

SCU: Good morning and welcome to our hangout. This is the fourth in our series of hangouts, and today we're going to be looking at building character and resilience through sport. Between now and the summer of 2016 when the Olympics and Paralympics games will take place in Rio, we'll be meeting some amazing athlete and the amazing support teams that work with Team GB and Paralympics GB to support them on their road to Rio. We're inviting schools from our get set community to put questions directly to these inspirational people and take part in some of those hangouts themselves. Today we are very lucky to be joined by two of those schools. We've got **Davenant** Foundation School, can I get a wave and a hello from you guys?

STUDENTS: Hi!

SCU: Brilliant, it's very nice to have you here. We've also got with us **Lealands** High School, can I get a wave and a hello from you guys?

STUDENTS: Hi!

SCU: Fantastic. So these two schools have some special questions to ask our special guests, so let's crack on and meet out two special guests. Our first guest is Edward Timpson who is Minister of State for children and families. He's responsible for school sport, PSHE in school and promoting character and resilience building among young people. Mr Timpson thank you very much for joining us, are you well?

TIMPSON: Fantastic, thank you for letting me join this morning, I'll looking forward to answering some really intrusive and incisive questions which will give a flavour of what a difference character and resilience can make through sport and life too.

SCU: Absolutely, thank you for joining us! I'm sure we'll get some great questions. Our second guest is Perri Shakes-Drayton. She's a track and field athlete who competed in the 400 meter sprint in 2013 in the European Athletics Indoor Championships in Gothenburg and won gold with a personal best of 50.85 seconds. Before we say anything else well done Perri, that sounds awesome! Secondly, thank you very much for joining us today, are well?

PERRI: Yes I am, good morning everyone and thank you for having me.

SCU: It's brilliant to have you here. We've asked the teams to have a little think about building character and resilience through sports, and they have put some questions together that they would like to put to our guests. So without further ado we'll move straight on to our questions and we'll start with Davan Foundation School who I believe have a question for Mr Timpson.

STUDENT: What character traits are needed to be a good politician, and are any of these traits transferable?

TIMPSON: That's a really important question, and it goes to really the heart of what we're talking about. How is character so important is everything we do, whether you're a politician like me or a top level sports star like Perry. There are some things that we do share in common, it might not be that obvious, and some of those are things that actually at

school would make you an outstanding pupil. Things like hard work, you don't become a great athlete, you don't become a politician unless you put in the practice. And it's funny that the more you practise the luckier you seem to be, so you do have to put in hard work. Someone is not a world class multi gold medallist because he's just naturally talented, he is naturally talented but also he puts in a huge amount of hard work and effort to make it happen, so that's a character trait that we should all be able to bring out to ourselves in whatever role we have in life.

I think it's also important that we have clear goals that we know what we're trying to do and what we're trying to achieve, and we don't just do things just because we feel like it. You need to have a path that you're trying to follow, and that would really focus you on what you're seeking to achieve in life. The last thing that's really important to me is a sense of self-worth, that you as a person feel that what you're doing is really making you a better person, because we can often find ourselves doing things we don't want to do. But if we do achieve them it will make us a better person at the end of all our efforts. So those are the traits and characteristics that whether you are someone like me or like Perry or like the many children who are in school thinking about these things, that it will make them the best prospects of being the best they can be.

SCU: Fantastic, that was great to get us started. Thank you so much. Our second question is from Laelands High School, over to you guys.

STUDENT: Hi, I have a degree in sport science and want to work very hard to achieve good exam grades. What did you want to be when you were at our age?

PERRI: That's funny because when I was young I really didn't know what I wanted to be, but there was one thing my dad always embedded in me do computer science! Anyway, as I got older I chose P.E, technology and realised that I was more into P.E. I had my other subjects as well but I wasn't really strong at them. One thing I would say to you guys is never be afraid to ask for help if you don't understand something. I was into cross country, I joined a club and I haven't looked back ever since. I met my coach there, and I've made it through hard work and a lot of dedication.

