



FOOD FOR Thought

Coach Don Swartz

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Don Swartz: We went to the ASCA World Clinic in Jacksonville and came home with many notes jotted hurriedly at the moment of inspiration. Some of these notes make more sense now after 5 plus weeks of reading and re-reading...some make less sense. Fortunately in both cases verification or clarification can be had at a rather reasonable price from the ASCA website. Our apologies to the sources if we misspeak; it is unintended...

Gregg Troy: There are very few things in life where if you put in less time you get improved results. We work in a delayed gratification sport, in a short term gratification world. Girls between the ages of 12 and 14 – give them everything they can handle. THE learning moment; tell them the truth at the biggest moment of disappointment – meaning at the

meet. If you don't repeat a specific workout, how can you possibly evaluate if it was good or not? Getting ready for a meet: rest either 3 days or 3 weeks – in between that, nothing good happens.

Kirk Grand: We didn't hear the entire presentation, came in late. We will buy this talk; it may be the most important one given..."Limits to Superior Performance" – about the brain, how it functions, how it processes information. Keep the brain quiet in big spots (races). The "Last Chance" meet vs. the First Chance meet. This guy is really smart, in my opinion.

Paul Yetter: value of hard work; praise and value attitudes over statistics; find ways to coach everyone well; what you say matters...might be better to hold your tongue. **(Continued on p.3)**

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Continued from Cover

David Marsh: Win something every day, even if it is only the warm-up. Use vertical kicking for rest period – i.e. 100's on the 1:20 do vertical kicking during the rest phase. Not my “best time” (which is my “old time”) rather what's my “next time” (goal time).

Steve Bultman from Texas A&M: When a swimmer takes their training to the next level their times will follow; it is just a matter of when.

Bill Wadley: Our job is to lift them up, get them to believe they can do something they haven't done before; ask them, “how many of you are more confident today than say 2 years ago?” We forget how far we have come. If at first you don't succeed, try something harder.

Dave Durden: His program is senior driven – each senior has a role. Training – win the day, as in “win the travel day” - win whatever day it is. Debrief from last year. Take a fall break of 4 days...plan it, calendar it, tell everyone... plus take “4 hour vacations” now and then.

Help freshman learn how to practice and how to manage a season...have patience with them.

Dave Krotiak: Allow kids to grow “into” their sport. Get the athlete to understand what we want from them. Make sure your body is always moving forward in the water. Be conscious of the exhale. Start with the goal and work backward to today to figure out what needs to be done. A set of 25's at 200 pace with specific stroke counts...Cordes was 14 high to 15.0 with two strokes after the pull through...amazing to watch.

Mike Bottom: Change is critical. When we teach a life lesson under stress, the lesson tends to stick. Make decisions based on principle vs. on convenience, rules or circumstance. Honor your traditions – and we – coaches – build them; don't let the swimmers build the traditions. Take club kids to local college meets, this helps build enthusiasm for the club programs. Need to make motivation synonymous with volition.

Bill Boomer: The 20th century swimmers

were surface warriors; in the 21st century they are/will be sub-surface warriors.

Matt Kredich: Inhaling is about survival in the moment, exhaling is about survival in the future.

George Kennedy: 90% of teams underperform. Sleep is huge – if you have 2 days with 6 to 6.5 hours of sleep you need 5 days to recover...so a really good cycle might be 2 days on and 1 day off – would take some real courage to see if that is true!

Also, some of the more valuable information got exchanged in the hallways, at lunch or dinner, ok – at the bar...our favorite was... source unnamed, “why do we seem to ask questions that we think we already know the answers to?”

Thanks to John Leonard, Guy Edson and the whole staff of ASCA for keeping this stimulating exchange moving forward. We love that our sport is so open when it comes to sharing information. ■

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10 surprising TRUTHS

About the World's MOST SUCCESSFUL TALENT HOTBED

By [Coach Rett Larson](#)
Performance Corps, Shanghai, China



Fully half of the 10 principles (1, 3, 5, 9 & 10) have **zero** to do with training methods and **everything** to do with the organizational culture. Mixing ages, applauding failure, avoiding specialization, embracing sacrifice, and having fun are not training techniques — they are shared values that apply far beyond just diving. They are powerful signals that create a cohesive, high-performing tribe of people.

