



Tiger's Reconstructed Image as Impressive as his Win

The transformation of Tiger Woods as a person seems as impressive as his winning his fifth Green Jacket. Yes, his comeback to win his first Master's title since 2005 and his first Major Title since 2008 is a phenomenal achievement given what he's had to overcome, physically, to get there. But the way he has matured and reconstructed his public persona during his comeback, is just as impressive.

Tiger was once broken, on and off the course. The fact that he's been able to rebuild his image, along with his golf game, all adds to the impact that this 'biggest comeback story in sports' will have on generations to come. Finally, his public image is befitting his incredible career accomplishments!

Whether it was a matter of maturing, hitting rock bottom and the awareness that may come from that, appreciating the results of his fourth back procedure that enabled him to play and compete again, the wisdom gained by becoming a parent or a combination of all the above, a more humble, compassionate, approachable, friendlier, more wise persona has evolved under the microscope.

Showing that he's a devoted father, more approachable to fellow competitors, the media and his fans; smiling; spending more time signing autographs; acting like a responsible adult; acknowledging again and again how fortunate he is that he's physically able to play and compete again, given the state of his ailments; these seemingly, no-brainer, ways of descent behavior, are a big part of anyone's legacy. And now when he talks, he'll have so much more positive impact!

When I asked Tiger after his incredible win on Sunday, based on the tremendous impact he has on so many, if he has any messages about his comeback and persevering, he again expressed his good fortune. "I was very fortunate to be given another chance to do something that I love to do. But more importantly, I've been able to participate in my kids' lives in a way that I couldn't for a number of years. And so they are a lot more active than I am, and I'm a little competitive myself, so I try and keep up. I tried to do that for a number of years and I just couldn't do it, but now I'm starting to do it and starting to be able to play with them and do things in their sports. That's something I always missed. I always felt like I could do pretty much anything physically but for a while there I just couldn't even walk. Now I'm able to play golf again and do it at an elite level again, which is something that I'm just very blessed to be able to have that opportunity again."

When my radio colleague Steve Futterman immediately followed up, asking Tiger what messages he might say to people who are struggling, Tiger replied: "Well, you never give up. That's a given. You always fight. Just giving up's never in the equation. Granted, pushing and being competitive has got me into this position, but it's also what got me out of it. And so I've always had a pretty good work ethic throughout my career and throughout my life and I just had to change the work ethic a bit and work on some different things. Focused on that and just keep fighting. That's just part of the deal. We wake up every morning and there's always challenges in front of us and keep fighting and keep getting through."

These are the messages that will most inspire and impact the world.

Congratulations to Tiger Woods on coming back on many fronts! Now the impact of his brilliant career can be fully embraced by all ages.

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