

Newsletter

AT PINNACLE, BUT DON'T CALL HER A PIONEER

[BY PAT BORZI]

THE NEW YORK TIMES

McKeever, the first woman to be named head coach of the United States Olympic women's swim team, cannot explain how she developed this skill.

"Maybe that's my gift," she said. "That's been my role on teams I've been involved in. Maybe it came naturally."

If so, it is one of the few things in McKeever's life that did.

From the little girl thrust into adulthood after the death of her father, to the gawky teenager with glasses and braces who found confidence in the water, to the coach who built Cal into a national power while her peers and even her own swimmers questioned her credentials, McKeever has struggled for acceptance. She married late, at 45, because she threw all her energy into succeeding as a coach.

"I married my job," said McKeever, 50, at a recent Olympic swimming trials in Omaha. "I blew the kid thing. But I don't think it was conscious. I just had such a competitive desire that I wanted to be good at this."

Now, there is little doubt she is. McKeever specializes in repairing broken psyches and pushing her swimmers to excellence in and out of the water.

She made her reputation in Berkely nurturing a burned-out Natalie Coughlin into an 11-time Olympic medalist. More recently, McKeever helped the 2004 Olympian Dana Vollmer recover her confidence after a disastrous 2008 trials in which she failed to make the team. At this year's trials, Vollmer won the 100-meter butterfly and qualified for the 4x200 freestyle relay.

"She is my coach; she is my mentor; she is my second mom," Vollmer said. "It's such an empowering experience to have someone who cares so

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American Swimming Coaches Association
5101 NW 21st Avenue, Suite 200
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
954.563.4930 | Toll Free 1.800.356.2722 | Fax 954.563.9813
swimmingcoach.org | asca@swimmingcoach.org

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“FOR ME,
SPORTS WAS
THE FIRST
PLACE I FELT
GOOD ABOUT
MYSELF...”

much about me and my personal development and how I swim.”

Anthony Ervin, headed to London in the 50 freestyle, credited McKeever with gently nudging him back into competing after an eight-year retirement. Ervin, a former Cal swimmer, trained with the Cal women’s team late last year.

“She inherited a very fragile mentally kind of persona,” Ervin said, “and she brought back what it was like to swim for fun and enjoy myself.”

In a way, McKeever has been mentoring her whole life. She often says she has been 40 years old since she was 10 or 12. Her father, the U.S.C. football star Mike McKeever, spent 22 months in a coma after an accident and died in 1967, when Teri was 6, the oldest of three children at the time.

Her mother Judy, formerly a competitive swimmer, remarried and had seven more children. In the family dynamic, McKeever often functioned as another parent, from changing diapers to, as a 16-year-old, driving her younger siblings on shopping trips. By then McKeever excelled as a swimmer, training in their 25-yard backyard pool (later rebuilt to 50 meters) with her mother writing out workouts and often watching from a window.

“For me, sports was the first place I felt good about myself,” McKeever said.

She went on to become the first female student body president at San Pascual High School in Escondido, Calif., and an all-American swimmer at U.S.C. McKeever graduated in 1983 with an education degree,

intending to teach, but she stayed at U.S.C. as assistant coach for the women’s team from 1984-87 while earning her masters in athletic administration.

“In those days, she was trying to find if this was the occupation she wanted to have,” said Dave Salo, now the U.S.C. swimming coach, who was a graduate assistant for the men when McKeever was on the women’s coaching staff. Fresno State hired McKeever as head coach in 1987. Five years later McKeever moved on to Cal, where she fought the perception that her gender, not her ability, got her the job.

“The early days at Cal were very difficult for her,” Salo said. “She had to work harder to be successful to get any kind of credence for her success.

“I knew she would be good because I knew what drove her. The important values that she had were the ones that the right kids in the mix were going to go, yeah, this is more than just about swimming. That’s why I think Natalie has been so successful. It wasn’t just about swimming. It was about the big picture. Once she found those women on her team who could embrace those values, it was just a matter of time before she would be successful.”

An innovator, McKeever emphasized cross-training over relentless yardage. She introduced ocean swimming, Pilates and even dancing to workouts to keep her swimmers’ minds and bodies fresh.

Cal’s 2009 N.C.A.A. championship made McKeever the first woman to coach a team to a national swimming and diving title, and the Golden Bears added two more the last two years. She was named Olympic women’s head

coach two years ago after serving as an assistant in 2004 and '08.

"She often finds it uncomfortable to be the first woman Olympic coach, or the first woman on this staff," Salo said. "She's just a good coach, and she wants to be thought of that way. She wants to stand against anybody and go, look, I do this well, I do it right, I'm successful at it – no different than a man. And no man could do her job any better than she can."

So why has it taken so long for a woman to coach the women's Olympic team? Olympic coaches generally come from colleges, where not many women are head coaches. The latest N.C.A.A. Gender-Equity Report, covering 2004 through 2012, listed 39 female head coaches among 332 Division I men's and women's swimming programs in

2009-10. Salo and McKeever said they knew talented women who dropped out to raise families.

"I'm not so sure I'll have this perfectly said or perfectly accurate, but our sport historically has been a male-coached sport," said Frank Busch, USA Swimming's national team director and a six-time N.C.A.A. coach of the year at Arizona. "When you think about women's sports at a high level, it's only back into the '60s when this kind of got started. It takes a while. The men have generations of team and coach mentality, and women are just scratching the surface."