1) WE MIX AGES LIKE CRAZY: The juniors aren't all lumped together like they are in most systems — instead, three-time Gold medalists train with top 10-year-olds.

Each diving coach might be responsible for five athletes — three Olympic veterans and two juniors. The juniors get to mirror the elites all day, from training to eating to bedtimes. It also creates a sense of humility in the juniors, who have likely dominated in their provinces since they were six years old.

2) WE SPEND MOST OF OUR TIME WORKING ON SUPER-BASIC DIVES: The Chinese have a higher training volume than the rest of the world — often more than 100

dives per day. But many of those dives are very basic. The first ten dives of the day might all be starting with your butt on the edge of the platform and falling into a simple dive. That's it — and that's the point.

3) WE APPLAUD SPECTACULAR FAILURES:

For the past decade China has won almost every competition by doing simple dives very, very well. Their technical proficiency is incredible because they practice longer and harder than any other country. But, they also know that they have to push themselves and innovate. You'll see in the video a male diver attempting to be the first human to do four flips from the 10-meter board starting from a handstand. He doesn't make it — spectacularly. What you don't see is the ovation he gets from the rest of the team after his failed attempt.

4) WE ARE OBSESSIVE ABOUT COACHING EVERY SINGLE REP:

Each dive is given feedback, even the basic ones. A dozen coaches sit on the side of the pool and give immediate feedback on every dive that their athlete performs that day.

5) WE AVOID ALLOWING OUR ATHLETES TO SPECIALIZE IN ONE DISCIPLINE:

The 10-meter platform divers won't spend all day on the 10m board. They'll have dives on the 3m, 5m, 6m, 7m, and even the springboards depending on what their coach wants them to work on. Each day the athletes receive a laminated sheet with their daily dives listed.

10) WE HAVE WAA-AAY MORE FUN THAN YOU MIGHT GUESS:

Dryland training is a place where there is frequent playing around and laughing. The coaches let the athletes be kids. Now I'm not saying that it's like a frat party (this is Communist China, after all), but compared to many teams I've worked with over the last 2.5 years in China, they have a good time.

6) WE ACCOMPLISH OUR MOST IMPORTANT WORK OUTSIDE OF THE POOL:

Chinese divers perform dry-land training better than anyone else in the world. If you ask the coaches — this is what has led to China's dominance. As you'll see in the video, their dryland training facilities are a Disneyland for divers. Like their dives in the pool, each athlete has a laminated sheet of dryland exercises that take them from the trampoline to the foam pit to the mats or to the runway to practice approaches. They move around the gym and are never on one piece of equipment for more than 20 minutes.

7) WE SEEK LOTS OF FEEDBACK FROM LOTS OF COACHES:

As the athletes move around the dryland training area, they move into the zones of different coaches who offer a variety of corrections based on what their "coaching eye" sees. Chinese coaches all share a basic methodology so there's no worry of conflicting messages being sent.

8) WE USE VIDEO AS MUCH AS HUMANLY (& TECHNICALLY) POSSIBLE:

In both the dryland facility and the pool there are closed circuit cameras that catch the dives being performed. After the athletes get out of the pool and receive feedback from the coach, they can look up on the huge monitors and see the dives for themselves.

9) WE SEEK WAYS TO ESTABLISH TEAM IDENTITY THROUGH SACRIFICE:

No other Olympic team in the complex trains before 9 a.m. — but three days a week, our team rises early to train at six — because it's a sacrifice. There's no need to train at 6am instead of 9am. They do it because it's inconvenient, and it creates an air of "we work harder than anyone else."

