Erik Averill ([00:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=aXvMyu-vgEkWh77wdesUBKQ9AooKjlngi2szxYrRLAoKdlBYWPptN5yjlfCDqxmZfnqEttcKcNGNArxfIg6CIBgSBCc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=14.48)):

Welcome back to the Athlete CEO podcast. I'm your host, Erik Averill, co-founder of AWM Capital, where we partner with our clients to unlock the full potential of their wealth. And one of the core beliefs that we have at AWM is your human capital is the greatest driver of your net worth. So this podcast, the Athlete CEO podcast is all about bringing you the tools, the tactics, and the access to the best experts in the world to help you unlock your full potential. And each month we have the gift to sit down with our resident peak performance coach, Josiah Igono, who is the founder and owner of All Things Performance. Jo, welcome back to the podcast.

Josiah Igono ([00:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eay3Zx_lPG6HxEDmzkxgeAkQ3QTHt495YZ43b-pxcY6iNnUZINQJqEDv38lUZ0Gy0t7J2Yk7MeHvyXnD3cW-6-riL2Y&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=59.69)):

What's going on E? Good to be here, man.

Erik Averill ([01:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=x1THIBf-4K0z9qZY4kGrFccfzGBrOxpgmXvnvYaSGRnnsnKsX7W-qUKXoLhjJxoBpPskQ27sYTblogRFI8as7umJGvc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=61.69)):

Well, today is a topic that I know so many of us would love to master because the amount of thoughts that flow through our brain, that it seems like we literally can't stop ourselves from thinking, we're going to talk about thought stopping. Let's get right into it. What exactly is thought stopping, and why is this such a tool of performance?

Josiah Igono ([01:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=FcUvASEvv8HpsfntQFBp9dtiv_1TqpTLIg8s8PAZ8Ql0lSnOaDgdqWGG9t02SHEob2Ys_oI8cnx9MLngVzoz9GvTnY0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=89.84)):

So thought stopping, first of all, thanks for having me again. This is a crazy subject. And I would encourage people to go and do some research on their own and kind of come to their own conclusions. Because when you start looking at thought stopping in the literature, it's actually controversial. So thought stopping in essence is we scan for negative thoughts, right? And when that thought comes in, we stop it, quote unquote, air quotes. And there are different means whereby people can do this. So I'll give you an example. So I'm in a performance competition, I'm at a game, I'm in practice, and I'm having a self-defeating thought. So thoughts stopping tells me that if I follow this procedure of scanning for those negative thoughts, and then I say something like a verbal cue, like, "No." No. And then I accompany that with a physical act, such as a rubber band on my wrist boom, or me clapping, no, or me hitting my thighs or whatever it is, no.

Josiah Igono ([02:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=KLV9HpDW3YBZwYNJVcSTYm_3e_x2nhxzt4o0lO8YrIrYGqGqp1hGBuVSlevFl51qAsEVP-GqBYn6GmX2zbEo-w5owAk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=159.85)):

Or me playing defense, somebody's coming at me, I'm a basketball defender and I'm having negative thoughts and I'm slamming the hardwood, like I got this, no I'm better than this. Whatever the case may be, the premise lies in, we are to scan for these negative thoughts. We seize them. We include a verbal cue and some type of physical act in this. Once we do this, we visualize ourselves doing something good. And then we do it. And then we go on to the next play. So the controversy lies in that when I tell you, don't look at the pink elephant, or don't think about the pink elephant, what do we do?

Erik Averill ([03:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QVypK2D3J87VHVSYOb9Oh0U6RpTNkxO09C8hh1n8_0GwTK14SFSsFoZsgYpa9xfMetaAgxiX8-cKDchimAphJjCmm9c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=209.34)):

Think about that pink elephant.

Josiah Igono ([03:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xhqlOtTAyjtDr-Ku2grdJXKPDmB_ehdq_09IlvoNrthE40ZJ0f-DA6-FtoyXv1tEbU2L_duz4rPuA7-kAN122sb6HZ8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=210.68)):

That's why it's controversial. Because some experts say that we're actually reinforcing habits, bad habits, when we try to stop these negative thoughts. And this opens up the flood gates for things like mindfulness, meditation and other things. So that's why it's controversial.

Erik Averill ([03:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SW6PO0zBX7S4_NZ7gLfgHEcmIBenQys97Khg06sOf_j_elBt9Z-qjbM0FDmLJPw5qBAyY_gDH7d9JimMP85ppBic8vU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=230.25)):

So you're leaving with an absolute cliff hanger here. I mean, you are our resident performance coach. Where do we follow?

Josiah Igono ([04:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=0wjdRRR1qEUvrEoSVUUxLNZjuPs5ytQEYMZLeWszjmVXcYtC1wvO_YPhbDT9jKMZMjsROvtTSR1_NVtTQ7evY9kSGOk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=242.29)):

There's absolutely no hope for y'all.

