

Live in Awe

YOU CAN NEVER STEP INTO THE SAME RIVER TWICE. Like that river your past is gone and the future is promised to no one. *All you have is now.*

Jim Valvano amassed an impressive career as a basketball coach and T.V. commentator. In 1983, his North Carolina State beat a heavily favored Houston team to win the NCAA Championship at the University of Utah. But when he was awarded the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage in 1993, it had nothing to do with basketball. He ended his acceptance speech with these words:

"I urge all of you to enjoy your life. Every precious moment you have on this earth. Spend each day with some laughter. Don't be afraid to feel...to get your emotions going. Be enthusiastic, because nothing great can be accomplished without enthusiasm. Live your dreams."

Jim Valvano lived with passion and loved his life...he lived in awe.

He Never Gave Up

Late one afternoon a skinny young man dashed down the steps at his school to check out the bulletin board by the gym. His heart was pounding as he saw the list that would tell if he had realized his dream of making the high school basketball team. He read it again and again, each time with the same result – his name was not there. He had failed. That day, that moment, would change his life.

For the next year, regardless of the weather, he practiced four to six hours every day in a park about a mile from his home. Many nights he was alone under the moonlight, practicing every move, every shot that he needed to make the team the following year.

The ending is a happy one. He did make the team – and Michael Jordan, on the heels of failure, went on to become the greatest basketball player of all time.

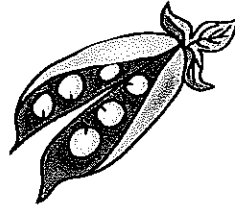


What is the lesson to be learned from the Michael Jordan story? It is this...your success or failure in life will not be decided by the number of setbacks you encounter, but rather how you react to them. Jordan had a choice. He could take his defeat personally, blame the coach, and throw in the towel; or he could do what he did – keep working and keep trying. Would Jordan ever have achieved greatness had he not fought back from failure? My guess is not. I believe with all my heart that, "Whatever doesn't kill us, makes us stronger." If you choose a positive approach in difficult times, you can take control of your life.

The Garden of Life

First, plant five rows of P's

Presence
 Promptness
 Preparation
 Perseverance
 Purity



Next, Plant three rows of squash

Squash gossip
 Squash indifference
 Squash unjust criticism



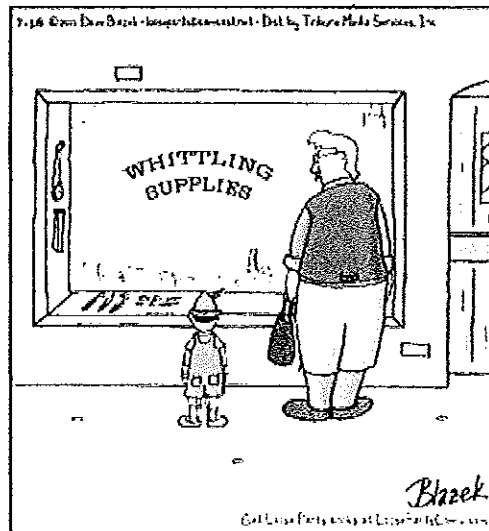
Then plan five rows of lettuce

Let us be faithful to duty
 Let us be unselfish and loyal
 Let us obey the rules and regulations
 Let us be true to our obligations and
 Let us love one another



No garden is complete without turnips

Turn up for meets
 Turn up with a smile
 Turn up with determination to make
 everything counts for something good
 and worthwhile



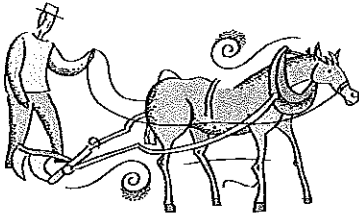
An extra moment of lingering was all it took to reinforce Gepetto's unique form of discipline.

Three Swimmers

How would you compare to these three swimmers (good, very good and great) when you come to practice?