“ How does Rett's list compare with the principles of other high-performing places (like, maybe, yours)? What's missing? What might be added? ”

PS – if there's anybody else out there who might want to offer a similar "insider's tour" of their training, please let me know. ■

101 COACHING TIPS

By Wayne Goldsmith

It takes 20 years to become an overnight success. Successful coaches have by a combination of experience, skill, education and practice, developed ways and means of getting the best out themselves and their athletes.

Here are 101 Coaching Tips to help you achieve your coaching goals.

1. Plan.
2. Develop communication skills and never stop trying to improve them.
3. Learn to effectively utilize the Internet, social media and email.
4. Never stop learning. Learning is for life.
5. Be open-minded. Never say, never.
6. What you may lack in knowledge, make up for with enthusiasm, desire and passion.
7. Be a role model for your athletes.
8. Accept constructive criticism as a positive. Learn from mistakes, take steps to improve from the experience and move on.
9. Allocate time every day for personal health and fitness.
10. Keep a detailed diary and record work actually done by athletes not just what was planned to be done.
11. Embrace effective change.
12. Use sports science wisely. The art of coaching drives the science of performance.
13. Seek out information – don't wait for the "secret to success" to fall into your lap.
14. Coach with your heart but don't forget the basics. Secure adequate training facilities, keep good records, observe O.H. and S principles, and maintain a commitment to safety and equity. Having the "nuts and bolts" organized allows you to focus on what you do best – working with athletes.
15. Believe in your athletes – they believe in you.
16. Steal ideas from others sports (and improve on them).
17. Strive to make yourself redundant – develop coach independent athletes.
18. Listen with your eyes and watch with your ears.
19. Attitude + application + ability = achievement.
20. Coach the person not the athlete. Coach the person not the performance.
21. Develop a network and support structure. Be a resource manager.
22. Best, better, brilliant – there's always room for improvement.
23. What you believe will happen, will happen. What the mind can conceive



it will achieve.

- 24. Persistence pays – never give up.
- 25. Learn basic business skills. Understand the basics of insurance. Be familiar with legal liability. Understand the basics of taxation and the tax system. Make coaching your business!
- 26. Give an ounce of information and a ton of practice.
- 27. Communicate – clearly, concisely, calmly, constructively, consistently and cleverly.
- 28. Seek out a critical friend. They are your greatest asset.
- 29. Help develop your sport not just your current athletes.
- 30. Mix with successful people. Success breeds success.
- 31. Delegate, delegate, delegate, give athletes, assistants, parents and officials responsibility for aspects of your (their)

program.

- 32. Enthusiasm, encouragement, energy = Excellence.
- 33. Look for things to improve in yourself.
- 34. Have fun. Life is short.
- 35. It is easy to coach athletes when they are performing well. Do you have the ability to help athletes (and yourself) deal with the tough times?
- 36. Focus on the long term even when trying to achieve in the short term.
- 37. Contribute to the development of other coaches. You may learn from teaching and students are often the best teachers of all.
- 38. Listen to your athletes.
- 39. Develop peripheral vision – in your mind.
- 40. Present information at coaching courses and workshops. Be willing to share.
- 41. Treat athletes like customers – coaching is

the ultimate in client service.

- 42. Read journals from alternative industries and seek out principles that you can apply to sporting situations.
- 43. Be flexible in your methods and approach.
- 44. Embrace the principle “For the love of it, not the money in it!”
- 45. Athletes develop confidence through competence. Nothing develops confidence like a thorough preparation.
- 46. Constantly challenge yourself and your athletes.
- 47. Create a safe, stimulating, interesting training environment where athletes enjoy coming to train.
- 48. In preparing athletes: leave nothing to chance, nothing untested: don't rely on luck: make your own!
- 49. Subscribe to this Blog!
- 50. Do your homework. Know the strengths