The schedule at the trials and the Olympics allows only limited time for coaching. The team was picked July 2, 26 days before swimming begins in London. McKeever's key tasks include choosing the order for relays and

ensuring everyone arrives at the site on time. (There are more menial tasks, as well: she spent a morning during the team's training camp in Knoxville, Tenn., at a Laundromat washing swimmers' sweat suits and T-shirts.)

The label of trailblazer makes McKeever uneasy, but not the job itself.

"What I wanted to do in life was make a difference and be a positive influence," McKeever said. "There are some regrets, absolutely. But it's been amazing. I'm incredibly blessed and honored, and there is nothing I would rather do."

"I can honestly look you in the eye and go, I'm pretty good at what I do. It took me a long time to be able to say that."•

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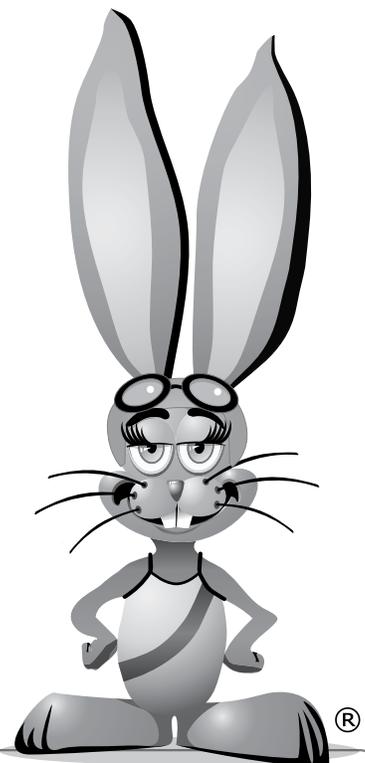


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ARTICLE REVIEW

PERSONALITY PROCESSES AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES.

[BY JOHN LEONARD]

“Grit – Perseverance and Passion for Long Term Goals”

By Angela Duckworth,
University of Pennsylvania,
and Christopher Peterson,
University of Michigan, with
Michael D. Matthews and
Dennis R. Kelly of the United
States Military Academy.

“the importance of intellectual talent to achievement in all professional domains is well established, but less is known about other individual differences that predict success. The authors tested the importance of the trait of “grit,” defined as perseverance and passion for long term goals. Grit did not relate positively to intelligence, but was highly correlated with Conscientiousness. Grit demonstrated incremental predictive value of success measures over and beyond IQ and conscientiousness. Collectively, these findings suggest that the achievement of difficult goals entails not only talent, but also the SUSTAINED and FOCUSED APPLICATION OF TALENT OVER TIME.”

**“TO PARAPHRASE BEN FRANKLIN,
THE GOAL OF EDUCATION IS NOT JUST
TO LEARN A LITTLE ABOUT A LOT, BUT
ALSO A LOT ABOUT A LITTLE.”**

Wow. Experienced coaches know that, and now research has “proven” it.

Prominent leaders in every field, demonstrate the GRIT characteristics. And, when top performers are ASKED what separates them from run of the mill performance, the answer related to Grit is most common. Grit is further defined by its emphasis on “long-term” stamina. Coaches will tell you that “long-term patience” is also a part of the term “stamina.”

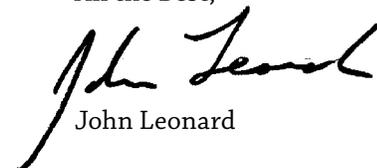
Individuals high in grit, set for themselves, extremely long term and challenging objectives, and do not swerve from them, even in the absence of positive feedback.

The researchers state in their conclusions: “Children who demonstrate exceptional commitment to a particular goal,

should be supported by as many resources as those identified as “gifted and talented.” In particular, we should prepare youth to anticipate failures, misfortunes, and point out that the excellence in any discipline requires years and years of “time on task.” To paraphrase Ben Franklin, the goal of education is not just to learn a little about a lot, but also a lot about a little.

The convenient ability of the sport of swimming to completely and totally reinforce this quality of GRIT, is one of the great life-developing forces of our sport.

All the Best,



John Leonard



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What is the optimum “stroke rate” that can secure a faster race? This is a question swimmers must determine but coaches struggle with how they are supposed to crack this code for each individual swimmer. Before, it was trying to remember the feel of a great sprint and getting that muscle memory; however, now there is a tool, a waterproof metronome, to help swimmers find the answer called the Tempo Trainer Pro from FINIS.

The best stroke rate is thought to be a skill swimmers instinctively possess or one that is acquired through endless repetition, finding the ideal tempo during training sessions and competitions.

The goal of swimming is to swim more efficiently, effectively and ultimately faster than the competition. As a result, coaches place a lot of importance on analyzing a swimmer’s stroke rate pace and distance per stroke. Finding the perfect equation will help swimmers to avoid spinning in the water but keep the stroke turnover consistent to optimize their performance in a race.

Many swimmers do have a tendency to “spin” when they increase their stroke rate to increase their speed. Commonly, the swimmer will appear to move the water around them rather than moving their body forward through the water. The direct result is an overly high stroke rate with an inefficient distance per stroke. This means that it is also important for swimmers to keep their strokes long. Toying with the length of strokes and the rate at which a swimmer moves their arms can present difficulties and confusion for some while they try to adjust to new speeds and rhythms. While varying a swimmer’s stroke rate when they are pacing is key, one of the fundamentals of efficient swimming is to keep a consistent rhythm, which harmonizes the various elements of the stroke. So how do coaches crack this code?

