

Daniel Decker: [00:02](#) Welcome to Jon Gordon's Positive University Podcast. My name is Daniel Decker. I'm the cohost of Positive U and on this episode Jon talks with Case Keenum, a quarterback for the Washington Redskins NFL team. Case also played football for Houston where he became the NCAA's all time leader in total passing yards, touchdowns and completions. This is a really insightful interview where Case talks about his journey, achieving your dreams, playing for more, listening to truth versus the lies of fear and doubt and so much more.

Case is a great example of being the best of the best and if you want to discover the 11 traits of what the best do better than everyone else, pick up a copy of John Gordon's book Training Camp. It's real world wisdom on what it takes to reach true excellence and how you and your team, whether it's your work team, school team or family team, how you can achieve it. To learn more, go to trainingcampeleven.com, that's training camp 11 dot com. Now, as you listen to this episode, share your thoughts and tag at Jon Gordon 11, that's at J O N Gordon 11 as we'd love to know what impacts you most. Let's join Jon and Case.

Jon Gordon: [01:09](#) Hey, I'm Jon Gordon with Positive University and today my guest is Case Keenum. Case, how you doing?

Case Keenum: [01:18](#) I'm doing well Jon.

Jon Gordon: [01:20](#) Let's talk about your childhood. Let's begin right there. Growing up, what did you want to be when you were a kid?

Case Keenum: [01:30](#) You know, that's a long time ago, man. You know, growing up I was a coach's kid. You know, my dad coached football in high school and then small colleges around West Texas. Man, you could say football was in my blood. I've been wanting to be a football player my entire life. You know, I honestly truly remember telling my third grade teacher I wanted to play in the NFL.

Jon Gordon: [01:54](#) Now you're living that dream which is just incredible. What do you think about when you think about the fact that you are an NFL quarterback, and you've had really great success?

Case Keenum: [02:03](#) You know, I have to pinch myself sometimes. You know, I know that during the season there are some times that it gets tough, you know, and it definitely is a job and I've worked my tail off to get where I have been and where I currently am and to stay there. But I've pinched myself because I am playing a game. I'm

playing a kid's game that I've played since I was old enough to pick up a football and throw it. I'm still doing the same thing I'm throwing and catching the football and obviously on a much larger scale and obviously trying to provide for my family and you know, future generations.

But I do have fun. I love the game. I love practicing. I love getting out there and competing. And the fact that I get paid for it is pretty incredible, man. I enjoy what I do and I love going in every day. There are tough times, but yeah, I've definitely looked around every now and then and think, "Oh wow. I can't believe I'm here."

Jon Gordon: [03:11](#) That's awesome. So think about, take us back to when you were in high school, in college, you had this dream of being an NFL player, but did it seem like that was a possibility when you're in high school and college?

Case Keenum: [03:24](#) You know, I don't know if I ever thought realistically about what it would be like. I just went out and loved playing the game. I loved playing whatever sport was in season at that time, whether it was basketball, baseball, golf, run and track and I think just playing in the NFL was the answer that I gave to the question of "What do you want to be when you grow up? I want to be able to go quarterback." And I guess God never fully closed that door and I just kept working, kept trying to do the best that I could do with whatever situation I was in. In high school, I knew once I started and we won a state championship my junior year that I really wanted to pursue playing in college.

And there's so many experts and critics and Scouts and so many different camps and Elite 11's and Nike camps and Under Armour All American games and all these things now, that there's these experts that tell you how good of a football player you can be. But, you know, I had some people, obviously some negative feedback and telling me how short I was and how slow I was or all these different things.

But, I just kept plugging away and I had a few people speak life into me and told me that I could go and do that. And you know, my dad was definitely one of them. I went to a bunch of football camps growing up and tried to get recruited. I had one scholarship offer coming out of high school and that was the University of Houston. Coach Briles, Art Briles gave me that shot. It was definitely where I was supposed to be.