- and weakness of your athletes, yourself, your opposition. Know the standards, what are the world records, national records, state records, regional records, and club records, what are your goals?
51. Look to help. Encourage your athlete to have ownership of the program.
 52. Maintain good appearance, look like a professional.
 53. Technology is your ally not your enemy. Use it wisely.
 54. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Mental toughness is still a key component of successful competition.
 55. Adopt the D.R.A.M.A. approach " Do, Record, Analyze, Modify, Act"
 56. Confront problems calmly by talking directly with the athlete – don't rely on rumor, relayed messages or other second hand methods of communication. If a message can be misinterpreted it already has been.
 57. Empathize not sympathize.
 58. Keep the reasons you coach at the forefront of your mind and your goals close to your heart.
 59. Desire: keep the dream alive, everyday. Motivation is a lifestyle not a one off event.
 60. What makes a great coach? Great athletes!
 61. Be firm and fair.
 62. Build your program around the five "E's": Equity, Excellence, Empathy and Empowerment.
 63. Share a joke, not sarcasm, just a funny joke, when appropriate.
 64. Field questions and throw back answers. Challenge athletes to discover the answers for themselves and to learn lessons.
 65. Observe, ponder, respond, be an observer of human behaviour.
 66. Share experiences willingly.
 67. Establish open and effective communication with all stakeholders, parents, athletes, administrators, officials and important others.
 68. When in doubt, pause and check it out. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know".
 69. Employ actions that minimize risk. The primary responsibility of all coaches is the safety of their athletes.
 70. Encourage your athlete recovering from injury by involving them in the program in some capacity. Everyone is needed and everyone belongs.
 71. Be aware of and carry out your legal responsibilities.
 72. Efficient coaches take responsibility for their own effectiveness.
 73. Self-reflection is your constant companion: be your own best critic but strive to be objective rather than self destructive.
 74. Recognize the contribution of others, players, parents, officials, assistants, facility maintenance staff, everyone enjoys being appreciated.
 75. Recognize, publicize, and reward. Praise in public, criticize in private.
 76. Lead from the front and support from the rear.
 77. The coach is the creator of positive experiences.
 78. Proper prior planning prevents pitifully poor performance.
 79. Praise and positive reinforcement are tools for the coach.
 80. Think about what you say before you say it. Then watch for reactions to your words before saying anything else.
 81. Body language replaces many words: Its not what you say but how you say it.
 82. Inspire your athletes to be all they can be, everyday and in all things.
 83. Coaching is a two-way process: The athlete feels but can't see, the coach sees but can't feel.
 84. Get to know something personal about your athletes. They are people who have chosen to play sport: not just sports-people.
 85. Holistically challenge your athlete's mental skills. They can be developed just like physical skills.
 86. Athletes listen when the coach listens to them.
 87. Know when to say no.
 88. Demonstrate, explain, demonstrate again, practice and give constructive feedback.
 89. Concentrate on the performance not the outcome.
 90. Process goals (how to achieve) should predominate over outcome goals (what to achieve).
 91. Facilitate motivation by allowing athletes to fulfill their goals in some way at every session.
 92. Coach your athletes to distinguish between attainable and unobtainable but to never stop dreaming of what's possible.
 93. Buy a video and refine your filming and reviewing skills.
 94. Sports officials give your athletes the best opportunity to achieve the best result – work alongside them. Welcome them into your program and invite them to provide input.
 95. To coach well you'll need to know the current interpretation of your sports rules and regulations.
 96. The coach has a great opportunity to easily expand their social circle, you'll never be lonely.
 97. Last year's programs produce last year's results. Resist the temptation to coach by routine and habit.
- (Why not add your own tips to the list and share them with me and all the Sports Brainers??) ■

- Wayne Goldsmith



MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Due to the kindness of Tom Avischious, I always get an early copy of the annual membership trends for the period 2001-2014. I like to pick through them looking for things that I think are significant.

Here are observations from the latest Edition (Thanks again to Tom).