Erik Averill ([04:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=zCZr5oAU1G5nE96XQlywxwCHZKkGjXJ4m7LM7T4jMYERXaZkC_md6xDHFBFIX_TfoUPr6K1aZfEN5s24RXlkY6MceJI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=246.4)):

Where we hang out on this?

Josiah Igono ([04:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=872DPwOQtLsWeKKLyNOy2T_1L9bJ_i3h7nrQviY6uReP5jL7IILUls0tSLbayIkcYRvk1wIu5WaLPr_T1CW9ORnIlV0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=247.41)):

So this is why, this is a great question. And this is the beauty of working with different people, because different things work for different people. You might find that, hey, putting a bracelet, a rubber band on, and me snapping that every time I have a negative reaction or response, when I have a negative thought, a self-defeating thought, you may find that clapping my hands, no. I'm going to think about me hitting a home run, or I'm going to think about the positive outcome in this next play. That might have a positive effect for some people. Whereas some people, they may use something like we've discussed in the past man, like a focal point or a release technique or something to help them upregulate, downregulate. This is where mental skills are so powerful because sometimes you can unscrew the same screw with a Phillips or a Flathead. You know what I'm saying?

Erik Averill ([05:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=pIgxzpAPmoyBuMHM5mGC8ZjTi7xlqu-KEXZVcy-SEJAjoEz2gYvAUaJgqWWFl27SO-SDO3CaiN2PEKj4siOWDdALmPs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=309.22)):

Right.

Josiah Igono ([05:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Dj4l-NRhMmSTO8pi3WX-vN_o1k9Qwv2pz--VNJ0gx0zmvUMIbXjExEKSrvqbvL-_4fpWvsFBG20zdyAZyNQLS7Km-nk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=309.57)):

So it depends on the person, and your preference, and just how you want to go about attacking your work.

Erik Averill ([05:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=K1KOLQHS1X9pVySqSQM52eTz-wD4uHghD-_aRqNREwzgA8xsgt1i8Zj13J_zS2hcAI0Bpre8njVT4D5DruO80vYRwyA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=316.13)):

Yeah. What I heard there is individualization, that it's so important that there is not a one size fits all. And it's also the danger, I think of bad coaching, right? We were having a sidebar conversation in between taping this session about CrossFit. There's nothing theoretically wrong with the methodology of CrossFit. When you have incompetent coaches, people get hurt. And I think it's the same thing when it says, "No, this is how you have to handle this. So this is right or wrong." As opposed to you saying, "You know what? Before I can prescribe a tool for you to unlock your mental performance. I got to know who you are. I got to know what makes you tick." One of the things I would ask and it's intro Trevor Moawad's book, It Takes What It Takes. He talks a lot about why it's not positive psychology, Russell Wilson and him talk a lot about neutral thinking, not just positive thinking, where does this positive psychology blend in with this thought-stopping conversation. I would love to hear that.

Josiah Igono ([06:31](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=AOWxrt7fbC27w4WDNipCVyLT-zGk-DSfGg7mSvAxkCmfRnsNCZDz1pqF9TERjoWduOplLlVNPfeZlFZBOAFC_uf2eyk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=391.14)):

No, that's a great question. So when you look at positive psychology, one of the foremost individuals in that area is Martin Seligman. You can go and look at his work, great work, tremendous contributions to the world of psychology. And there are definitely benefits. I myself have experienced benefit from reading and applying some of those concepts. At the end of the day, we're human beings, right? We are human beings, human beings have emotion. We have reactions. We have responses. We are not monotone in our action thought deeds, words, we're just not, we're very animated creatures. And so when it comes to a person and a performance, those are two different conversations. Because before I perform as an athlete, before I perform, I am a person first. And the person has needs, wants, cares, worries, anxieties that are real, that I can't just say, "Oh, I'm going to choose to feel nothing." Try telling that to your child.

Erik Averill ([07:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=CgS_Gfq5qTGP02JCXPKiCdp3tTl6kezDFJmYHsP5zK4pk8BjiZ5LRzj3VcqkghKYi_8KC-JEjm_N5Zy70sW43I-17Is&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=460.73)):

Yeah.

Josiah Igono ([07:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nhVmJy1m_x8_bOmqGWckO0kmVLrZFP2pc2Toqr1QciAcStV4QPeAL2E6e6lagpkqYKn7LryQOzxDqtepFxRGxsENmCk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=461.7)):

You know what I'm saying? So those things all have their places. But what I would say to that in terms of the positive psychology, the neutrality, the stoicism in those is that... I'm talking to the athlete real quick, okay. I know there are many different people listening to this, but I want to speak specifically to the athletes that are listening to this podcast. When you start talking about athletes, athletes are performers. We all have different colors that we wear, whether it's red, white, and blue, whether it's the purple and gold the crimson and white, it doesn't matter. We are people first, but we're also... did I say that right?

