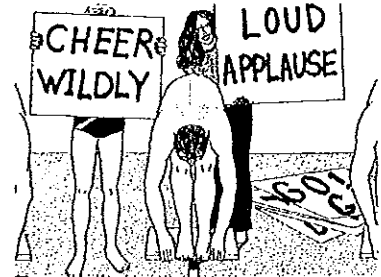


15. **Act As If** – If you – want to become a winner, first you have to learn to act like one. Acting as if is the master strategy of champions. If you act the way you want to become, you'll become the way you act. Show your opponent someone who on the outside looks in control!

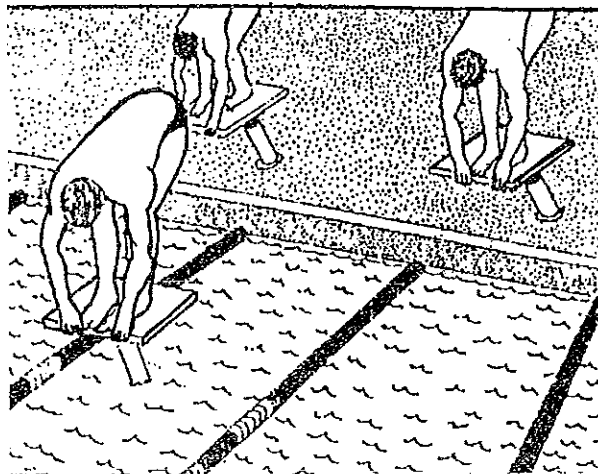
16. **Learn To Be Your Own Best Fan** – Champions separate themselves from everyone else because they've learned to be supportive to themselves when things are going badly. Learn to be your own best fan. Someone who is here to share the success and help you through the tough times.



17. **You Are Not Your Races** – Learn to separate who you are as an athlete and person from how you do in your meets. You are not the result of your races. A swim meet should never be viewed as a measure of self-worth and respectability.

18. **Learn To Relax** – You can learn to stay composed under pressure by practicing one or two of the many relaxation techniques available to swimmers. Probably one of the best is to learn to slow and deepen your breath. By taking a few slow diaphragmatic breaths you can very quickly calm yourself down pre-race.

All of the extra work and
training you do between
now and your big meet will
give **YOU** the advantage
over your competition



Top Ten Mental Toughness Tips

By Dr. Alan Goldberg

1. **STAY CALM AND LOOSE PRE-RACE** – Tight muscles wreck your stroke mechanics and kill your endurance. Listen to relaxing music, tal with friends, keep yourself distracted, keep your breathing slow and deep and have fun pre-race.
2. **LEAVE YOUR GOALS AT HOME ON RACE DAY** – They should NEVER be brought on deck with you on race day. Swimmers who think about or dwell on their goals make themselves too nervous and physically tight. You don't have to think about your goal times at meets order to reach them.
3. **STAY IN YOUR OWN LANE** – Keep you focus of concentration in between your two lane lines. The more you concentrate on what you are doing, the more relaxed you'll stay the faster you'll go and actually beating the competition.
4. **STAY IN THE "NOW" BEFORE AND DURING YOUR RACES** – When you mentally leave the now and jump ahead to the future or fall back to the past, you'll make yourself uptight and sabotage all of your hard work. Focus in the "now" both before and especially during your races.
5. **BE AWARE WHENEVERY YOUR CONCTRATION DRIFTS AND IMMEDIATELY BRING IT BACK** – Discipline yourself to recognize the instant your concentration leaves what YOU are doing in the NOW and quickly bring yourself back.
6. **KEEP YOUR RACE FOCUS ON FEEL, NOT ON THOUGHTS** – Swimming fast happens when you are focusing on the feel of what you are doing without thinking about it. Focus on feel when you race and when thoughts intrude, quickly return your concentration back to the feel of what you're doing.
7. **HAVE FUN** – If you want to have the meet of your life, then you have to understand that this can only happen when you are having fun. Fun = speed When you're having fun, you're mentally and physically loose and relaxed and loose is the secret to swimming fast under pressure.
8. **FOCUS ONLY ON THINGS THAT YOU CAN CONTROL** – You have no direct control over how fast your competition swims, what kind of pool you're competing in, who's in your heat or the time you went in your last race or meet. When you focus on these "uncontrollable" you'll get nervous and physically tight, lose your confidence and swim poorly.
9. **KNOW THAT LAST MINUTE DOUBTS AND NEGATIVE THOUGHT ARE NORMAL** – Know that you can still swim your best with this negative thinking going on just as long as you stay calm. Try not to fight with the negative thoughts, replace them with positive one, or work to keep them out of your mind.
10. **TRUST AND LET IT HAPPEN** – You'll always swim your very best when you relax, trust your training and let the fast swim come out.