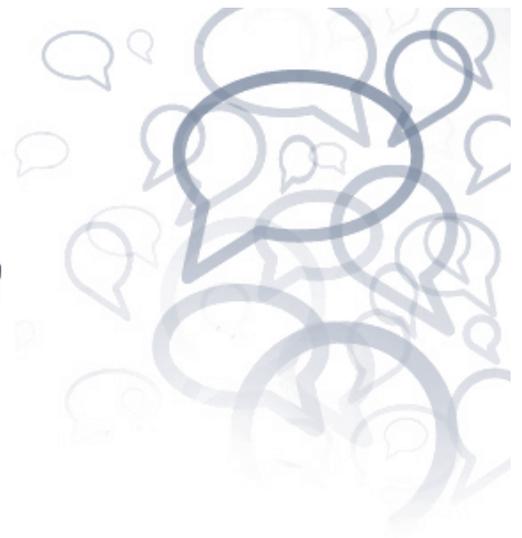
1. **Overall retention rate for our sport is 74.9%**. Spectacular in this day of the “sports mall” for curious families.
2. **Retention of 13-and-overs is a SPECTACULAR 90.5%**. Which, in my mind, speaks to the long term value our coaches provide to our athletes. When teenagers buy into it, its AUTHENTIC.
3. **Still a female dominated sport**....45,000 more females registered than males.
4. **18,001 coach members**....speaks to our adherence to requirements imposed on us.
5. **3,565 Full-Time coaches**....while RISING, is still small.
6. **14,335 Part-Time Coaches**...range



7. **911 new coaches**. Relatively STABLE number (within range of 100) year to year.
8. **8,913 female coaches and 9,008 male coaches** - Virtually EVEN BY GENDER.
9. **6,641 (more than 1/3 of our coaches are ages 21-30.**
10. **666 of us are 61-70 years of age.** 122

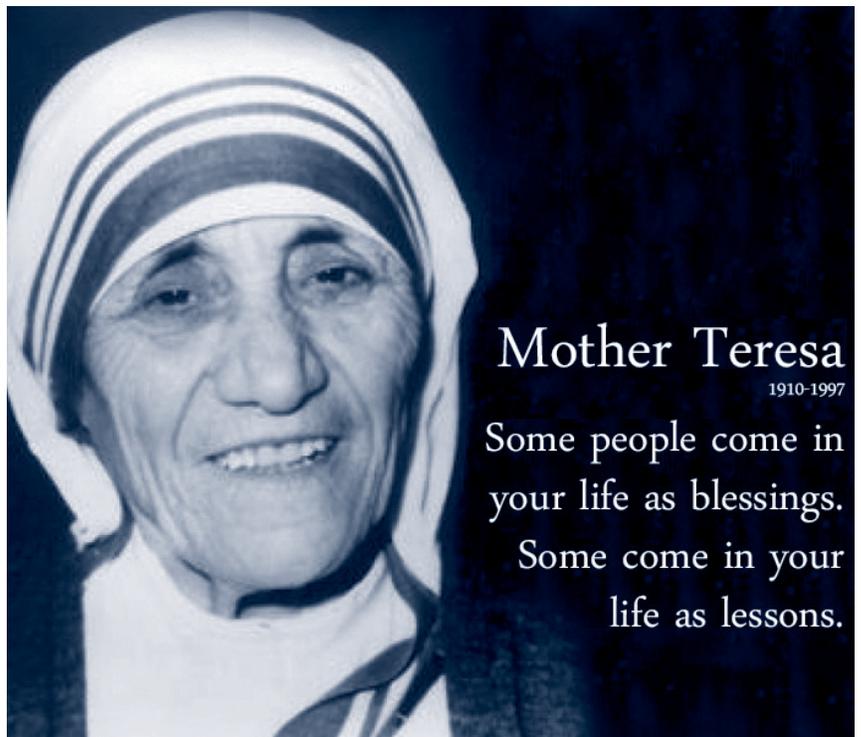
11. **134 New Clubs in 2014**; 2,926 total (slowly climbing).
12. **USA Swimmers are 0.10660% of the USA population**. Which reminds me of the George Block quote: “When you think you are really HOT SHIT, you’re HALF right.”
One tenth of one percent.
Okay, all our egos should be in check now. ■

Inspiration



// The best way to lead people into the future is to connect with them deeply in the present. //

~ J. Kouzes



Mother Teresa
1910-1997

Some people come in your life as blessings. Some come in your life as lessons.