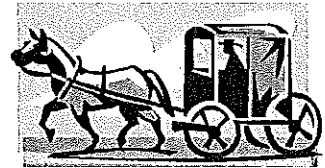
Practice Activity	Good Swimmer	Very Good	Great Swimmer
Warm up easy – Free	Swim slow easy Free	Swim slow easy Free, making sure not to breathe inside the flags and to streamline off ever turn	Swim slow easy Free, making sure not to breathe inside the flags and to streamline off ever turn, not breathing on the first or last stroke and trying to swim each lap with one less stroke than the one before
Drill: 6 X 50 on 1:30	Do the drill	Do the drill correctly	Do the drill correctly, aiming to do the minimum number of pulls and kicks each lap, developing great distance per stroke and trying to hold an exact pace
Kick 10 X 50 on 1:15	Do the kick set	Do the kick set fast and hard with strong powerful kicks	Do the kick set fast and hard with strong powerful kicks, trying to kick each 50 as close as possible to their PB
16 X 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds	Do the 16 X 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds	Do the 16 X 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds trying to streamline out of each turn	Do the 16 X 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds trying to streamline out of each turn, experimenting with pacing strategies like negative splitting
Swim down 6 X 100 IM	Swim down 600 yards	Swim down 600 yards aiming to do good turns	Swim do 600 yards aiming to do good turns and practicing to improve in any areas of weakness in the worst stroke

You Never Know



His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surrounding. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."



"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family home.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me provide him with the level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of." And that he did.



Farmer Fleming's son attended the very best schools and in time, he graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the same nobleman's son who was saved from the bog was stricken with pneumonia. What saved his life this time? Penicillin

The name of the nobleman - Lord Randolph Churchill

His son's name - Sir Winston Churchill

How High

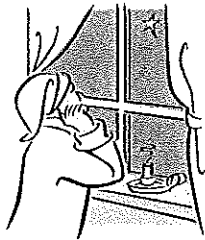
How high I aim, how much I see
How far I reach, depends on me

If you can imagine it, you can achieve it
If you can dream it' you can become it



Stick to the fight when you're hardest hit
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit

Think freely, feel deeply, and reach for the sky
You have failed only when you have failed to try



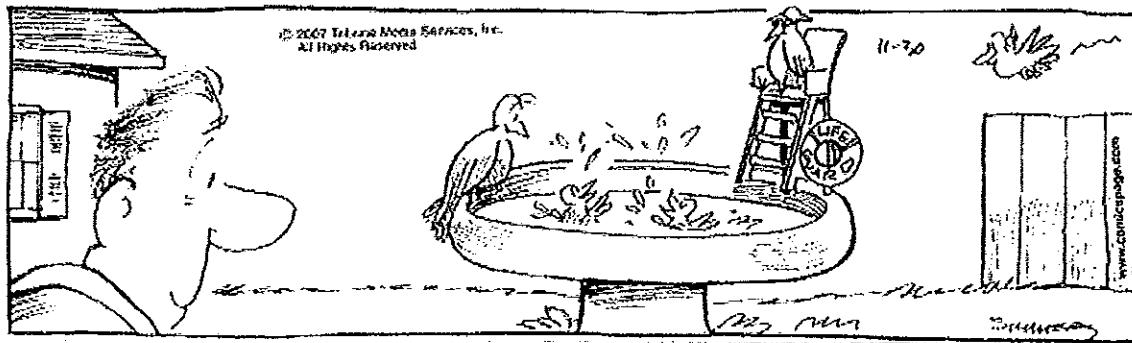
Welcome love, dream dreams, and wish upon a star
The best part of you is who you really are

When you reach for your dreams,
No matter what they may be

You grow from the reaching,
You learn from the trying and
You win from the doing

You wonder how they do it and look to see the knack
You watch the foot in action or the shoulder or the back

But when you spot the answer, where the higher glamour's lurk
You'll find in moving higher up the laurel cover spire
Than the most of it is practice and the rest is work



Overcoming Limitations (Sport-Imposed and Self-imposed)

The key to using the greatness which *does* exist within you is to remove barriers that you or others – knowingly or unknowingly – have placed in your way on the road to excellence. The first step in removing these limitations is indentifying them. Once identified, their validity can be determined and action plans implemented to overcome them.

Follow the steps outlined here and you will be on your way toward the elimination of limitations.

Using a separate sheet of paper

1. Write down the limitation.
2. Is this limitation sport-imposed? (Does it come from someone other than you?) If yes, then write the name (or names) of the person(s).
3. Is it self-imposed
4. Whether it is #2 or #3, can you identify when (the actual day or close to it) you first heard or became aware of it?
5. Was it valid then?
6. Is it valid today? If it isn't, congratulations! You can now dismiss it every time you hear it – either from others or from yourself.
7. If it is still valid today, do you want to remove it? Hopefully the answer to this is a loud YES?
8. What plan of action (what goal or goals) will eliminate this limitation? Write down your plan of action and put it someplace where you will see it every day.
9. Will you co9mmit to this plan of action?
10. Perhaps the most important question of all...when will you commit?

