



# Sample Script for ELM Tree of Mastery

(In all of the online courses and live, group workshops that Positive Coaching Alliance presents nationwide for youth and high school sports leaders, coaches, parents and student-athletes, we explain the concept of "The ELM Tree of Mastery." Following is a script that coaches can draw from in order to share the concept with players. With just a few adjustments based on which sport you coach and your players' ages, you can **deliver the core message in your own voice.**)

There are two kinds of winners in sports. One kind is the team that has scored the most at the end of a game. This is the Scoreboard winner. We want to be a Scoreboard winner and the other kind, a Mastery winner. A Mastery winner gives consistently great effort, continually learns, and bounces back from mistakes.

We can be this more-important kind of winner no matter what the scoreboard says. The more we work at being Mastery winners, the more likely we are to be Scoreboard winners. And the more we work at being Mastery winners, the more likely we are to be winners in life!

To help remember the important parts of mastery, we use the **ELM Tree of Mastery**. In ELM, the E is for Effort, the L is for Learning and the M is for Mistakes are OK. Let's go over some details of what I mean.

**E is for Effort.** We'll give our best effort in every practice and game. It's more important to me that we try our hardest than if we win. If we win without giving it our best effort, that win doesn't mean much. But if we play a strong team and try our hardest and lose, I'll still be proud of our team.

**L is for Learning.** Let's continue learning and improving every time we come out here. If we continue to learn, we will get better. Getting better than we are now is more important than whether or not we are better than some other team. We can also think of this as competing with ourselves; if we get better than we used to be, then we are winning that competition.

**M is for Mistakes.** Nobody likes to make mistakes, but mistakes are part of learning. You can't learn without making mistakes, because to learn you have to try things that are new and challenging, so of course you are going to make mistakes. On our team, it is okay to make mistakes.

Our team will have a Mistake Ritual called Flushing Mistakes. If you make a mistake, flush it by making a motion with your arm like you are flushing a toilet so the mistake goes away. If you look at me and your teammates after a mistake, we should all make that flushing motion, too. We want to learn from our mistakes and not let them discourage us or keep us from working hard.

So, remember, as long as you give your best Effort, Learn and are not afraid of Mistakes, you are climbing the ELM Tree of Mastery, and you'll be a winner in sports and in life.