// Wise men, though all the laws were abolished, would live the same lives. //

~ Aristophanes

// Character is the only secure foundation of the state. //

~ Calvin Coolidge



// If a man had greatness in him, it comes to light not in one flamboyant hour, but in the ledger of his daily work. //

~ B. Markham

Try not to become a man of

SUCCESS

but rather try to become a man

of

VALUE



Albert Einstein via Gecko&Fly



"DON'T COMPROMISE YOURSELF.
YOU'RE ALL YOU'VE GOT."

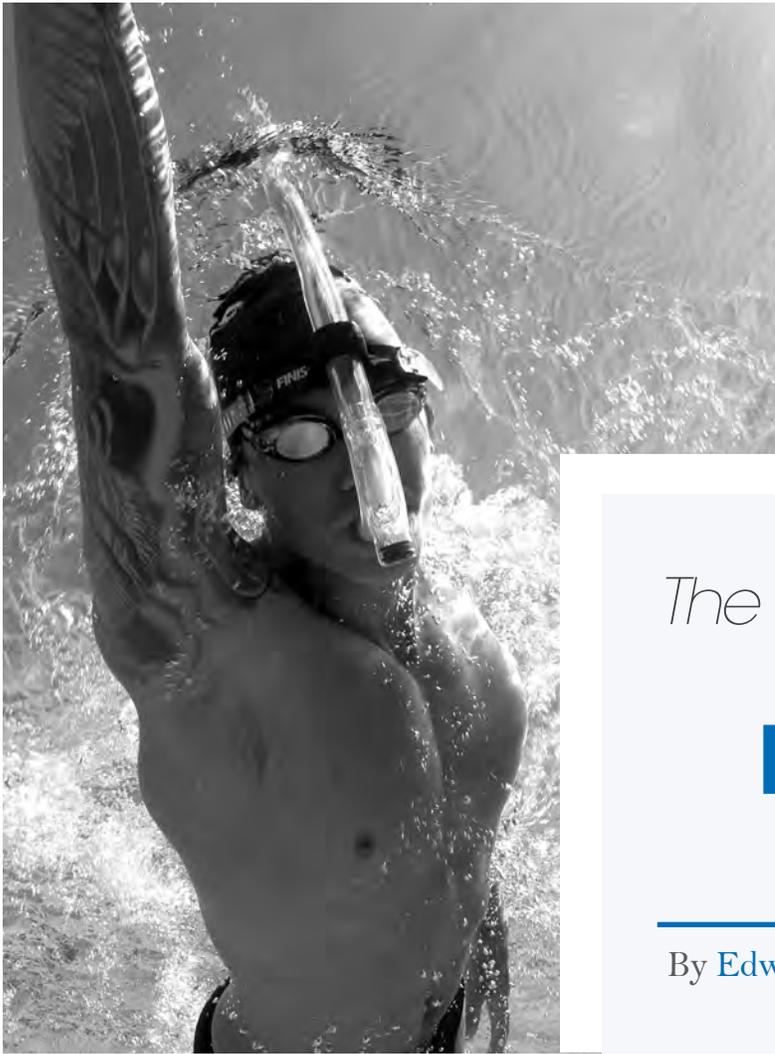
- Janis Joplin

// The happiest people I know are those who find purpose and meaning pursuing a grander vision of a good life measured in terms of worthiness, not net worth. //

~ Michael Josephson

// The first great gift we can bestow on others is a good example. //

~ T. Morell



The Care & Nurturing OF THE **BREATHING PROCESS**

By [Edward H. Nessel, RPh, MS, MPH, PharmD](#)