- Jon Gordon: [05:01](#) When you talk to younger people, which I know you do, what advice do you give them about going after their dreams?
- Case Keenum: [05:06](#) Yeah, I talked to a lot of kids, mostly specifically football players, but you know, a lot of different kids who are have a lot of different dreams. Football players, there's a lot of different ways of getting where you want to go. There's a lot of different avenues or ways to reach your dream, whatever dream that might be. You know, for me, I worked every day as hard as I could and I knew when I went to bed at night that I put everything I could into my craft. And I felt good about that. Whether it was going to be good enough to get a shot to go to the NFL, or whether it's me good enough to get a shot to play division one football. I didn't know, but I put everything I could into it.
- You know, I like to tell young people of all, whatever their dream is that to not let other people's opinion, especially people's opinion that don't matter. Whether it's people on social media, basically a lot of times people hiding behind screens or phones. Whether it's, quote unquote experts or you know, critics or scouts or whatever it is, don't let their opinion drive your motivation, drive your, you know, what really sets, you know, gets you going.
- You know, listening to people that are really important that actually do matter, that can speak truth into your life, that's more important than listening to the false narratives that can get out there and so much negativity that can weigh you down and whatever dream you might, you might have.
- Jon Gordon: [06:41](#) I love that. So let's fast forward now. You actually wrote a book recently. Can you talk about that book, the title, and why you wrote it?
- Case Keenum: [06:50](#) Yeah, I mean it's, it's pretty crazy. You know, obviously talking to a best selling author about my book it was a chance, you know, I had a few different people, some writers, agents, some publishing companies come up to me after our year in Minnesota. Played for Minnesota Vikings, two years ago, 2017 and had an incredible year. Finished going to the NFC Championship, getting defeated by the Philadelphia Eagles. But we won our divisional playoff rounds against the Saints on the play, the Minnesota miracle, the last second touchdown play that has never been done in a playoff game ever. A walk off touchdown to win the game. 60 plus yard pass to Stefon Diggs. Pretty amazing play that happened, an amazing game, and a lot

of cool things have happened from that. And one of them was having a chance to write a book.

Just basically our story cumulating around the idea of the Minnesota miracle play, and we titled it Playing For More. And it's just kind of my story, my wife's story, our story on an off the field of just how God has used us in eight different cities and on six different teams getting cut three times, undrafted, one scholarship offer out of high school. Just kind of being an underdog and just different lessons that I've learned. A lot of them from your books. Just different things that I've learned and put into my life and the way that I live my life, and the way that I operate, and the way that I work and the way that I live life. The way I love my wife, the way I chase after Christ. Really, basically why I do what I do. That's why we wrote it. That's why we do what we do. We really enjoyed the, kind of the feedback that we've gotten from it. It's been really cool to see what God's done in our life.

Jon Gordon: [08:43](#)

Yeah, it's an amazing book. And you recently gave a talk, I actually followed you the next day at the same event. There was an FCA event and everyone was raving about you and your wife and the talk you gave. It's an incredible story. And you said like why you do what you do. Case, tell us why do you do what you do?

Case Keenum: [09:00](#)

It really focuses around one thing and I can talk about a lot of the reasons why I play the game. I've been fortunate to be raised by incredible parents who give me great life lessons and so many different things to play for. But for me, I know where my ability has come from. My ability is not my own. It has been given to me by God, and my faith in Jesus Christ is the most important thing in my life. So I play not to give my name glory, not to have my name put out there and not to see my stats out there, but I play to give God glory. To let people know that my life is not to win football games. I do the very best I can with what I'm given, the abilities God's given me.

But at the end of the day, I want to point people to Jesus Christ because I know that he is my Savior. He's the most important thing in my life. He's the reason that I am where I am. And even if it weren't for him, I mean, there's no telling what or where I'd be. And that's what I want to point people to is that I play to give glory to God. Everything else that comes with it is just external.

