

Claire Keswick | Northwestern Basketball

Hi I'm Claire I'm on the women's basketball team at Northwestern University and I'm from the Boston area I think some of the best advice that I've been given from coaches are to control what you can control and Um those two things are like how hard you work and your attitude So I think I've always been really big on like no matter the outcome or the uncontrollables having a smile on my face and being a good teammate and having a good attitude or like the most important things you can do like my bread and butter In my training I focus on um rather than like really spreading myself thin over a lot of skills I focus on Being great at like one thing Or like a couple things So for me I'm a shooter so I work a lot on my shot and doing the same thing every time And then from there expanding a little bit more but I think it's really important to be confident in like what you're great at and I spent a lot of time on my shot I'm really big on hydration I always bring my water bottle everywhere with me And then I also focus on hitting my protein intake I love salmon like all my friends know I have it almost every meal but I definitely find those proteins and um things that people say that are good for you that I enjoy and then I try and include those every day And then also always have time for a sweet treat I think that's really important Um and then as goes recovery I spent a lot of time in hot and cold tubs doing contrast because it makes my body feel good and it's another way that I socialize with my teammates I'd say some challenges that I faced especially growing up was figuring out how to balance wanting to be great And getting all these opportunities playing at the college level while also Um like socializing having friends like being a normal kid and I think that took me a while to figure out cause you always worry about like burning out or doing too much But um for me I was able to kind of like make friends and socialize through basketball and then like do outside activities like hot yoga go for walks and lifting with other athletes from other sports and I think that kind of fostered A healthier relationship with a sport because sometimes you worry about doing too much or focusing too narrow on one thing and burning out So I think that was always a worry but my parents were really great with like having me do other things and I had a lot of friends that played different sports so I dipped my toe into other things too Yeah so my recruiting process started when I was pretty young And I didn't even I had college coaches asking me like what I wanted to major in and I was like I don't even know what position I want to be in college because I was like still

growing Um so that happened really early and then it picked up really fast and it was very overwhelming and I just knew like I think it came to like my sophomore winter sophomore spring and I was like I just want to commit I was really overwhelmed but then I waited a little bit longer And then I took some visits I visited Northwestern my junior fall and I got like emotional with my mom when I was here and I was like Mom I want to come here I got that feeling and then I committed on the spot which you're not supposed to do but I recommend it because I'm very happy here and yeah I chose Northwestern because I got a feeling that I hadn't gotten anywhere else As soon as I stepped on campus I knew like I could see myself being here but also I got to see like just looking outside like the fields the resources and then the people I met um and then obviously this level of education I can't ask for anything more So I think just considering all of that I knew that this was a place I wanted to come to and it was a place that I wanted to like make better by the time I left So when you're interacting with college coaches to be yourself Because if you find that someone doesn't want you like that is a blessing to know because you want to go somewhere where you're wanted and where like you have a good relationship so you don't wanna you don't want them to fall in love with the version of you that's not authentic to yourself so I'd say be yourself and then also when you're on the court to Um like not it's not all about just like how many points you score all your stats I'd say like who you are as a person on the court or on the field or whatever it is like how good of a teammate you are how you act when you're on the bench how you talk to your parents how you talk to your coaches That is also so important and coaches do look at that Yeah things like body language really influence the game because It's such an emotional sport and everything kind of holds so much value it feels like that um all the little things you do matter and like not just like how many points you put up but how you score Are you getting people involved because like when you're playing it's just so energetic You feel like the crowd you feel your team you feel your coaches and I think all that energy if it's positive it really contributes to something great Um so I'd say body language and just the way you do everything is like super important here I think that for my teammates um I've learned the importance of culture um and personal like work ethic and that like what you put into something is what you get out of that and not just at a skill level but As goes the team like how much you put into the team is how much you get out of it cause basketball is such a team sport and you can't get something done by trying to do it all for yourself So I think Um relying on your

teammates even though sometimes it's it sounds fun to try and do it all yourself but you really need help from other people So I think putting time effort and energy into your team your teammates and your relationships really shows on the court Yeah so during COVID I ran some basketball clinics with um with my sisters too in the local um like youth basketball community And it meant so much to me because I felt like I was kind of struggling not getting to I mean see all my teammates and all the people that I see from the basketball community and I understood that if I was feeling this way I couldn't even imagine what younger girls in the community were feeling So I wanted to like kind of share that and try and work towards like a greater goal And it just meant so much to me that in a time like where there wasn't really anything going on and it felt kind of dark that I was able to bring light to that and then I also hope that that experience of these younger girls having someone kind of show them the way and make sure that they were kind of continuing their lives that they maybe can carry that on to someone else if they're presented with a similar situation Here at Northwestern we have So many resources for um balancing um life on the core and in the classroom So I definitely take advantage of all of these resources Uh I have an amazing academic advisor that really helps me keep everything together um but I also use I like use an agenda I write all my commitments down And then just have like a person to talk to because sometimes when I'm thinking about practice film lift conditioning class homework project this all of these things that I have going on it's a little overwhelming So sometimes just talking it through with like a teammate or I call my mom like twice a day and tell her everything that I have to do and it makes me feel so much better I would say just to keep your head down and there's a lot going on Especially now in the digital era with um everything being posted online and I would say to just keep loving the game doing the things that you love with basketball like if it's doing a shooting workout with a friend or um we have our grandpa rebound for us and that was always so much fun Or playing um playing pickup like doing those things that make you love the game is ultimately what makes you get to this level and like keep enjoying it Um and I'd say like kind of stay off social media because everyone's posting their highlights there and it's important to understand that like There are ups and downs but sometimes when you're on social media you don't see everyone's downs So I'd say to not compare yourself to everyone else I think that building a really strong support system and a network is really important for um obviously you have to take care of your

business in the classroom take care of your business on the court But I think where a lot of people have trouble is when you're not treating your relationships with your coaches and your teammates like when you're not prioritizing those you can have trouble Um for me I had a great relationship with my AAU coach and she was such a strong female role model for me and I think Listening to everything she had to say and taking her feedback and kind of just trusting the process from someone that's been there before If you can find that sort of mentor like I'm so lucky I still like text and call her all the time and continue to ask for advice but I'd say finding a mentor whether it's a coach or maybe even like a college athlete that you can Kind of just receive reassurance that you're doing the right things and to trust the process Hi I'm Claire Keswick I'm on the women's basketball team at Northwestern University and you can check me out at Next Level Prep