SCU: Fantastic, thank you very much Perri. It's interesting what you were saying there, a lot of the things married up with what Mr Timpson was saying earlier on; working hard and just trying to make sure you have put in all the effort that you can. Another point is to always ask questions and get the help that you can. Let's move to question three which I think is for both of our guests and this is from Davenant Foundation School.

STUDENT: Can you think of a time in your career when you have had to show determination and courage?

TIMPSON: Well I think the first thing to say is in anyone's life it's not always an upward trajectory. What I mean by that is that things don't always go your way and there'll always be setbacks and times when you really have to dig deep and trying to get through it. That's where having courage and determination is very important. One of the things unfortunately that you have to do as a politician is in the democracy that we live in you

don't just get appointed, you have to get elected. And that means what we had earlier in the year in May, we had elections where everyone would vote for you and some will not vote for you. And your whole career depends on whether you'll win that election. When I first got elected, which is now seven years ago, it was in something called a by-election when unfortunately the previous Member of Parliament had died and we had a by-election to decide a new one. And for three weeks the whole national press and newspapers and TVs came to where my constituency is in the North West, and for three weeks I had them scrutinizing every aspect of my life and people throwing accusations at me that weren't true.

There were times when I could have crumbled, I could have tried to walk away from it or fallen away, but I had to show lots of courage. I had to really get out there and explain myself to people that some of these things people were saying were not true and this is the sort of person I actually am and the sort of family that I come from, and this is why I am determined to make a difference as the MP for this area. And that was probably the one time in my life where I've had to look at myself and discover what makes me tick and try to bring to the surface all those important character traits like discipline and a belief in myself so that I would get through it. The reward at the end of all that is first of all you win, but more importantly you know that you've given everything you possibly can so you're proud of the achievement you've made for yourself. That's probably the one thing in the whole of my life that brought all that together and really made me sure what I'm capable of.

SCU: Thank you very much, I'm going to pass it on to Perri.

PERRI: It's quite funny that me and Mr Timpson share similar characteristics even though we have different professions, but they are very similar. [Inaudible]. I injured my knee at the World Championships in Boston and I was not able to run. I had to go back to the basics and learn how to compete, train six times a week and all that. Obviously I'm recovered now, but it was the fact that I remembered I had achieved a lot before it happened, and that kinda got me fuelled. My family, my friends, my coach, they were kind of like my backbone for me to keep staying positive with that mentality that I'm going to be back to where I was and finish where I left off!

SCU: Fantastic, thank you so much for your answer. I'm going to go straight to Lealands High School, and you have a question for Mr Timpson.

STUDENT: Is there any advice you would offer to the team in dealing with disappointment?

TIMPSON: Well I think the first thing to say is we all share in that disappointment, don't we? We all want to do well, but it hasn't happened on this occasion. I think the most important this is a little bit as we've been talking about and Perri has touched on it as well, that we all have times when things don't work out the way we wanted. Actually how you react to that is very important than when things go well. The more that you are prepared to try and take the positive out of that and learn from the experiences, the more it's going to make you a stronger person the next time you're faced with a similar sort of challenge. So my advice whether they'll take it or not is don't panic, there are lots of things that

you did right but some things you didn't do as well and that will perhaps explain why things didn't work out as planned. But don't see all through your negative lens, try to see it as something that you could really build on in the future and come back better and stronger and wiser so that you can achieve your goal when the next opportunity comes around.

SCU: Fantastic, and that's advice for all of us. Let's move on to Davenant Foundation School and their question for Perri.

STUDENT: Being born and raised in East London, what was it like watching the Olympics from your doorstep?

PERRI: Wow, East London was a place before that I would say no one was really proud to say they came from, but since the London Olympics everything changed. It all transformed, even my local athletics track that just looks amazing, and the Olympics stadium coming up we had, I mean the air just became a buzz and everyone just wanted to be there and associate. I think that inspired the generation in a way that the youngsters came down to my track and we had a lot of participants which was great to see. For me I felt really proud to say that I come from East London, I think it shaped me to be the person that I am today. You know, it's always about the struggle and not letting that get into you, that determination. And not always having the best facilities, you just work with what you have because they you can appreciate a lot more. So definitely it was a fantastic experience. I'm looking forward to Rio.