50 Ways to Cope With Stress



1. Get up 15 minutes earlier
2. Prepare for the morning the night before
3. Don't rely on memory...write it down
4. Make duplicate keys
5. Say "No" more often
6. Set priorities in your life
7. Avoid negative people
8. Use your time wisely
9. Always make copies of important papers
10. Anticipate your needs
11. Look at problems as challenges
12. Unclutter your life
13. Don't know all the answers
14. Look for the silver lining
15. Say something nice to someone
16. Schedule play time into every day
17. Believe in yourself
18. Stop saying negative things to yourself
19. Visualize yourself winning
20. Develop your sense of humor
21. Avoid garbage food and thoughts
22. Pray
23. Stop thinking tomorrow will be a better day
24. Have goals for yourself
25. Say hello to a stranger
26. Ask a friend for a hug
27. Look up at the stars
28. Exercise every day
29. Ask questions if you don't understand
30. Admire a piece of art
31. Practice breathing slowly
32. Read a story curled up in bed
33. Find support from others
34. Stop a bad habit
35. Strive for excellence not for perfection
36. Stand up and stretch
37. Always have a plan "B"
38. Be responsible for your feelings
39. Learn to meet your own needs
40. Do your homework early
41. Keep a journal, write down your feelings
42. Become a better listener
43. Get to work early
44. Take a different route to work
45. Remember that stress is an attitude
46. Remember you always have options
47. Have a support network of people, places and things
48. Get enough sleep
49. Talk less and listen more
50. Relax, take each day "one day at a time"...you have the rest of your life to live.



Using Failure to Build A Better Future

One fact of life that we all have to learn to deal with is failure – things will not always turn out the way we had hoped for. Test scores will not be as high as you had hope, you will not get the job or date that you had planned on, you will be told now when you hoped for a yes, etc. Learning how to cope with these disappointments will make your life easier. The following suggestions may seem simple, yet **THEY WORK**; learn to use them

1. **Let it hurt** – then use that feeling of pain and disappointment to drive you on.
2. **Analyze why you didn't succeed** – Sometimes you deserved what you wanted, and it just didn't happen. Things are not always fair in life, you just have to accept them and move on.
3. **Get up and go back to work** – The biggest emotional high of all is success after repeated failure.

The Value of Time

Imagine there is a bank the deposits \$86,400 into your account each morning. At the end of the day, it takes away whatever money you have failed to spend.

What would you do? Spend every penny, every day!!!

Each of us has such a bank. It's name is **TIME**. Every morning, it gives you 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever amount you have failed to invest to a good purpose. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the remainder of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposit, the loss is yours. There is no going back.

There is no borrowing against the next day. You must live in the present on today's deposit. Invest it so as to get the utmost in health, happiness and success!

The clock is running. Make the most of today.

- To realize the value of **ONE YEAR**, ask a student who has failed a grade.
- To realize the value of **ONE MONTH**, ask a mother who gave birth to a pre-mature baby.
- To realize the value of **ONE HOUR**, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.
- To realize the value of **ONE MINUTE**, ask a person who just missed the train.
- To realize the value of **ONE SECOND**, ask a person who just avoided an accident.
- To realize the value of **ONE MILLISECOND**, ask an Olympic Silver medalist.

BUILD A BULLETPROOF BRAIN AND SWIM LIKE SUPERMAN

By Wayne Goldsmith

Would you like to be so mentally tough that you go to swim meets overflowing with courage, calm, confidence and composure – as opposed to feeling weak, wimpy and wishing you could be somewhere else?