Jon Gordon: [10:11](#) I know for me, where my book would be edited by publisher after publisher, it was hard to stay faithful and positive. So, how about you? I know you have this strong faith, but let's be honest, when you were undrafted and then getting cut by these various teams all the way to then the Minnesota miracle, where you see it all culminate. How hard was it to really stay faithful through those times or was it not hard?

Case Keenum: [10:36](#) It's very hard. And for me and my personality, you know, the way God made me, I'm a very analyzing person. I overanalyze. I hate to use the word perfectionist, but you know, part of me is wanting to perfect things. And I've had to learn that there's, it's more of a process than it is a final result. I've had to have so many people in my life that have encouraged me and challenged me and been there to really, like I said before, to tell me what's true and what's lies from the enemy. Worrying, being anxious, focusing on the negative things that I can think of, and sometimes in my mind, I'd get cut and in my mind I'd go down this trail of where I'd wind up, I'm living under a bridge, begging for money. And it's like, no, that's not, that's not the truth. That's just where the negativity in your mind is, you know, Satan is trying to breathe this thing into you.

And then so having people in my life, you know, obviously my faith very, very important. But you know, those things I think, and having the right people in my life to speak truth is so much more important in this. And this helps me get where I am and stay where am for sure.

Jon Gordon: [11:54](#) Yeah. How, how good the feeling was it that happened after the season you had in Minnesota?

Case Keenum: [12:01](#) It felt pretty good man. You know, there's, there's not too many seasons like that. I've played with a lot of people in NFL who have never even sniffed the playoffs. So to have a moment like that in the playoffs to go play in the NFC championship game, which wasn't our year that year to make it all the way to the Super Bowl. I mean Nick Foles and the Eagles were just unstoppable that year. But you know, the opportunity to do that, to win 13 games, to have a career year, it's pretty special. I know those don't come along very often. We definitely, we're very thankful for it.

Jon Gordon: [12:36](#) Yeah. Let's get practical for a second. I know this is going to help a lot of people that's why I'm going to ask it. You talked about the negativity that comes in. I know that so many younger people, or everyday people just go into work, deal with the

negative voices that come in. What's your strategy or how do you trigger the negative voices in order to move forward with a truth?

Case Keenum: [12:58](#)

You know, I'll steal a play right out of your playbook. You know, weeding and feeding man. I know that my mind goes negative in a lot of situations. And I have been in an opposing team's stadium where there's 80,000 people booing me or even my home stadium where they're chanting the backups name and trying to get me to get benched. A lot of negativity comes my way a lot of times. But for me, without letting those, man I'm stealing your thunder here, but letting those weeds grow, I tell myself what to think rather than listening to my mind and these lies that can, that can go.

I think that's very important is telling yourself positive thoughts. And really for me, telling myself truths, like, "Man, you've done this. You've been here before. You've been in so much work, so many different, situations. You've practiced for this. You've thrown a million balls in your life." All the positives that I can tell myself, that outweigh and that drowns out the negativity. So I think that's very, very important.

And like I said before, I can't stress enough having the right people around you that are going to breathe life into you, that know you, that know the ins and outs of your personality, that have been there through thick and thin, that aren't just a yes men. That don't just pump you up, but they can challenge you at the same time and they're going to speak truth into your life and they're going to know you when you need to be encouraged and built up or they're going to know you when "Hey, your head's getting a little too big. I need to bring you down a notch. My wife is so good at knowing me and knowing what I need. And that's one of the biggest proponents for me is just having the right people around you.

Jon Gordon: [12:58](#)

I love that. We all need encouragement. Where did you meet your wife by the way?

Case Keenum: [14:46](#)

You know, we grew up together. We're both from Abilene, Texas. I think we actually met at church when we were like grade school and doing Bible drill. And then went to different high schools in the same town. Reconnected later in high school and she was no longer Brandon's little sister. She was this cute girl from the other school that I really wanted to get to know. So yeah, I asked her to go get a snow cone with me, and it worked.