The priest was preparing a man for his long day's journey into night.

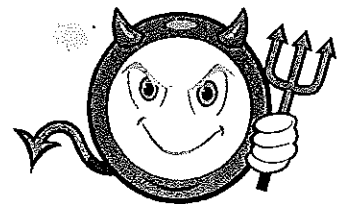
Whispering firmly, the priest said, "Denounce the devil! Let him know how little you think of his evil."

The dying man said nothing.

The priest repeated his advice. Still the dying man said nothing.

The priest asked, "Why do you refuse to denounce the devil and his evil?"

The dying man said, "Until I know where I'm heading, I don't think I ought to aggravate anybody."



You Are ...

You are a swimmer and one of the greatest athletes in the world.

Who else practices twice a day, getting up while it's still dark outside? Tennis players? Baseball players? Football players? No usually. No one is as tough as you – the swimmer. You are one of the greatest athletes in the world.

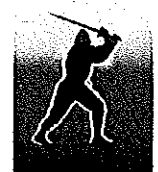
Once the horn starts and the race begins, there are no time outs. Can you picture a swimmer about 85 yards into the 100 fly, stopping, standing on the bottom, making a "T" with his hands and telling the stroke judge they need a time out because the race isn't going according to plan and they need to have a strategy session with their coach?



Neither are there substitutions: "Well, I swam fly and back and now by designated swimmer will come in to swim the breast and free." There is not going back into a huddle every 30 seconds to catch your breath; there is not R & R time while a teammate shoots foul shots; there is no standing out in right field watching the grass grow.

When that horn sounds, whether for a 500 or a 50, you must be ready to carry the load, to do the job, to meet the challenge, to race, to hurt, to risk, and ultimately to stand accountable.

A swimmer is a peculiar breed, at war with the clock, pain, and doubts in their own mind. A pool is filled with swimmers, but the real competitor is the water, clock, chlorine, and pain.



The champion has the talent and competitive drive to punish their body to beat the clock. They swim through pain barriers, legs numb, shoulders aching, lungs gasping, their mind reduced to instinctive commands through hours and hours of training. Only a swimmer knows the joy on-on-hundred of a second improvement brings. Each stroke must provide maximum power and minimum resistance. Each turn must be time to split-second perfection.

The champion is at war with their mind. Doubts and fears must be eliminated. The adrenalin must be channeled into positive thinking and mechanical perfection. No thought of fear or succumbing to pain can be permitted. Hours of training must be forgotten. Technique, power and endurance must be put together in one tremendous effort. When one defeats their adversaries, they also defeat their own doubts and fears; then one becomes a true champion in the minds of all.

All America loves a winner, but there should be no stigma attached to losing when one has given their best. Being number one is the dream of most athletes. Yet another kind of winner, perhaps dearer to a coach's heart than all the number ones put together, is the athlete who works as hard as number one but never quite makes it to the pinnacle of success. They may never know the acclamation of a champion, but maybe that is why a coach loves them the most. They are always trying and striving, but never quite making it, determined, human and forever humble

Pride

It is easy to quite if you have no pride. If you are proud of yourself and what you do and what you have accomplished, this is one article that needs very little explanation to you.

Pride is something that has to be developed. The better individual that you are, the harder you work, the greater your sacrifices, the more pride you will have.

Some people may say that having pride is a bad thing. Too much of it used in the wrong way or as a show of power is bad. Using it to build your self-esteem, or setting a good example for others to follow and making those with whom you come in contact with feel better is not necessarily bad. After all aren't we all proud to be an American?



Are you proud of yourself? If not, why not? Eliminate the negative elements of your life and push toward the positive, toward a goal. Strive to become the best person, the best student, the best swimmer you can become.

You won't gain any pride by a half-hearted performance. The level of your pride is therefore, directly proportional to the extent of your effort.

There never was a great athlete who was also a good loser. A good sport, yes; but not a good loser. Good losers lose often: maybe that's why they're good at it.

When two swimmers have:
 Equal natural ability,
 Equal preparation,
 Equal conditioning,
 Equal concentration and
 Equal reaction to pressure
 Who will have the edge?
 Who will win?

The answer is simple – the swimmer with competitive greatness – the swimmer who is at their very best is needed – the swimmer who loves a hard battle – the swimmer who refuses to lose – the swimmer who has the most pride.

No matter what happens to you - never let them take away your pride.