Here are three “Mental Toughness Tips” that will help:



MENTAL TOUGHNESS TIP # 1

You have to make training (physical and mental) more challenging and more demanding than the competition for which you are preparing.

Think of it this way:

Imagine that swim meets have a “ranking between 1 and 10, where a ranking of 1 is a swim-for-fun meet at your own club just for prizes and laughs, and a ranking of 10 is the Olympic final.

If you are preparing for a local school meet, let's say with a ranking of 4 out of 10, then your preparation needs to be set at a level of 5 or 6 out of 10.

If you are preparing for the state championship with a ranking of 6 out of 10, make sure your preparation is at a level of 7 or 8 out of 10.

Unfortunately, many swimmers prepare for a “Level 4” meet by training at a level of 2 or 3, and then hope that everything will work out when they get to the competition pool. Clearly, hope is not a recommended strategy for success.

By always preparing to a *level higher* than the meet for which you are preparing, you can race with the *confidence* that there is nothing the meet can throw at you that you can't beat: no obstacles you will have to face that can stop you, no challenge that will be too great for you to defeat.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS TIP # 2

You have to out-prepare – in every aspect – every swimmer whom you will be facing in competition.

This means not just *training* harder, smarter, more consistently and faster in the pool than your opposition. This means *every aspect of your preparation* must be better than that of *every swimmer against whom you will race.*

- You have to eat better than your competition.
- You have to get more – and better quality – sleep than your competition.
- You have to work hard than your completion.
- You have to take care of injuries more effectively than your competition.
- You have to manage your time, your work, your study and rest better than your competition.

Imagine for a moment that you are preparing to race an outstanding swimmer at your next meet. Imagine yourself looking at the swimmers getting ready to swim, and there in Lane 4 is Michael Phelps, standing and smiling back you...or Jessica Hardy...or Kate Ziegler.. or Ryan Lochte!

Now there is nothing you can do to control their talent, their skill, their training or their abilities. All the things that they own are outside of your control – that is part of who they are...so, *forget about them!*

What you can control is every aspect of your own preparation.

- ❖ You can control what you eat
- ❖ You can control when you go to bed and how well you sleep.
- ❖ You can control how much effort, how much focus, how much concentration you give to your pool and dryland workouts.

And if you *know* that you have consistently “out-eaten,” “out-slept,” “out-recovered,” “out-trained” your competition, you can go to the meet with the confidence you can perform at your best in every situation, every race, every time.

Think of it another way:

If you were racing Phelps or Hardy or Ziegler or Lochte – with all their talent and ability – and...they had also eaten better than you, slept better than you, recovered better than you and trained better than you..well *you have no hope whatsoever of beating them!*

By controlling the “controllables” – that is, by controlling all the things that you can control – you can always compete to your full potential, and you are giving yourself the best possible opportunity for success.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS TIP #3

You have to do the first two tips every day – in everything you do – in and out of the water.

Want to know the secret to being mentally tough?

The secret to being mentally tough is not to have to be mentally tough!

Most people think being mentally tough is fighting hard to overcome tough situations. Others believe being mentally tough is staying strong in the face of adversity. Some people think being mentally tough is never showing pain and never succumbing to pressure.

But the real secret to being mentally tough is not to have to be mentally tough.

Talking tough, walking tough, yelling team war-cries, painting your face, listening to motivational speakers, getting tattoos, screaming out heavy-metal rock tunes – all of these things are great fun, but *none of them are real and none make you really mentally tough.*

- ❖ *Real* mental toughness comes from one thing: **preparation.**
- ❖ *Real* mental toughness comes from one person; **you.**
- ❖ *Real* mental toughness is based on **confidence**...confidence that comes from **knowing**...*knowing* that you have done everything within your power to prepare to be the *best of your ability every day!*