Cracking the code on speed is all about trying different varieties of arm rotations and distance per stroke exercises. While it may take people quite some time to learn their optimum stroke rate by coordinating it with their

distance per stroke, a solution has been developed. FINIS offers swimmers of all levels the opportunity to home in on stroke rate with the Tempo Trainer Pro. This device has been developed to help athletes find their optimum speed, remain focused and give that extra motivation to reach the swimmer’s goals.

For more information and training sets utilizing the Tempo Trainer Pro and cracking the code on speed visit <http://www.finisinc.com/blog/workouts/one-tool-and-five-sets-that-will-transform-your-swimming>.

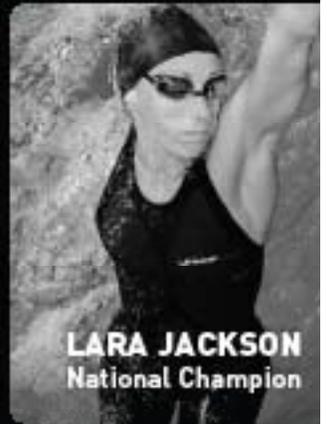
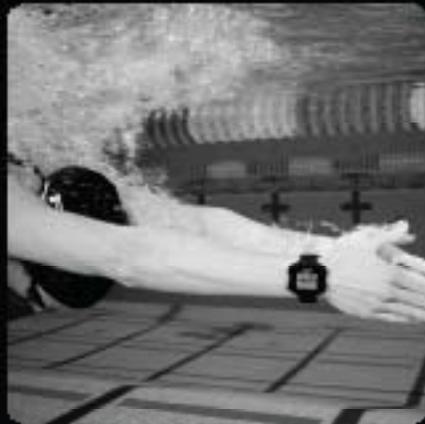




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NOTICE OF THE PASSING OF CECIL COLWIN, CANADA

To friends, family and the many long-time much loved associates:

My father, Cecil Colwin, passed away this morning at 1:40 AM. He went peacefully, with my sister Pauline and me at his bedside. He would have been 86 in August. The burial and graveside ceremony will take place Monday, June 25th at the Jewish Memorial Gardens, located at 2692 Bank Street in Ottawa. We will sit Shiva at Pauline's home, located at 1114 Cromwell Drive. There will be an open house from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM starting Monday June 25th until Friday June 29th.

Please accept our apologies for not keeping in better touch over the past few months . . . particularly the unanswered emails and phone calls. Cecil began to deteriorate in February, and our time was consumed with his care.

On behalf of the family I thank you all for the many, many years of support and friendship shared with my Dad. As my father's illness progressed it quickly became evident that the doctors were not dealing with the average patient. Last week after been given a couple

days at best my father was moved to a wonderful Hospice facility. As I sat with him in his new room while he was sleeping, his arm raised up from under the covers and started to practice a freestyle entry! I must tell you it was still flawless.

In his own words, he said:
"I've had a great run."

All the best,

Robert Colwin and family.



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READINESS FOR COMPETITION AND THE YOUNG SWIMMER

[BY JEREMY BOONE]

ATHLETE BY DESIGN

Across sports, kids seem to be competing at younger and younger ages. Children as young as three, four and five are competing in sports such as gymnastics, swimming and baseball. As an extreme example, there is a competitive event called a “baby decathlon” in which infants compete against each other. Young children used to “play” with friends after school and on weekends, for a variety of reasons they are now enrolled in organized, competitive athletic programs. Should we be concerned? Can a child be too young for athletic competition?

WHEN IS A YOUNG SWIMMER READY TO COMPETE?

While this is a seemingly simple question, it is actually quite complex with no easy answer. In addressing this question about readiness, first, we need to define what we mean by “competition.” Then, we need to assess readiness across disciplines – from a biological, sociological, psychological and physiological perspective – because, for example, a

young athlete may be physiologically ready for the demands of competition but not psychologically ready. Only after readiness across disciplines has been examined can we try to answer this question with each of our young athletes.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COMPETITION? RESTRUCTURING COMPETITION TO MAKE IT DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE.

When assessing readiness for competition, we tend to define competition strictly as organized swim meets where the participants compete against each other in specific events according to specific rules, a so called “adult model” of competition. A more fitting way of looking at competition involves broadening our definition of competition to include models that are developmentally appropriate. A young athlete may not be socially, psychologically, technically or physiologically ready for the “adult

model” of competition but would be ready for and benefit from more developmentally appropriate types of competition. In the following section, a few ideas or suggestions of competitions more appropriate for developmental athletes are presented.

Keep in mind that at the developmental level, the important element is skill; it therefore makes sense to structure events that emphasize skill. In addition, evaluating performance based strictly on time is an injustice to our late maturing athletes that are at a biological disadvantage relative to their early maturing peers. Be creative in using different evaluation criteria or rewards that recognize areas we want to emphasize i.e., stroke, technique, individual improvement. Following are varied examples of appropriate competitions for developmental athletes:

- ▶ Technique meets
- ▶ Skill recitals
- ▶ Do-overs instead of DQs

- ▶ Alter events based on physical abilities, i.e., allow 5 butterfly strokes then 5 butterfly kicks
- ▶ Race strategy competitions
- ▶ Intra-squad and inter-squad meets
- ▶ Relay only meets
- ▶ Single age events
- ▶ Compete by height
- ▶ Buddy meets: pair younger swimmers with older swimmers
- ▶ Fewest stroke / stroke rate competitions
- ▶ Swim and score: kids score teammates stroke

By creating developmental progressions for competition that are not part of our traditional rules and competitions, we are setting up a more sound and appropriate program for entry level swimmers to develop a firm foundation, a foundation that includes proper skill development and the development of self-esteem. Finally, creating a sound developmental program will instill in children a love of swimming.

