

CHASING INFLUENCE

TEAMWORK: THE MARIGOLD EFFECT

"I'll do whatever it takes to win games, whether it's sitting on a bench waving a towel, handing a cup of water to a teammate, or hitting the game-winning shot." -Kobe Bryant

As a team member, you can choose to either be a marigold or a walnut tree. Marigolds are a gardener's best friend as they provide a first line of defense around a garden. Their strong aroma confuses pests and keeps diseases and unwanted weeds at bay. Planting marigolds near your garden will help your vegetables grow bigger and healthier. In contrast, walnut trees are attractive and produce bountiful nuts, but they come with a cost. These trees emit toxins into the soil that can poison plants and vegetables in the area up to 50 feet away, earning them the nickname of the "killer tree." Although walnut trees can be fruitful, they come at their surroundings' expense. Finding and surrounding yourself with marigolds can be beneficial, not only in garden ing but also in life and sports. It's crucial to identify people who act as marigolds in your life and make an effort to spend time with them, as they can support and help you grow. Whether you're having a tough day or need encouragement, being around marigolds can make all the difference. Equally as significant, ask yourself: Are you someone else's marigold? Are you someone who brings positivity, support, and encouragement to those around you? You can help others thrive and achieve success by being a positive influence. In doing so, we can create a commu nity of support and encouragement that helps us all reach our full potential. So, as a teammate, which one will you choose to be? Do you want to be like the marigold, which protects and nurtures its surroundings, or the walnut tree, which may produce but can also have negative consequences for its environment? It's up to you to decide!

"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime." -Babe Ruth

Connecting this quote to the story

Similar to how individual stars in a team need to work together to achieve success, a garden needs different plants to work together to thrive. This quote emphasizes the significance of working together as a team to achieve success, just as how different plants in a garden need to work together to thrive. All of us have marigolds in our lives. What qualities do the marigolds in your lives demon

Reflection Questions

1. All of us have marigolds in our lives. What qualities do the marigolds in your lives demonstrate?

2. What can walnut trees do to a team?

3. What human characteristics would you give marigolds? What traits would you give walnut trees?

4. Have you ever had a teammate who acted like a marigold? How did their presence benefit the team?

5. How can you be a better marigold to your teammates?