SCU: I think we're all looking forward to Rio, thank you so much for your answer. Let's move on to Lealands High School who have a question for both our guests.

STUDENT: Through hard times, what characteristics helped you persevere through?

PERRI: It's my determination, my strong-mindedness and my passion. I have a big passion for what I do. I found that when you have a passion for something it doesn't feel like a chore, because you just love doing it. I get a buzz working out and running, it makes me feel good. The list could go on, and I think we share similar characteristics with the minister.

SCU: Absolutely, should we pass it on to you Mr. Timpson?

TIMPSON: Yeah, I agree with all of that and I think someone like Perri has to deal with some huge shocks through injuries which can ruin well laid out plans and months of hard training. That really tests you, and I think when things do turn out to be difficult or you have a hard time, at that moment it can feel like the worst thing in the world and that it's never going to get better. Actually what you need is a sense of perspective. Sometimes what I say to myself when I'm having a particularly bad day is will this feel better in a week's time or a month's time or a year's time? The truth is that life moves on and you can shape it in the way that you want to. It goes back to what we were saying before about how you react to these situations. Sometimes I think having a sense of humor, we take life very seriously but we also need to have a light side too. Remember there are other things that we have which are precious to us, like our family and friends, and they are

the ones that will actually help us come through those difficult times. So you should always reach out to people, not keep all inside. Talk about it, because there's a lot of support out there. And I know in school it can sometimes be difficult, I'm also responsible for bullying in school and cyber bullying which has become an even bigger issue. The way to tackle that is for people to talk about it and to be able to feel that there's help out there to help them through. So I would say, remember things always move on, things will change, you can shape your future and let other people help you do that.

SCU: Fantastic. Thank you very much, I think we've got one last question. I'm going to go back to Davenant Foundation School, they have a question for Mr. Timpson.

STUDENT: How can the education system help young people to build on their talents?

TIMPSON: This is about making sure that whatever your start in life, whether it's through your school life or life in your community, you get a chance to be what you are capable of being, and no one should be left behind. Through school there's lots of opportunities to give you a chance to show what you can do and to build those life skills and characteristics so that when you become an adult you can really be in a good position to make a successful life for you and your family. I think because we're talking about sports and the London Olympics and looking forward to Rio, it's worth remembering that through sport you can develop a lot of those characters. I'm going tomorrow to see some secondary schools in London who are working with the Rugby Football Union to try and see what we can bring to that school; resilience and discipline and teamwork and all those aspects of life which are very important.

So whether it's through the Cadets that we know, trying to get more into schools through the national citizen's service in which we're trying to give a bunch of children a chance to try out different activities and work out with children who normally wouldn't be able to. There are ways to make sure that you're not just getting a fantastic academic education to pass exams, but you're also coming out of school as a well-rounded young person who's got a lot to offer beyond just the academic side. So there's a lot of chance to do that, I hope in your schools too, and you should make the most of it because the time you have in your school is a time when you're able to get a chance to shape who you're going to be once you get into the wonderful life of adult life.

SCU: Fantastic, and a great way to finish our hangouts. That's all we got time for today, so I want to say a massive thank you to our two schools. We've got Davenant Foundation School can we get a wave from you? And Lealands High School thank you very much too! Of course thanks to our two guests Mr. Edward Timpson and Perri Shakes-Drayton, thank you so much both of you.

We'll be posting this hangout on our website, [www.getset.co.uk](http://www.getset.co.uk), where you can also find out about the Road to Rio app where we're challenging groups of young people to get active and travel the distance between London and Rio. If you would like to be part of our next hangout then just email us at [getset@getset.co.uk](mailto:getset@getset.co.uk). From all of us, bye!