Jon Gordon: [15:25](#) A snow cone. I love that.

Case Keenum: [15:28](#) Yeah, man. That's the key.

Jon Gordon: [15:32](#) What are you excited about going forward in terms of, obviously, you left Minnesota. You're in Denver, right? I love your career by the way, because it's, I love your story more than anything because it is ups and downs. It's not perfect. You've had to overcome so much. You're such a great testimony and example of someone who others didn't believe could be there. You did. And then with your talent and your faith, you've achieved so much.

That's why I wanted to have you on here to visit us at Positive University and you have stayed positive throughout. As you now step into this new era, right, after Minneapolis, after Denver. You're now in Washington, right. What are you thinking about going forward?

Case Keenum: [16:11](#) You know, for me it's leaning on the same principles and the same lessons I've learned. For me, I can't just forget about those things. I have to reteach myself. I have to make sure that I get up each morning and I pour myself into the Word and I make sure that today's not about me. It's about how can I serve the Lord? How can I further his kingdom and make sure that I know my purpose and my goal and what's going on and what I need to do. Because, I'm pretty good about forgetting the lessons that I learned in the past and forgetting about what got me where I need to be.

Staying humble. Being thankful. I think making sure I'm thankful at everything, every situation I'm in. I know that there's a lot of tough situations that I've been in, but there's so many people that would kill to be in my situation. You know, even though it's tough and I'm going up against tough competition and another quarterback competition, for the right to be the starting quarterback of the Washington Redskins. But like I said, there's people that would, kill to be in my shoes.

Jon Gordon: [17:16](#) Yeah. Do you always feel like you have to prove yourself? That's something I had to do throughout my entire life, is always prove myself and I look back and I realize, well, that's what made me who I am today because nothing was ever given to me. Do you always feel like you have to prove yourself?

Case Keenum: [17:30](#) Yeah, and I don't even know if those are the right way to put it. I think I totally agree with you in that the fact that I wasn't a

highly recruited out of high school, the fact that I was undrafted, the fact that nothing has ever been handed to me, made me who I am for sure. No, but I know who I am. I don't have to prove myself to critics, to scouts, to anybody else out there except the people that matter.

You know, I try to be the same person every day. I compete in everything I do. I mean, I want to win no matter what. If I'm playing ping pong against my buddies or I'm playing Monday Night Football against the Chicago Bears, I'm going to give it everything I've got. You know? That part of proving myself, I guess that's, it's more of I know who I am and I'm confident in my abilities. I don't have to prove to myself. I'm going to do what I do and let other people think what they want to think. You know, especially those opinions that don't matter. I guess that's kind of more along the lines of how I view proven myself.

Jon Gordon: [18:32](#) Yeah, that's a great way to look at it. Love that. When you're having a bad outing, I'm just curious, or you're having a bad couple of weeks or bad couple of games. Do other quarterbacks around the league share encouragement with you? Do you guys encourage each other along the way?

Case Keenum: [18:48](#) Yeah, it's a fraternity. There's so many good players, and they're really good guys. There's nobody out there that I'm like, Oh, this guy, you know, and you get to know these guys and it's like a family. Getting to talk to them before games and and getting to talk to them in the off seasons and it's really become some of my best friends that, you know, they're the only other ones that have been in my shoes that know exactly what it feels like to absolutely get your head knocked in the dirt on second and four and then have to get up and call a play and on third and 10, with the game on the line, ready to go after that. So it's a fraternity and it's definitely, we all want everybody to do well. You know, I just, I want my best to be better than their best on the day we play them.

Jon Gordon: [19:37](#) Man, because everyone's competing, even though they're friends.

Case Keenum: [19:41](#) Yeah, exactly.

