



I love the smell of college football in the air and Paul Finebaum blasting from my flat screen. Some people call it fall, but I call it football season as the golf season wanes into the Fed Ex Cup playoffs followed by the Ryder Cup. How does this fit into mindfulness and the alternative perspectives this column is known for, you may ask? There's a time and a season for everything and everybody, isn't there? Besides, the point of meditation or mindfulness is to find *you* in the everyday.

Do we not delude ourselves and waste time like Clemson fans thinking that two national championships in thirty-five years constitutes a dynasty comparable to Alabama when we post endless Facebook pics and announcements about the mundane? That's great you drank a gallon of kombucha before the rest of us got up, but are you attention deprived? Is it to show that you're busier, prettier, stronger, or more travelled than the next person? It's okay, no judgement here. Just answer the question in your head, check your motivations, and set your intentions for a better tomorrow.

Do we bog ourselves in constant debate with anyone who'll pick up the gauntlet? Is it pointless to wade into who's the greatest coach of all time in college football? Dunno, but ask yourself if you really care whether it's Nick Saban or Bear Bryant or if you just like to be snarky to bully the War Eagle fanbase? Besides, for a real hot button issue, is the NCAA an outdated, toothless organization that should allow student athletes compensation for the billions of dollars built on their backs? Given that, is Saban's 10+ million dollar salary really enough?

You know what, these delusions are okay to a certain extent as long as we're aware. Sports and sports talk can be an escape that we all need. I mean, most Ohio State fans deluded

themselves into thinking they played in a real conference before Clemson blanked them on New Year's Eve 2016. What a New Year's Day hangover that must have been for Buckeye Nation. (I'll not wade into the all too real and dangerous delusions going on in Buckeye Nation currently until we have all the facts. Assuming we ever get them...) Meanwhile the Buckeye's rivals up North are willing to go all the way to the Vatican or the beaches of Normandy to distract from the fact that they lost the last three years. Sure, Harbaugh taking his young men to Europe is a heck of a recruiting tool, but to what extent do you go to distract yourself from the business at hand, not to mention him being the most overpaid, overhyped coach of probably the last five years. Is it to recruit friends, co-workers, or mates into your life? Again, no judgement, we all do it, let's just be aware of it and question why you do what you do while making changes your future self will thank you for.

Perhaps I'm rambling, but that's what fans do right? (Recall that fan is short for fanatic.) After all, I'm a son of the South where college football is a religion. I'm told the best comparison to college football in the South is soccer in South America and Europe. Without a doubt, there are some Harvey Updikes and Adrian Briskeys out there that could be labeled extremists, if I were being kind, but at its heart, college football and sports as a whole are a belonging that we can all feel. We can have fun dressing in the same colors, tailgating, placing wagers, and feeling/sharing a bond like no other. What's wrong with that? Nothing at all; however, let's just make sure in this belonging that you're asking yourself what you are belonging to. How do you treat yourself and others that happen to be wearing the opposing colors? Is trash talk good-natured ribbing or does it degenerate into spitting, fighting, and "your mama's sooo big" jokes? Does your daddy's team give you goose bumps when you hear 2001 or do you spend your weekends drunk and watching Gameday because it's all you've ever known?

Can you live your life with certain delusions? Of course you can; just be sure they are properly placed. Ask the above questions and more of yourself often and always. But Suttty, I don't follow sports, you may say. Well, most of my peers would have no clue what I'm talking about in this article, so keep in mind college football is serving a dual purpose here of metaphor while providing a bridge to my woo-woo world as a holistic healthcare provider.

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