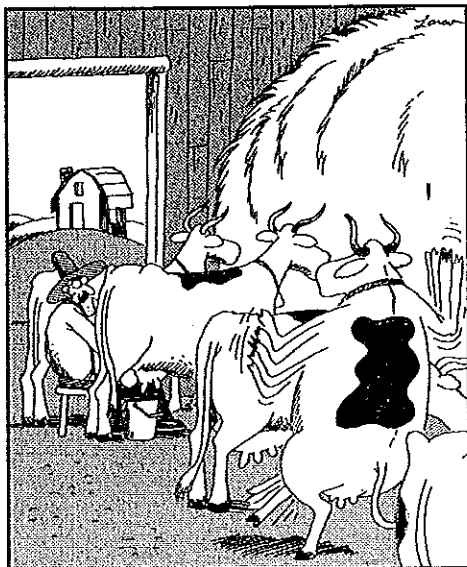
SUMMARY

1. Building a bulletproof **body** is a matter of training hard every day, making sure your practice sessions are always challenging and demanding and above all, consistently training to your full potential
2. Building a bulletproof **brain** is the same; prepare your mind to face new challenges every day, learn to overcome demanding and difficult situations in practice and consistently engage your mind to its full capacity in everything you do.
3. Being bulletproof in competition comes from **confidence** and confidence comes from **knowing** that every day you have challenged both your body and your mind to a level even more challenging and more demanding than any competition could ever be.

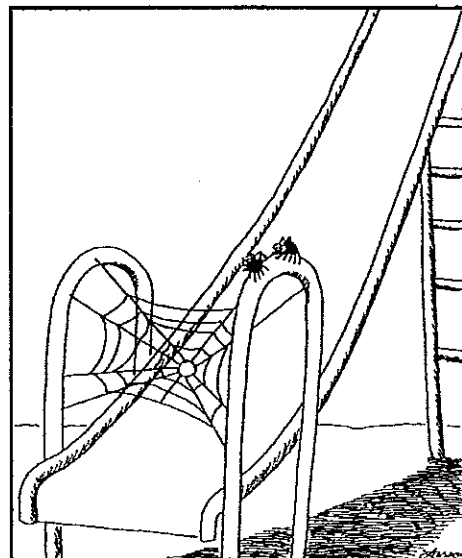
The Optimist Creed

I Promise To:

- ❖ Be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- ❖ Talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- ❖ Make all of your friends feel that there is something worthwhile in them.
- ❖ To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- ❖ To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best.
- ❖ Be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.
- ❖ Forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
- ❖ Wear cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile
- ❖ Give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have time to criticize others
- ❖ Be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.



"Hey! I'm coming, I'm coming—just cross your legs and wait!"



"If we pull this off, we'll eat like kings."

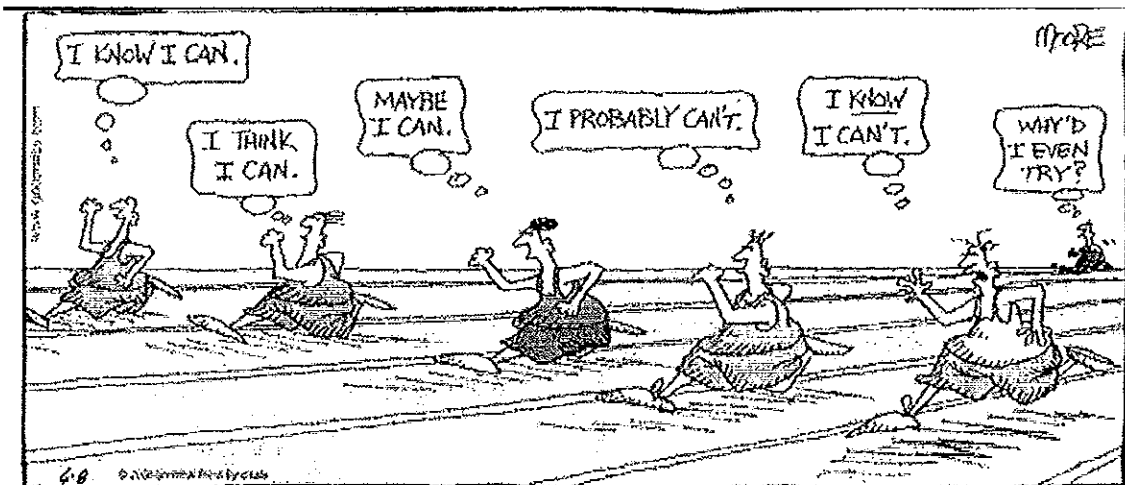
"I Can"

Figure it out for yourself my lad
 You've got all that the greatest men have had
 Two arms, two hands, two legs, two eyes
 And a brain to use if you would be wise
 And with they equipment they all began
 So start for the top and say, "I can!"