Jon Gordon: [19:42](#) Yeah. It's like playing against your brother in the backyard when you're playing hoops. Right? We always would compete, but you're still brothers at the same time.

Case Keenum: [19:49](#) No doubt.

Jon Gordon: [19:51](#) Speaking of that, you and Colt are friends, right? And you're on the same team. I was talking to Jos McCown. I had him on the podcast and he said it's always an interesting dynamic. As your friend, you're supporting each other, but you're still competing for the spot. And you know, that always makes an interesting dynamic, but it's a pretty cool dynamic that you've obviously been through many times. Can you speak to that and how you guys support each other?

Case Keenum: [20:17](#) Yeah. Yeah. I know different guys have different philosophies when it comes to, the competition on your own team. You know, I've heard of guys like not doing some very good things, but for me, like I said, I want my best. I want, I want my opponent or whoever I'm competing against to play their best. I want to play my best, but I want my best to be better than their best, if that makes sense.

Jon Gordon: [20:42](#) Yeah.

Case Keenum: [20:42](#) And so I want to help. I'm there to help everybody out. You know, I'm there to talk about different plays. Hey, how do you view this play? How do you see this? What are your footwork on this? What are you thinking when you see this? Because it's a craft. You know, playing quarterback, just like any job, anything it's a craft, and I want to continue to build my craft up and I want to learn my craft. I want to perfect my craft as, as much as I can. Helping other guys as part of the job. I mean, I'm where I'm at because of guys like Matt Schaub, Ryan Fitzpatrick, you know, older guys that have taught me things that I've learned from. You know, the Josh McCown and like you said, and just picking their brain and learning about them, you know, has been huge for my career. I always try to pass on information and help other guys as I can.

Jon Gordon: [21:32](#) Speaking of that, how do you keep getting better doing what you do? What are the keys to getting better?

Case Keenum: [21:38](#) You know, there's so many keys. My entire career, I guess those two words, you know, that can encompass what I try to do every single day is get better. Whether I'm practicing, whether I'm playing, I'm learning from my mistakes. I'm continuing to get better at the things I do well. I mean, I wake up with that on my mind. What can I do today to get better?

For me, there's the big focus, there's a small focus. You know, big focus? Okay, what do I want to get better at this off season? I'll watch my film from the previous year. All right. This year I

want to work better at throwing on the move, running around in the pocket, being accurate when I'm off platform. So this whole off season, every day I would work a certain specific drill on working off platform. Whether it was completely throwing on the run or just moving a little bit on the run. Then it's, not just the physical part of it, you know, the mental aspect of it. Working on learning the plays, studying my playbook. There's always things you can get better.

And for me, I've had to learn as well, not just working, but also taking the rest, the time off, you know, and being okay with resting and I'm going to get better by resting today. So whether it's a not working out or just doing like a little recovery type workout, I can get better by recovering as well. Giving my mind a mental break, and going on vacation with my family and getting at the lake on the boat, you know? So there's a lot of ways to get better, man. That's, that's what what life's about, I think.

Jon Gordon: [23:09](#) Yeah. And I know you're about helping others get better. So I want to bring it back to your book again real quick and say, what do you hope that it does for people? How, how do you want others to get better from your book?

Case Keenum: [23:21](#) You know, there's a lot of things in my book. I hope just one thing applies to one person. You know, like I told you earlier before we went on the air, I read Drew Bree's book the year before I tore my ACL. The name of his book was Coming Back Stronger and he had a huge injury in his career and he came back stronger, was a better player afterwards because of it. You know, I read that book right before I got hurt and I came back and was a better player after I was hurt. So having something like that, that applies to one person, just one little lesson that may be one chapter in there or one saying that somebody gets out of a high school or junior high or whoever college aged kid reads it, and learns and takes away, the book was a success and I'm pumped that we did it.

Jon Gordon: [24:08](#) I love that. So as you get ready for the training camp, ... Last couple of questions. As you get ready for training camp, what's your mindset going into a training camp and leaving like the old life behind, and now stepping into this new life again?