UNDERSTANDING READINESS

As previously mentioned, because the question of readiness

for competition is complex, the answer is also going to be complex. While we cannot provide definitive answers regarding when precisely a child is ready for competition, we can 1) identify criteria or specific aspects of development that need to be met for the young athlete to be “ready” for swim competition (of the adult model; 2) discuss reasons why all young athletes are not developmentally ready for competition. Readiness issues regarding the areas of psychological and social development are discussed below. However, coaches must rely on their best judgment and knowledge of the swimmer to determine physical readiness for appropriate levels of competition.

- ▶ As discussed in the psychological development section, the young athlete’s perspective-taking ability develops sequentially and is important to understand because it impacts the young athlete’s behavior in sport. In regards to this perspective-taking ability, in order to “compete” athletes need to be able to be able to see the world from perspectives that go beyond their own personal perspective and see relationships that don’t involve them directly. That is, they need to possess the cognitive abilities to take multiple perspectives or multiple roles. For the

competition to be meaningful, the young athlete must be able to conceptualize the competition from an opponent’s perspective and engage in social comparison. It would not necessarily be harmful for the young athlete to compete without this perspective-taking ability, but the athlete’s motivation and satisfaction would have to be derived elsewhere. “Imposing a competitive reward structure on the sport activities of children who do not possess these social-cognitive skills is at best senseless and futile” (J. Coakley). Furthermore, as discussed earlier, research has identified sequential stages of development in terms of role-taking abilities (Selman, 1976). And, it is not until around age twelve that individuals develop the ability to engage in formal reasoning and to put themselves in numerous roles. In sum, it seems that prior to age twelve (roughly) young children do not possess the social cognitive abilities to understand and experience the competitive process.

- ▶ Another cognitive skill that impacts an athlete’s readiness for competition involves how she explains performance outcomes, also termed “casual attributions.” This cognitive skill is important not only because it illuminates aspects of performance that can be addressed in training but also because it impacts the athlete’s perceptions of competence (a developmental skill discussed earlier). For example, an athlete can attribute a loss to an unstable

“... AT THE DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL,
THE IMPORTANT ELEMENT IS SKILL”

factor, such as lack of effort, and still feel competent in her abilities. Conversely, an athlete may attribute a loss to lack of ability, a stable factor, which will negatively impact his perceptions of self-competence. It has been found that prior to around age twelve, children are not able to distinguish between effort and ability in explaining successes and failures. These young athletes, therefore, do not have the attributional abilities to accurately assess competence based on competitive performances. “These developmental shifts in casual reasoning influence not only how children of different ages will assess their competence based on performance outcomes but also how they will respond emotionally to those outcomes, what their future performance aspirations and success expectancies will be, and how they will approve or disapprove of other children based on those children’s outcomes” (Passer, 1987).

- ▶ In trying to determine a young athlete’s readiness for competition, we also need to assess if the athlete has the coping skills to deal with the demands and challenges inherent in the competitive environment. Some of these demands and challenges may include dealing with success and failure, managing time and energy at the competition, getting DQ’d, and performing in front of others. A young athlete who is found in tears after a race may not have the coping skills to deal with competition and is therefore not “ready” for competition.

Coaches need to monitor how the young athlete copes with various situations in practice to determine if she has the coping skills to deal with the increased demands and challenges of competition. Use “teachable moments” in practice to help the athlete acquire coping skills.

- ▶ There is a developmental need for social comparison beginning around five-six years of age. Yet, the above comments suggest that young athletes may not be ready for competition (adult model) until eleven-twelve years. We need to think about how we can fulfill this need for social comparison without adding additional

stress/pressure that the athletes may not be ready for. We need to be creative in structuring opportunities for “healthy comparison.”

Now, back to our original question “can a child be too young for competition?” The answer would be “yes” is we are strictly referring to competition as competition of the adult model (i.e., organized swim meet) because, as has been discussed, young athletes often do not have the psychological, social and physical skills necessary for the competitive environment. However, if we structure competition to make it developmentally appropriate for these young athletes, they can benefit from the experience and develop the skills to prepare themselves for competition. •



FIN TIP
SHORT OR LONG BLADES

Even though there are a variety of fins out there, they can be classified into two general categories: short and long blade. The type of fin you use is all about preference, and there are evident advantages for each blade length.

The advantage of a short blade fin is the legs can cycle fast enough to keep up with a normal arm stroke rate. This allows you to maintain a six beat kick without fatiguing prematurely. The goal for short blade fins is to make it possible to keep both arms and legs aggressively engaged in swimming.

As blade length or blade stiffness increases, resistance to the kicking movement increases. The legs take away more blood and oxygen flow from the arms, which results in a drop off in stroke rate and the swimmer slowing down. The same fin that lets one swimmer keep the legs aggressively involved can bring cramps and failure to another; the difference being ankle range of motion.

There ultimately is no right and wrong fin, you just need to determine your end goal.

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Long-time Beaverton swim coach Rod Harman named to the National High School Hall of Fame

[BY WENDY OWEN]

THE OREGONIAN

As the Soviet Union prepared to launch Sputnik 56 years ago, Rod Harman launched a career of training swimmers in Beaverton schools.

He's not an imposing figure. He doesn't reach 6 feet tall, and his sparkling eyes reveal a jokester. But Harman has a surprisingly strong handshake for an 85-year-old.