Look them over, the wise and the great
 They take their food from a common late
 And similar knives and forks they use
 And similar laces they tie their shoes
 The world considers them brave and smart
 But you've got all they had when they made their start

You are the handicap you must face
 You're the one who must choose your place
 You must say where you want to go
 How much you will study the truth to know
 God has equipped you for life, but He
 Lets you decide what you want to be

Courage must come from the soul within
 The man must furnish the will to win
 So figure it out for yourself my lad
 You were born with all the great have had
 With your equipment, they all began
 Get hold of yourself and say, "I can."



Are You a Winner or a Loser?

By: Sidney Harris

A winner says "Let's find out:"

A loser says, "Nobody knows."

When a winner makes a mistake they say, "I was wrong;"

When a loser makes a mistake he says, "It wasn't my fault."

A winner knows how and when to say "Yes" and "No;"

A loser says, "Yes, but," and "Perhaps not" at the wrong times for the wrong reasons.

A winner isn't afraid of losing.

A loser is secretly afraid of winning.

A winner works harder than a loser and has more time;

A loser is always "too busy" to do what is necessary.

A winner makes commitments;

A loser makes promises.

A winner shows they are sorry by making up for it:

A loser says, "I'm sorry," but does the same thing the next time.

A winner says, "I'm good, but not as good as I ought to be;"

A loser says, "I'm not as bad as a lot of other people."

A winner listens;

A loser just waits until it's their turn to talk.

A winner would rather be admired than liked, although he would prefer both:

A loser would rather be liked than admired and is even willing to pay the price of mild contempt for it.

A winner respects those who are superior to him and tries to learn something from them;

A loser resents those who are superior to them and tries to find chinks in their armor.

A winner feels strongly enough to be gentle:

A loser is never gentle – they are either weak or pettily tyrannous by turns.

A winner explains;

A loser explains away.

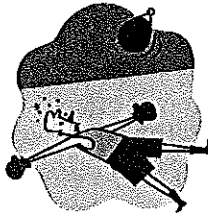
A winner says, "There ought to be a better way to do it;"

A loser says, "That's the way it's always been done."

A winner paces themselves;

A loser has only two speeds – hysterical and lethargic.

50 Self-Defeating Behaviors



Your behavior at practice is a choice. To become a better swimmer, you have to make the right choices. Go through this list and identify the ones that apply to you, and then select one to eliminate each week. By the time the championships roll around, you will not defeat yourself.

1. You keep forgetting your equipment (including your water bottle.)
2. You choose to hang out with people who have different values from the ones you know you need to have in order to be the best swimmer you can be.
3. You don't pay attention, when your coach is explaining the practice, so you don't know what to do when practice starts.
4. You come to practice exactly on time, not early.
5. You only try your best on the last repeat of every set.
6. You goof around in dry land conditioning.
7. You don't swim your sets in practice the way your coach wants you to. For example, if your coach says breathe every three strokes, you breathe every two; or if the coach says descend each 100, you swim them all at the same speed.
8. You float into your turns during practice.
9. You swim fast on the sets you find easy and not the sets you find hard.
10. You're constantly comparing yourself to the other swimmers on the team.
11. You swim the same events, afraid to try new ones.
12. You have problem that you know is hurting your swimming, but won't take to your coach about it.
13. You set unrealistic goals for yourself.
14. You stop in the middle of tough sets
15. You act like you know how to figure your average on a set when you really don't
16. You don't take care of your goggles, and because you don't; they are always lost or broken.
17. You believe you – and you alone- are responsible for you swimming success.
18. You keep an injury a secret.
19. You're closed-minded about new ideas.
20. You fail to keep your grades up in school
21. You race hard in races you like, but not others.
22. You hang out with the troublemakers in practice.
23. You always swim second in your lane even though you know you're fast enough to swim first.
24. You're always the last one into the pool for practice.
25. You always have an excuse for a bad swim...and it's never your fault.
26. You try talking your teammates into slacking off in practice because you don't feel like working hard

