much of trust has to do with *trusting the process* of life as it unfolds around us. In a sense, *trust* is a decision. It is a decision we make about something larger than ourselves.

With the Miami Heat, players have to *trust the process* of the team’s evolution as players learn to play with each other and as—together—they figure out how to beat other teams (like the Boston Celtics, for example, who have dominated them in recent years). Again, it’s a process.

Our growth and maturation as individuals, families, teams and groups take time. Sometimes, therefore, the best counsel we can give ourselves (or others) is to *trust the*

process, remembering that the process takes time. Relationships in all realms of our lives take time to evolve and blossom.

In all of this, it is important to have a sense that we have done our best, that we have done all we can do. This also helps minimize any feelings we might have of regret. In both our lives and in the world—we can't instantaneously simply fix everything that's broken. The *fixing* (the resolution) takes time. Once more, we have to *trust the process*.

At the end of the day, hopefully, we all learn that our lives are about more than us as individuals; they are about us as family, as team and as community. And because we need each other—both to win in sports and to thrive in our relationships, *trust* is a key element to our health and well being.

Again, *trust* is a decision.

As the Miami Heat continue their pursuit of an NBA championship, let's hope the Heat players play each game with a level of *trust* that becomes contagious for them all. Let's hope they trust in their shooters to make shots and trust in their defensive specialists to make stops.

And let us, too, learn the lesson of trust—that in building relationships of trust with one another, everyone benefits. Again, it is a process—a process of growth with successes and failures; a process that makes us all better and takes us all to higher ground. Go Heat!