The Beaverton resident, who could pass for a 60-year-old and has the energy of a 30-year-old, has helped coach three Olympians, 62 All-American high school swimmers and brought home numerous state high school championships.

He started the Tualatin Hills Swim Club and has a swimming center named after him on Scholls Ferry Road.

In July, Harman will be immortalized in the National High School Hall of Fame during a ceremony in Tennessee.

Whether his students had a learned or an innate ability, Harman figured out how to motivate swimmers. "You learn to read kids," Harman said. "They need to know what they have the ability to do."

"EVERY DAY IS SOMETHING NEW.
I WALK AWAY A BETTER COACH
AND A BETTER PERSON."

— TINA MUNCH

Friends describe him as a humble man who appreciates the accolades, but he doesn't coach for the prizes and praise.

He pulled a laminated letter from a file and slid it across the table. "This is the reason I coach," he said.

It's a simple but heartfelt letter of thanks from Karen Huan, who swam for Harman during her four years at Southridge and graduates this year.

She gave him the card during the annual sports banquet after swimming season ended this year. "He laminated it?" Huan said.

She wrote him the letter, she said, because, "After four years, I realized it was the last time I would swim in high school, and the last time I would swim for Rod. It made me reflect on how swimming has helped me and how Rod had helped me. He was a fantastic coach. I think it was his sense of humor and his ability to relate to everyone."

Harman is winding down his coaching, which means only that he's stepping down as head coach at Southridge. He will continue as an assistant coach and spend the offseason, as usual, working pool rehab with injured athletes and coaching club swimming.

SWIMMING AT AGE 5

Harman was born in 1927 and spent his younger years in Iowa, where he learned to swim in a baptism assembly area in the Iowa River at age 5.

“We lived in the water,” he said, referring to his brother and himself.

In 1942, his parents, who had met in Chicago where they both worked as telegraph operators, moved the family to Hillsboro.

Harman enlisted in the U.S. Navy a month before World War II ended and enlisted, again, during the Korean War but never saw combat.

He swam the butterfly for the University of Oregon team. Harman said he was a decent swimmer but he could have been better. The team’s coach left, and Harman struggled with motivation.

“I never pushed myself,” he said.

Since then, he said, “I’ve wanted to maximize people’s abilities.”

He has coached nearly every sport, including football, water polo, wrestling, track and cheerleading. He spent 38 years coaching at Beaverton High School before moving to Aloha for a decade and Southridge for the past eight years. When he wasn’t coaching, he taught social studies at Beaverton High School for three decades.

Of the thousands of kids Harman has coached during the past five decades, some have gone on to become regional, state and national champions. He numbers a few Olympians among his swimmers as well, but Harman takes no credit for their abilities.

Among them is Carolyn Wood, who was 14 when she won her gold medal in freestyle in the summer of 1960, a few months after she joined the freshman team at Beaverton High School under Harman. Most of her Olympic training was through the Multnomah Club, she said.

Wood became Harman’s assistant coach her senior year.

“He has an uncanny ability to read everybody,” she said. “I think every kid felt they were cared for.”

KNOWING THE LIMITS

In addition, Wood said, Harman understood the physics of coaching, knowing exactly how far to push athletes in training before releasing them, called tapering. “He would taper these kids ... drop their times by seven seconds. I found I was able to improve my time,” said Wood, who later taught English at Beaverton High School.

“When you’ve been around a sport for that long, you’ve seen everything under the sun,” said Bryan Sorenson, Southridge High School athletic director. “He just has a way of getting the most out of the kids.”

Tina Munch coaches with Harman at Southridge, but does so only because she can work with him. She plans to leave when he ends his coaching career at the school.

Munch graduated in 1998 from Aloha High, where she swam for Harman. She also coaches the Nike Ninjas Swim Team.

“I have learned so much from him,” she said. “Every day is something new. I walk away a better coach and a better person.”

No one can remember Harman losing his temper with kids. He prefers using humor. Emma Marquard, 16, a sophomore at Jesuit High calls him “literally, the nicest person.”

Marquard swims for Harman as part of a local club. “You want to do well to please him,” she said.

Marquard’s mom, Julie, said the coach seems to sense the moods of her daughter and her friend.

“Sixteen-year-old girls are not in the same mood every day,” she said. “If they’re down, he’ll get them picked up and going. He’s very intuitive. He seems to relish the energy and the optimism the kids have.”

But Munch said Harman gets a little distracted and down around Christmas time, which is when his wife, Barbara, a math teacher at Aloha High, died 12 years ago. “She was the love of his life,” Munch said.

Coaching helped him through her death, Harman said.

Harman may be stepping down to assistant coach at Southridge, but he has no plans to slow down. Likely, he’ll go for a four-mile walk, a half-hour swim and lift weights by the end of the day.

He doesn’t actually like swimming, but he knows the health benefits and spent months last year swimming with one arm after he dislocated his shoulder in a fall.

What’s the secret to good health and happiness?

“Good genes,” Harman said. “I get them at Costco.” •



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HONORS BEV BALL

Bev Ball and swimming are synonymous. And for that matter, Abilene, Texas and Bev Ball go hand in hand as well. After attending college at North Texas, she began a coaching career in Abilene that will span into its 59th year during the 2010-11 school year.

Prior to starting McMurry University's swim program in 2000, Ball had a brief three-year coaching and teaching stint at Jefferson Middle School in Abilene before spending 46 years (1954-2000) at Abilene High and Cooper High School as swim coach for both teams.

Longevity has been Ball's mainstay, and after her "retirement" from the Abilene Independent School District, she enters her 11th season as head men's and women's swim coach for McMurry at the college level.

