Dan Gastin

English 101

Prof. Thomas Denton

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John Quartuccio

I woke up on the morning of October 23rd with a feeling of anxiousness and fear. My interview with John Quartuccio was not until four o’clock but it felt as if it was in an hour. That morning I felt rushed, which, is something I try to avoid. As the feeling of being rushed was upon me, I started to get nervous and while I was pouring milk into my cereal (at least I thought I was pouring it into my cereal) I completely missed the bowl and the milk went all over my kitchen counter. My mom sure did like the sight of the milk dripping down the cabinet doors and getting underneath the brand new Keurig coffee machine. Well as if my morning couldn’t have gotten any worse-it did. On the way to the interview I kept saying to myself: “What If I mess up and say the wrong thing and get him mad?” Another thought that entered my head was, “I hope I don’t start to stutter in the middle of asking a question because that’ll be the begging of the end for me.” I was about ten minutes from NorthStar Sports, the facility where John works. As I got closer to Northstar my heart began to beat faster and faster. I felt as If I was in a horror movie because of how fast the adrenaline was getting pumped into my bloodstream. Then all of a sudden…BOOM! While I was driving, a squirrel ran out in front of my car and I hit it. I felt so bad about it, but luckily the squirrel was not killed and scurried back into the woods.

I knew if could handle the events up to this point, then I could handle anything that came my way.  As I pulled into the parking lot of NorthStar Sports, my heart began to return to its normal rhythm, which gave me confidence because I knew I could conduct this interview with no problems at all. I stepped out of my car and took a deep breath and said, “Dan, this will be a walk in the park for you.” I walked up this path of stairs and found myself in front of this enormous building, which looked like a large warehouse. As I approached the front door of the building, a brisk gust of wind suddenly hit me, it felt like a wind you would feel in December and not October. I opened the door and was immediately blown away by the magnitude of the training facility. It looked as if I stepped foot inside an Olympic training center, from the power racks to the elaborate wall of pictures of collegiate athletes. I knew this place was the real deal.  I spotted John as soon as I walked in, so I waved and he began to walk over to the front desk area where I was. As John got closer and closer, my fear of conducting the interview magically vanished. When John came over to me he said “Danny?”

“Yes” I replied.

“Nice to meet you, let’s walk to the back and get this thing started.”

Right away I got the impression that John was a cool, down to earth, and easy-going guy. When I first met john he towered over me. I would say he is at least 6’2 or 6’3. Anyway, we walked down to where he works on athletes at NorthStar, “The Regen Room” as it’s called. The room is about a hundred and sixty-eight feet and contains several healing tools, such as Cyro-Cuffs, a Hydrocollator, an ice making machine, and two treatment tables. All of this got me very intrigued about what John does on a daily basis and led me to create new questions about those specific machines that I saw.

As I sat down on the treatment table, John seemed very happy that we were about to conduct this interview together, I say that because he had a smile on his face and said to me, “I have been looking forward to this all week!” When I heard that, it made me feel good that I was not being a burden or taking up any of his valuable time that day. One of the first questions that I was so eager to ask John was, “What influence did you have growing up that sparked your interest about helping people recover from injuries?”

He paused for several seconds and then expressed to me that his football career ended early due to three herniated discs in his back, and the rehab he went through was terrible to get him back to playing. Also, John knows the feeling that people have when they are severely stricken with a devastating injury which leads them to take on the mindset: “I can’t do it anymore” and give up.  John wanted to help people get through that “helplessness feeling” and get them to where they wanted to be. By hearing this first answer it blew me away because you could really tell how John is dedicated and willing to do whatever it takes to help his clients.  Without even having to ask the next question, John answered it for me. That day I wore my University of Miami football shirt, and to my luck, John went there! “I love shirt, it’s my Alma Mater” said John.

“No way?”

“Yup, went there for four years, but that was not the first college I attended, I went to St. Lawrence university for a year but got hurt so I came home, went through rehab, and did classes at Dutchess, then I went to Miami. In total I went to college for six years, which was felt like a lifetime, but it was worth it in the long run.”