Erik Averill ([08:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yxPSAntIKii2iayB0ouyAoVEzUyQX0ykA-Oprlgr62pAHHLY-CH1ZDvNbDmqdfjW_oEJcV4rRYaQ5lDUn_0ptBMx6io&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=508.97)):

Yeah.

Josiah Igono ([08:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=f1QepqatTF-2Q5a6_7sKz8xNh7nKEs1EsntDJzqqtc86to4P0fercrKXuo65IWQkW1hDdYNbGth6Za8GnDSZq2Wvyps&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=509.31)):

Okay. So we're people first and then we're performers. So at seven o'clock kickoff, we become performers. 7:05 opening pitch, we become performers. We are putting on a show. It is entertainment. But then afterwards, we are people again, full blown. And one thing that people need to understand, especially the athletes that are listening to this is that you are not your performance. You're not. And so you are going to have these self-defeating thoughts. You are going to have these moments of elation, these moments of dejection, depression, anxiety, stress, worry, fear. You're going to have that. That's part of the human experience, which you talk about so often. And it's important to be able to take these thoughts under and make them subjective or bring them into subjection. And so I'll give you an example from my life.

Josiah Igono ([09:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=A9teFZLBJQcw__2WGA1k0SPgMPKf9ma6J8nrGKTKXYft8nOK7TpEDvVf9h06uyXcw_88B6odK9x37PpI6pUIBc06_z0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=570.48)):

So one of the things that are so powerful, and we're going to talk about this later, are your words. So one of the ways in which I use thought stopping is like this. So if I hear somebody saying something negative or trying to give me something negative, or trying to just control the space, you know what I do? I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. I literally will say, no, I'll probably give them the Dikembe. You know what I'm saying? Dikembe, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Because to me, that signals that this is a negative thought. I'm not letting it in. I'm going to do this. That's thought stopping.

Erik Averill ([10:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=21w3y6hUaN2f25kZH-bMcjpLocjNFFn0CAhDhcoxpSjinTGBAmVvA3oei19lOOnl4KSPegYIrfrvrFHDe440b5ZNIFI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=614.71)):

I love it. Yeah.

Josiah Igono ([10:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=XseYxPsZ1R8TZe54suGBxlYJuu4dSnk2c5MAjRgRO38k7qL_DeO2sk5T8TKz-VMc69Sf5Xw-vkv3pJc7Mw3bGY5HLks&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=616.44)):

That's thought stopping. And people might be different, and might use different tactics, but that is a form of thought stopping. Taking that negative thought under subjection and saying, no, my physical thing is nope, nah, I'm good. Nope, nope, nope, nope, nope. And then I direct the conversation somewhere else. Whatever you feed will grow.

Josiah Igono ([10:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hn8KZEP7Z6-yL-WwjOzok75reV-_wpNm4_azqpaEsrpcp88l8Xu2h1g8yTuzObeHe1HLTYOUQBHywYtpdYrEcxsE0rw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=635.57)):

Yeah. And I know we've talked about this in previous podcasts, you just had mentioned lexicon. And another one, we might talk about command words, but what you speak to yourself. We had a few episodes ago, talked about what you say to yourself is the loudest voice. And so I think that this even interplays with that thought stopping of going, not only do I have to have an awareness of what I don't want to let into my life. So that takes intentionality. In a previous podcast, we talked about journaling. Maybe we should journal on what are the things that we want to affirm about who we are as human beings. I think that that is so important that the way to performance is not to deny your humanity and try and be a machine, because you won't have success doing that.

Josiah Igono ([11:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=rAp9TnSu0XqDrbdz6c94WRo0kdy3u8aNC90hmPCrnQ032Wk8t6wSaJpLHDBEUbBhU0tKP7Gjo5LaqC-mjcY8EkGlk2Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=687.38)):

But then at that same point of knowing what you're going to replace stuff with.

Erik Averill ([11:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=wdTTaH6w-Dq6quOacitzN-hV5KwShVHyyWN_19im7cfkRoOl1J4KPGvufV6XvDqyslqpPvOqG3fZp5DNt4eEuUamFLM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=692.12)):

Absolutely. And not being afraid to use your full humanity. I think that that's the other thing. I heard you say I used a physical action, something that triggered in my mind and I used my voice. You used the full tools of what it means to be human. And I just, I love that. Hopefully this has been helpful for you listeners. I know we didn't go into insane depth of what thought stopping protocols that you can use, but I encourage you to reach out to us at athleteceo.com. Josiah has been so incredible over the past few months of giving us resources, being accessible. That if you have questions, whether it comes to daily practices or specific situations of how you can use thought stopping, please reach out to us. And as always, we appreciate you guys, the attention that you're on, we know that you're trying to be the best in the world at what you do. So until next time, stay humble, stay hungry and always be a pro.