Because of her dedication and loyalty to the area, her programs, students and student-athletes, Ball has earned recognition in many different areas.

For the 1997-98 school year, the regional Fox Sports TV affiliate named Ball the Fox Sports Southwest "Coach Who Makes A Difference.:" From there, she was awarded the Theron Pickle Outstanding Achievement Award by Texas High School swim coaches in 1998. In 1999, Ball was

TO CELEBRATE 55 YEARS OF
COACHING IN THE ABILENE AREA,
MAYOR NORM ARCHIBALD DECLARED
JUNE 10, 2006 AS BEV BALL DAY
IN THE CITY OF ABILENE

named the Chuck Mosier Girls Coach of the Year, named after Mosier the legendary Abilene High football coach who won three state championships.

In 2003, she was inducted into the Big Country Athletic Hall of Fame for her service to Abilene High and Cooper. To celebrate 55 years of coaching in the Abilene area, mayor Norm Archibald declared June 10, 2006 as Bev Ball Day in the City of Abilene where she was honored at McMurry University in front of hundreds of former athletes, colleagues and friends.

At McMurry, she conducts two NCAA Division III teams that swim independent of a conference. However, she's been able to prove

her standing at the national level as she's coached national qualifiers Justin Schultz and Hillary Poole. Despite their independence, many of the NCAA Division III independent schools gather at the conclusion of the regular season to form their own "conference" meet.

From year to year, at that meet named the Liberal Arts Swimming and Diving Championships, McMurry makes its presence known. Ball coached three women who will return to the squad in 2010-2011 that won individual titles in Erin Johnson, Alex Altstaetter and Amber Perkins. •

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NINE THINGS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO DIFFERENTLY

[BY HEIDI GRANT HALVORSON]

Why have you been so successful in reaching some of your goals, but not others? If you aren't sure, you are far from alone in your confusion. It turns out that even brilliant, highly accomplished people are pretty lousy when it comes to understanding why they succeed or fail. The intuitive answer — that you are born predisposed to certain talents and lacking in others — is really just one small piece of the puzzle. In fact, decades of research on achievement suggests that successful people reach their goals not simply because of who they are, but more often because of what they do.

1. GET SPECIFIC.

When you set yourself a goal, try to be as specific as possible. “Lose 5 pounds” is a better goal than “lose some weight,” because it gives you a clear idea of what success looks like. Knowing exactly what you want to achieve keeps you motivated until you get there. Also, think about the specific actions that need to be taken to reach your goal. Just promising you’ll “eat less” or “sleep more” is too vague — be clear and precise. “I’ll be in bed by 10pm on weeknights” leaves no room for doubt about what you need to do, and whether or not you’ve actually done it.

2. SEIZE THE MOMENT TO ACT ON YOUR GOALS.

Given how busy most of us are, and how many goals we are juggling at once, it's not surprising that we routinely miss opportunities to act on a goal because we simply fail to notice them. Did you really have no time to work out today? No chance at any point to return that phone call? Achieving your goal means grabbing hold of these opportunities before they slip through your fingers.

To seize the moment, decide when and where you will take each action you want to take, in advance. Again, be as specific as possible (e.g., “If it's Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, I'll work out for 30 minutes before work.”) Studies show that this kind of planning will help your brain to detect and seize the opportunity when it arises, increasing your chances of success by roughly 300%.

3. KNOW EXACTLY HOW FAR YOU HAVE LEFT TO GO.

Achieving any goal also requires honest and regular monitoring of your progress — if not by others, then by you yourself. If you don't know how well you are doing, you

can't adjust your behavior or your strategies accordingly. Check your progress frequently — weekly, or even daily, depending on the goal.

4. BE A REALISTIC OPTIMIST.

When you are setting a goal, by all means engage in lots of positive thinking about how likely you are to achieve it. Believing in your ability to succeed is enormously helpful for creating and sustaining your motivation. But whatever you do, don't underestimate how difficult it will be to reach your goal. Most goals worth achieving require time, planning, effort, and persistence. Studies show that thinking things will come to you easily and effortlessly leaves you ill-prepared for the journey ahead, and significantly increases the odds of failure.

5. FOCUS ON GETTING BETTER, RATHER THAN BEING GOOD.

Believing you have the ability to reach your goals is important, but so is believing you can get the ability. Many of us believe that our intelligence, our personality, and our physical aptitudes are fixed — that no matter what we do, we won't improve. As a result, we focus on goals that are all about

proving ourselves, rather than developing and acquiring new skills.

Fortunately, decades of research suggest that the belief in fixed ability is completely wrong — abilities of all kinds are profoundly malleable. Embracing the fact that you can change will allow you to make better choices, and reach your fullest potential. People whose goals are about getting better, rather than being good, take difficulty in stride, and appreciate the journey as much as the destination.

6. HAVE GRIT.

Grit is a willingness to commit to long-term goals, and to persist in the face of difficulty. Studies show that gritty people obtain more education in their lifetime, and earn higher college GPAs. Grit predicts which cadets will stick out their first grueling year at West Point. In fact, grit even predicts which round contestants will make it to at the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

The good news is, if you aren't particularly gritty now, there is something you can do about it. People who lack grit more often than not believe that they just don't have the innate abilities successful people have. If that describes your own thinking well, there's no way to put this nicely: you are wrong. As I mentioned earlier, effort, planning, persistence, and good strategies are what it really takes to succeed. Embracing this knowledge will not only help you see yourself and your goals more accurately, but also do wonders for your grit.

