

My Own Words

Marvin Lewis On Finding Your Way



Marvin Lewis, outstanding student and athlete, graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2004, after leading the basketball team all the way to the semi-finals of the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament. His career achievements on the court put him in the Georgia Tech record book for total games played and career scoring. Marvin won the Tech team's top student athlete award in 2003 and was twice named to the regional Atlantic Coast Conference All-Academic team for men's basketball in his four-year college career. Now 22, he is employed by an accounting firm in Atlanta, Georgia, and is studying to become a certified public accountant.

Marvin Lewis drives down the court during a February 2004 game in which he led all scorers with 24 points. (© AP/WWP)

I remember what it was like being a teenager, wanting to fit in, but still feeling like maybe I never would, that I'd never find what was right for me. You want to find that place, find that niche of friendship and feel like you belong. So what I did was get involved in a lot of extracurricular activities, trying to find something that I enjoyed.

I did a little bit of everything. I played multiple sports, not just one sport. I played basketball, football, baseball. I also joined after-school activities just to see what I liked, and to see what type of people I liked, and figure out if that was something that I wanted to do.

Sometimes you find out you're lousy. Sometimes you screw up and you're afraid people are going to laugh at you, but so what? You have to do your best to not be afraid of people laughing or not agreeing with what you're doing. You have to stand up and be your own person first of all. And second, when you find that thing you do enjoy doing, that thing you're good at, keep at it.

And it's not like you have to figure all this out by yourself. I remember I had one really good friend who was my age. He could kind of tell me the positives and negatives about things I was doing. I also had relatives who could be objective and tell me if things I was into were good or bad. And they didn't judge me. That was a really big thing. I was really looking for somebody who wouldn't judge me for what I was doing. They would just support me as much as they could.

Maybe you're thinking, "Sure, Marvin. Who's going to help me?" You'd be surprised. If you go out and ask for help, people are more than willing to help you. If you need somebody to talk to, if that's in school, if it's a guidance counselor or a relative, they'll probably help you. You just have to ask. ■