Case Keenum: [24:25](#) You know, my mindset is, I don't know if I have a one word picked out yet for this year. I kind of lean on a lot of words that I've used over the years. You know, there's really nothing new, I don't think that I've ... I mean there's always, there's something

new, but I feel like I've got experience in a lot of different situations. You know, for me, I'm just going to go be me. I can't be anybody else. I can't be, you know, I've learned a lot from these other quarterbacks, but I can't be a Tom Brady. I can't be an Aaron Rogers. I can't be a Fitzpatrick, Schaub, all these guys I've learned. I'm going to go be me. I'm going to be the best version of me and I'm going to be okay with how that winds up.

However the chips may fall, I always say I'm going to do the very best that I can today and I'm going to sleep really good tonight cause I worked my tail off today. I know I did everything I can to be the best version of myself today. And I'm going to do that each day and the days stack up and at the end of the year, I'm gonna be happy with, with the product I put out there because it's the best that I could've done. And I'm not going to have any regrets about that.

Jon Gordon: [25:30](#) That is awesome. Do you think you might coach in the future?

Case Keenum: [25:34](#) You know, I don't know. I've always thought about it. You know, with my dad being a coach, football is in my blood. I would say I do have a Master's slash PhD in offense, considering I've been in eight different systems and West Coast digits systems, all different types of offense. And it'd be a shame to let that go to waste after I'm done playing. But who knows, you know. I mean, who knows where God will point me and I'm excited to see where it'll be. But right now I'm going to enjoy playing the game that I love to play.

Jon Gordon: [26:12](#) Last question, Case, who is one of your heroes?

Case Keenum: [26:15](#) You know, every time I get asked this question, I try to think, and I always try to think of a new one, but I always come back to my dad. You know, I have an incredible father. He is my first coach. He taught me to throw the football when I was a kid. There's these lessons that are just continually repeating in my head as I've gone, left my home, gone out to the world and grown up and got married and I'm about to have my own son that I know I'm going to teach him the same lessons. So I would say my father. I mean he's, he's the best example of what my Heavenly Father is like. I think that is something that I strive for myself and I want to share that with my son, after he was born. But yeah, I'd have to say my father for sure.

Jon Gordon: [27:03](#) Well, when you said Heavenly Father I just had this image, and I just have to ask you this. When you do meet your Heavenly Father, when your time comes and your time on this earth ends,

what would you want God to say to you about your time here on earth? I know it's a deep question, but I just can't help it.

Case Keenum: [27:22](#) Yeah. You know, I think I want what everybody wants, "Well done." I want to have done the absolute best with what he's given me and I know all these things that we work for in this world and you know, homes, cars, a salary, providing for your family. You're not going to take any of those with you. The only thing you can take with you is other people. I want everybody there too. I want, "Well done." But I want to make sure that I've done the very best that I could with what He's giving me, what He's blessed me with.

Jon Gordon: [28:02](#) That's perfect. Case Keenum thank you so much. I rooted for you ever since we talked and became friends and saw you playing at the Texans, right as a backup, then got the starting job and then Minnesota was incredible. And then last year rooted for you and I'll be rooting for you now. I know so many people are as well. So just keep up [inaudible 00:28:23]. Just know that a lot of us are really [tripped 00:28:25] on.

Case Keenum: [28:28](#) Well, thanks John. I appreciate you having me on, man. It's been a pleasure.

Daniel Decker: [28:32](#) Thanks again for joining us for this episode of the Positive University Podcast. If you found value from it, please share it with a friend. You can post on social and be sure to tag at Jon Gordon 11. Make sure you also subscribe so you get notified each week as a new episode releases. You can subscribe, rate, and review in iTunes or wherever you listen. It would be extremely grateful for that as your reviews help encourage others to listen in. So until next time, stay positive and remember the best is yet to come.