7. BUILD YOUR WILLPOWER MUSCLE.

Your self-control “muscle” is just like the other muscles in your body — when it doesn't get much

exercise, it becomes weaker over time. But when you give it regular workouts by putting it to good use, it will grow stronger and stronger, and better able to help you successfully reach your goals.

To build willpower, take on a challenge that requires you to do something you'd honestly rather not do. Give up high-fat snacks, do 100 sit-ups a day, stand up straight when you catch yourself slouching, try to learn a new skill. When you find yourself wanting to give in, give up, or just not bother — don't. Start with just one activity, and make a plan for how you will deal with troubles when they occur (“If I have a craving for a snack, I will eat one piece of fresh or three pieces of dried fruit.”) It will be hard in the beginning, but it will get easier, and that's the whole point. As your strength grows, you can take on more challenges and step-up your self-control workout.

8. DON'T TEMPT FATE.

No matter how strong your willpower muscle becomes, it's important to always respect the fact that it is limited, and if you overtax it you will temporarily run out of steam. Don't try to take on two challenging tasks at once, if you can help it (like quitting smoking and dieting at the same time). And don't put yourself in harm's way — many people are overly-confident in their ability to resist temptation, and as a result they put themselves in situations where temptations abound. Successful people know not to make reaching a goal harder than it already is.

9. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WILL DO, NOT WHAT YOU WON'T DO.

Do you want to successfully lose weight, quit smoking, or put a lid on your bad temper? Then plan how you will replace bad habits with good ones, rather than focusing only on the bad habits themselves. Research on thought suppression (e.g., “Don't think about white bears!”) has shown that trying to avoid a thought makes it even more active in your mind. The same holds true when it comes to behavior — by trying not to engage in a bad habit, our habits get strengthened rather than broken.

If you want to change your ways, ask yourself, What will I do instead? For example, if you are trying to gain control of your temper and stop flying off the handle, you might make a plan like “If I am starting to feel angry, then I will take three deep breaths to calm down.” By using deep breathing as a replacement for giving in to your anger, your bad habit will get worn away over time until it disappears completely.

It is my hope that, after reading about the nine things successful people do differently, you have gained some insight into all the things you have been doing right all along. Even more important, I hope are able to identify the mistakes that have derailed you, and use that knowledge to your advantage from now on. Remember, you don't need to become a different person to become a more successful one. It's never what you are, but what you do. •

Heidi Grant Halvorson, Ph.D. is a motivational psychologist, and author of the new book *Succeed: How We Can Reach Our Goals* (Hudson Street Press, 2011). She is also an expert blogger on motivation and leadership for Fast Company and Psychology Today. Her personal blog, *The Science of Success*, can be found at www.heidigranthalvorson.com. Follow her on Twitter @hghalvorson.

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YOU'RE NOT SPECIAL

[BY DAVID MCCULLOUGH JR.]

NEWSWEEK

After my commencement speech that stunned America.

The other day, I found myself in a small glass room with an honest-to-goodness Nobel laureate. This came to pass because a week earlier I had told the members of the Wellesley High School class of 2012 that they are not special. While the well-meant attentions of their parents and the advantages they've enjoyed (or taken for granted) might have led them to think otherwise, none of them, I said, matters more than anyone else, because everyone is special, everyone matters—all 6.8 billion of us. Simple logic, really. Along the way I tried to give them a few laughs, some thoughts to ponder, and, at the end, an exhortation to make for themselves, and for the rest of us, extraordinary lives, abundant in energy and guided by a spirit of selflessness. It was a lovely ceremony, and the speech was well received.

But I did not know the electronic world was watching. Taking lines out of context, sensationalizers started a wildfire. Attention came my way from a million directions, nearly all of it, for one reason or another, enthusiastically positive. My email inbox exploded. My phone rang and rang. Radio, television, and newspapers from around the world wanted to speak with me. Bloggers, tweeters, talk-show hosts,

and callers opinionized. Orioles fans wagged fingers at me. Religious people reminded me that all of God's children are special. Limousines whisked me to interviews near and far. For a middle-aged high-school teacher and suburban dad, it has been a dizzying experience.

Enter the Nobel laureate: economist and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman. We spent half an hour sitting a few feet apart, each awaiting his turn on *CBS This Morning*. He was busy at his laptop. I was busy being nervous. We did not speak to one another. He is a smallish man, I can report, with a gray beard, a professorial mien, and sensible shoes. He is also, as we all know, powerfully smart, supremely accomplished, hugely influential.

And I'm willing to bet he never went to lacrosse camp. Or to a four-day tourney of any kind in Orlando.

In fact, I'll bet he never even went to economics camp or sat three afternoons a week at age 12 with an economics tutor. And, further, I suspect his wonderfulness was not celebrated when he had been something less than wonderful. I'll guess neither his anxious mom nor a \$100-an-hour tutor helped him with a lightly plagiarized 10th-grade *Middlemarch* paper; nor did

his parents encourage him to pack his résumé with papier-mâché. He did not, I'll bet, endure a six-week intensive SAT prep class or snort Adderall before sitting to take the test. Probably his parents did not hire a pricey consultant to shepherd him through the college-application process; nor did they lean on his teachers to let him retake tests on which he did poorly, or, better, to just change an unwelcome grade because the, um, cat died.

