

The Hero Within

In 2018, Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino became the first Japanese mixed doubles champions at the prestigious Yonex All England Open. They upset their much higher ranked Chinese opponents, and have since won many fans like myself who can't get enough of Yuta's craftiness on court and Arisa's powerful smashes. The pair currently ranks fifth in the world and has won numerous accolades, including bronze at the most recent Tokyo Olympics.

Both players began playing at a young age. Yuta didn't play well as a singles player in his teenage years, and his small stature limited his court coverage, so he switched to playing doubles. Yet even then, he wasn't a 'top-tier' character per se, and his pairing with Arisa was cruel- due to the fact that both were at the bottom of their respective lists. Even though they could have given up then, their love of badminton and aspirations to be world number one spurred them on, and I'm glad they did, as it provided badminton fans around the world with great sports entertainment and a great story of resilience.

Coaching that helps individuals get unstuck from their professional situations and accelerate

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The idea that life can be unpredictable and that challenges can come in all shapes, sizes, and at unexpected times is probably cliché during our Covid-19 pandemic years. As Yuta and Arisa felt when they were bottom of the list, many of us may be wondering what the future holds for our careers or family businesses. We might even feel depressed.

If the story of Yuta and Arisa doesn't inspire, how about the story of this young girl whose mother died, and her somewhat 'less-than-mature' father placed her in a Catholic orphanage where she spent her teenage years sewing crosses onto nightdresses and embroidering initials on towels. There wasn't much choice but to do the work she hates that made her feel like spitting. In addition, she resented the nuns for what she felt was a 'lack of love'. Her experiences with these 'mean and nasty nuns' ignited a taste for success and a passion for grandeur, which her sewing skills helped lay the foundation for. The iconic Coco Chanel was born from these experiences.

Whatever the situation, make the most of every circumstance, whether that means reframing the narrative, expanding the options, or simply celebrating the small steps and small victories. Look for someone to journey with if the going feels exhausting. You can find your inner hero even during the toughest season if you have the right perspective. Let's chat!

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