Which led me to the question of what type of classes did you take? Did you participate in any internships? John said that he had to complete a sixty-hour internship for the University of Miami Exercise Physiology degree, which he did as a performance trainer at a Miami sports training facility. He spent a hundred observation hours for Physical Therapy (PT) School (graduate school).  The hundred hours were completed at three different locations, two outpatient orthopedic offices, and one at a children’s hospital (pediatric).  Most schools, he said, want over one- hundred hours, and it looks good to have different settings not all at one place. I went on to ask him how he got involved with NorthStar. John said that while he was home attending Dutchess Community College one of his exercise science classes went on a field trip to Gold’s Gym and that’s where he met Jerry North. Jerry fixed John’s back and got him back to training harder than ever.

All of a sudden, an athlete who was training went down and screamed in pain. John rushed over and he said I could tag along. Not to be mean, but I was kind of glad I got to experience this in person! It looked like the athlete injured her foot/ankle area. John explained to me that one of the first things he does when he encounters an athlete that is hurt is that he administers posture testing, which means that he examines what the specific part of the body is hurt, and he already knows what it’s “supposed” to look and feel like, so he compares his knowledge to what he is looking at right in front of him.  As he was going through his series of tests, he began to examine his body language.  He seemed calm, cool, and collected, which I, assuming you need to be in a time when an athlete is injured. When John was done doing his test’s he then told me that the next thing he checks for is the range of motion of that particular part of the body, in this case, the ankle. He told me that he learned what the range of motion of the ankle should be like in his anatomy and physiology classes. At the conclusion of his tests, John ruled it as a sprained ankle, news an athlete does not want to hear. While John helped the athlete to the front of the facility, I wrote down all of the things he had told me while he was working on the athlete. Luckily I recorded the remainder of the interview though.

After helping the athlete, he said “you’re lucky to have witnessed that, you can use that in your report!”  After witnessing that, I had to ask hi his personal ties with his job. I started off by asking what his daily workweek entailed for him and how did it affect his life outside of work? Again, John paused for a good thirty seconds before answering. He said well, I work about forty hours a week, plus an additional ten for all social media postings and write-ups I do about the athletes and the promotions that we offer here. He also revealed to me that he sees about a hundred and forty people a week! He also told me that he deals with client’s pre and post surgery, and pre and post injury. One of his main jobs is to prepare the athlete to get back into training at the level they were at before the injury occurred.  Then he got into about how his work affected his life outside of work. He said that Jerry, his boss, is big on nutrition and introduced him to how to eat right and how to properly life an overall healthy lifestyle. With those changes, John said he has seen a significant change in his life since being at NorthStar.

Then the interview took a path that I did not expect it to take. John asked me if I had any recent injures, I said yes, I tore my plantar fascia a couple of months ago. He told me to take off both my shoes and socks and to lie down on my stomach on the treatment table. John then examined both of my feet. He said he has never seen feet like mine before, which led him to say that my fascia on my foot felt like “rope” which is not good. He said that he was not surprised that I tore my fascia because it was so tight; it was likely to have happened anyway. This surprised me because the physical therapist that I did rehab with never said anything about my fascia being like that.

After John treated me like a regular client of his I had to ask him one final question: “How do you feel when you are done helping someone recover from an injury.” John did not have to pause for this response.

“It’s an amazing feeling. It’s the best feeling that you can possibly get in your life, the main reason why I chose my career is to help people get through the journey and not to get down on themselves. My number one priority is the client and their needs and I will do anything to help them reach their goal, which is to recover.

After hearing that I knew I had all of the information that I needed to complete the interview report. When I left, I shook John’s hand and said, “Thank you, you really opened up my eyes and gave me a better sense of what you do in your field of expertise.” I left NorthStar that day with a large amount of information of my note pad and recorded on my phone, by learning all of it and experiencing first hand what John does, it is swaying me to pursue a career in Physical therapy.