



# JIM HARSHAW, JR.

*Clarity of Action. Peace of Mind.*

Success for the Athletic-Minded Man Podcast

Action Plan Episode #495

## **Failure Isn't Final: Black Leaders on Success, Failure, and World Class Performance**

Some people seem to have it figured out.

They break records, shatter barriers, and thrive under pressure while the rest of us wonder... *What's their secret?*

Spoiler alert: It's not luck. It's not just talent. And it's definitely *not* magic.

Success— real, lasting success— comes down to mindset, habits, and the right strategies. And in this special episode of "Success for the Athletic-Minded Man" podcast, you're getting the inside scoop from five men who have mastered the game.

To celebrate Black History Month, we're revisiting conversations with world champion wrestler Lee Kemp, former NFL player and performance coach Niyi Sobo, Jamaican Olympic bobsled team captain Devon Harris, performance expert Nicodemus Christopher, motivational coach, speaker, and author Ryan Leak, and the first African-American chess grandmaster, Maurice Ashley.

Each of these guys has faced setbacks, failures, moments where quitting would've been easier. But instead, they leaned into four game-changing principles that separate elite performers from the rest:

- ✓ The power of mentorship— why success is never a solo sport.
- ✓ The truth about failure and why it's your most valuable asset.
- ✓ The mindset shifts that build unshakable mental toughness.
- ✓ The power of visualization and goal-setting in turning dreams into reality.

If this conversation resonates with you, share it with a friend, subscribe on Apple or Spotify, and join the free community at [JimHarshawJr.com/free](https://JimHarshawJr.com/free) for exclusive discussions and free bonus content.

Let's get into it!

### **Top Quotes From This Episode**

*"It's okay to ask for help. It's okay to be vulnerable. It's okay to say, 'I don't know.'"* (Devon Harris)

*"Be willing to stare fear in the face and go, 'You will not steer my life.'"* (Ryan Leak)

*"Prepare and create the condition for success."* (Lee Kemp)

### **Show Notes**

**This episode touches on the following key topics and ideas:**

- **[Share this episode!](#) (3:43):** Share the podcast on social media by tagging me and using the hashtag #SAMpod:
  - **YouTube:** [@jimharshaw1](#)
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  - **LinkedIn:** [Jim Harshaw, Jr.](#)
  
- **The Role of Mentors and Trusted Advisors:** Mentorship is non-negotiable for success.
  1. **Lee Kemp (4:26):** Success requires embracing all aspects of growth guided by mentors. He also emphasizes true commitment beyond just showing up.
  2. **Devon Harris (7:00):** Stresses the importance of identifying where you're stuck and seeking help without shame.
  3. **Nicodemus Christopher (8:24):** Highlights the value of accountability and having someone to expose blind spots.
  4. **Maurice Ashley (9:28):** Reflects on the necessity of trusted advisors and how having a support system accelerates growth.

- **The Role of Failure in Growth:** Failure isn't a roadblock, it's a vital checkpoint.
  1. **Niyi Sobo (12:00):** Shares his NFL experience, stressing the importance of grieving failures, then pivoting to new goals.
  2. **Ryan Leak (18:28):** Reframes failure as a teacher, emphasizing the importance of embracing mistakes to improve.
  3. **Maurice Ashley (21:37):** Discusses mental resilience and how setbacks can sharpen focus and strategy.
- **Mindset and Mental Toughness:** Mental toughness is about repeatedly facing fear.
  1. **Ryan Leak (24:41):** Explains how repetition reduces stress, encouraging people to face challenges regularly.
  2. **Devon Harris (26:25):** Talks about rising to meet high expectations and how belief systems shape performance.
  3. **Nicodemus Christopher (28:25):** Shares principles for pausing, reflecting, and maintaining mental clarity in tough situations.
- **The Power of Visualization and Goal Setting:** Visualization fuels belief, even when reality doesn't reflect your aspirations.
  1. **Lee Kemp (30:21):** Describes how vivid mental imagery transformed him from an average wrestler to a state champion.
  2. **Ryan Leak (35:27):** Advocates for daily wins and setting small goals to build momentum.
  3. **Niyi Sobo (38:13):** Suggests creating a "target practice plan" with controlled wins to reinforce positive habits.

### **List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode**

[WATCH] ["Cool Runnings"](#)

## **Other Episodes Referenced**

[#25 Believing the Dream and Not Reality with Lee Kemp](#)

[#415 The Peak Performance Secrets Inside NFL Veteran Niyi Sobo's "I'm Not You" Program](#)

[#327 From Ghetto to Greatness: The True Story of Jamaican Olympic Bobsledder Devon Harris](#)

[#456 How Not to Decay: Coach to NBA Champions Nicodemus Christopher Shares Secrets to Maintaining Peak Performance](#)

[#318 Chasing Failure: Real Life Lessons from One Man's Shot at the NBA with Ryan Leak](#)

[#458 Inside the Mind of a Chess Grandmaster: Maurice Ashley's Winning Secrets](#)

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