Rather, I'll guess Krugman discovered an interest in economics at some point in school. Perhaps it came upon him when he was thinking about other things. Probably it ignited in tinder gathered from his observations of the world around him in his meanderings as a kid. Most likely he encountered struggles in a class or two and buckled down and persevered. Maybe someone challenged one of his suppositions, identified a flaw in his reasoning, a deficiency in his research. Likely someone offered, with little regard for his self-esteem, a criticism of something he had written. And I'm guessing he carried on because he enjoyed learning—and might have forged ahead anyway as a matter of principle had he not. Probably he worked hard for a long time with

no sign of external reward. For none of this did he feel particularly heroic. Or special. And I'll guess over time he came to realize the toil had become a pleasure, then a joy, then a way of life, perhaps even an inextricable part of his being.

I am a teacher. When I speak, a few dozen teenagers listen ... usually. With good reason I anticipate no Nobels—but I take unceasing delight in kids, I believe in them and in what we do together, and evidence suggests that after more than two decades I'm not so bad at it. But I chanced upon the job. No boyhood reverie or parental path-charting headed me in that direction. I'd had no formal training for it, had taken no classes aimed at it, no tutorials, no weekend seminars. I did not go to teacher camp. Instead, long ago I found myself in a city far from home (Honolulu) with a thin wallet and little cause to be picky. A good man at Punahou School took a chance on me. And in those first few years I was not especially terrific. This alone served to suggest to me the enterprise might be worthwhile. A few among the brass wondered if I had what it took. But they were patient, I stuck to it, paid attention, and learned. And today I prize what I do all the more because once upon a time it didn't come easy.

Now I'm the father of four and find myself subject to the same impulses and cultural encouragements that influence other parents of means. I've taken a daughter to soccer tournaments across the country. I've dropped a son off for SAT tutoring. I've sweated college applications and paid significant money to hear the first 40 seconds of Clair de Lune coaxed from an obstinate upright again and again. And I too have struggled to decide what is best for my children, and have not always resisted the merely expedient. But I

know when to stay out of the way—and when I don't, I respect the right of my children to tell me so.

And while they're special to me beyond expression, I recognize my kids—like my students—are no more or less important than anyone

else's, no more or less deserving of happy, productive lives, lives that shake a joyous fist at mortality, lives that matter beyond themselves. They know it, Nobels or no Nobels.

I wonder what Krugman might think. Probably I should have asked. •

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HERE'S A WONDERFUL IDEA FOR EVERY TEAM

[BY JOHN LEONARD]

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Good teams are made up of people who work hard to develop their skills; people to whom good must be made better and better made best. In the process, they become “stunning colleagues,” which translates to peers that all of us admire and respect and seek to emulate. What better environment for your child to grow up in?

The second thought is also important. The only route to personal growth is through uncomfortable terrain. We stretch and grow only when we are striving to the maximum

of our ability...what author and skill learning scientist Dr. Anders Ericsson of Florida State University calls “purposeful practice”. . . practice that challenges our every faculty with the intensity of effort required . . . be it a piano piece, or swimming the 200 fly well.

The team, the coach, that fails to challenge their members appropriately, will fail to see significant improvement in them as people, or as swimmers.

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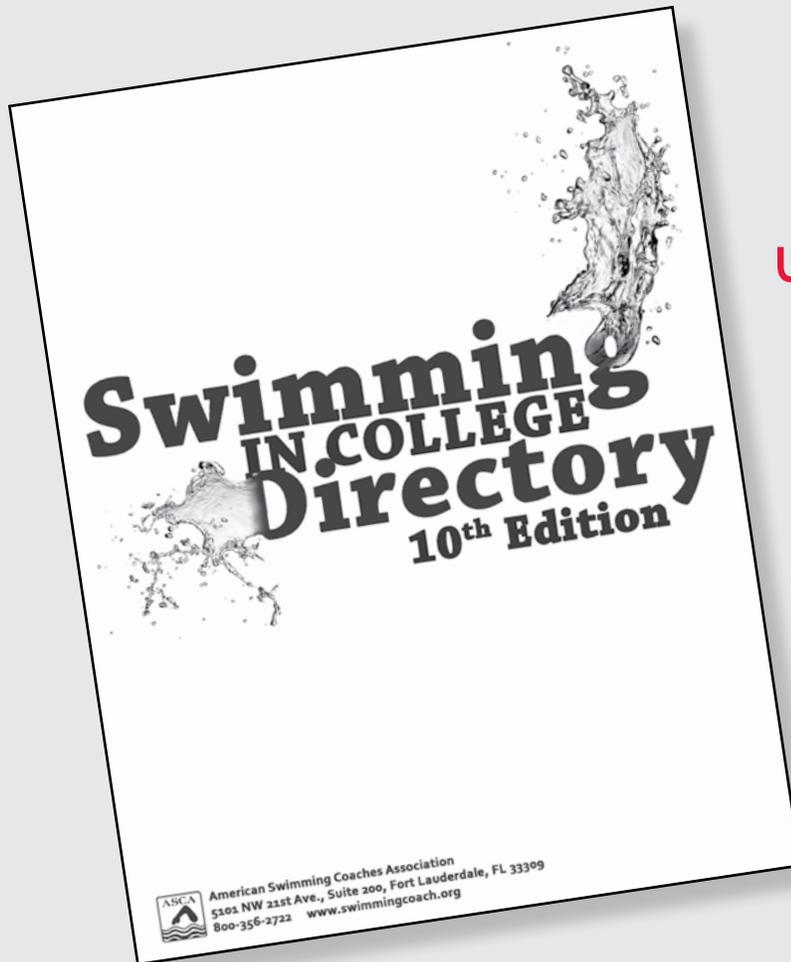
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