There are several things in life we simply take for granted; you don't need intense mental effort nor demand of dedicated focus to figure them out. One of these things is the main topic of presentation. We as a species have acclimated appropriately to our environment and even more closely to our immediate ambiance. This is the way the human element has always functioned, and it is mostly directed by the way we live our lives. The human body is the most miraculous machine ever, and after so much effort to study its functions, we still don't know so much. Biological scientists are continuously engrossed to peel back and expose the hidden reasons for how and why to body acts, reacts, and adapts to its surroundings and change in immediate conditions. If we stay in our comfort zones, for example, we expect very little challenge to be created in the body's functioning. But if we push ourselves into areas of serious physical challenge, we then see much of our efforts to endure this

challenge consume much of our deep energy reserves and mental toughness. Things occur to either allow adaptation or failure. And the single most important adaptation we can work to achieve, in my opinion, is the reliance on our ability to exchange air adequately as our ever-increasing need for oxygen drives all metabolic processes and takes over our very existence in sport and exercise.

We have come to consider this a natural right our very being. Compromise our breathing ability, even a little, and the body will respond dramatically in kind. Nature has provided for us to adapt, even thrive on what the earth offers up: only 21% pure oxygen at sea level. Most of the rest of our ambient air mixture has non-physiologic nitrogen (78%) with minute amounts of trace gases. But our physiology can only work with oxygen. Our biochemical reactions are geared to how much O₂ can we inhale, absorb and chemically-turn into bio-friendly compounds to enable quality muscular

activity. This is such an important process that the main computer of our body, the brain, is brought in almost immediately to control our perception of where we are moment by moment with regard to how much oxygen is available and our ability to utilize it.

[The Brain's Involvement in the Breathing Process](#)

With any serious attempt at athletics or intense physical exercise, it is the brain that takes control of our bodies. Nature gave it the software to quickly perceive our ambient oxygen supply ranging from everything is alright to there is absolutely not enough to go on. (This is an important concept which will be discussed below: "what we perceive is what we believe.") The brain's respiratory center is given such importance that it continues to function allowing us to exchange air even when other controlling centers begin to shut down under the increasing influence of



alcohol and/or drugs. But it is not infallible. With sufficient damaging dosages of central nervous system depressants, the ability to breathe becomes labored and eventually can be inhibited enough to bring about suffocation.

This 10% of our body mass (the brain) absolutely influences the other 90%. And the controlling segment of the brain that is the center of all this activity is next to the respiratory center and is called the amygdala. It is strongly stimulated by the presence of carbon dioxide (CO₂). The more this compound builds up in the body, the stronger the amygdala “screams” stop. The participant’s perception proceeds quickly from “I feel OK,” to “I don’t feel OK,” to “I think I am going to die.” Often-times panic ensues with enough amygdala stimulation. And this is manifest to a greater degree in the water than on land since humans are all born land-based beings, the water presenting as a foreign and ever-threatening medium through which swimmers

choose to move. With very few exceptions (example: the appendix) Nature does not waste much time and energy providing body parts or biochemical reactions that do not have protective or activating functions. The amygdala’s main activity is to sense threatening or exceptional conditions that are perceived to be interfering with the body’s ability to easily move, and this perception is centered around the need to obtain as much oxygen as quickly as possible.

Since it is intuitive that our perceptions command our beliefs, to feel we are out of air causes us to work the inhale more than the exhale. With intense exercise or movement, this perception can become all-controlling; to the point that it absolutely influences what we do and how long we do it. The uninitiated or untrained athlete would show great distress with a marked grimace and veins popping from the neck desperately trying to inhale as much air as quickly as possible. This painful distortion

of facial features and labored air-exchange produce what is called the “dragon-breathing syndrome;” all this because of the intense feeling of being out of air. Since physical law states that two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time, if forcefully exhaling the “stale” air with its carbon dioxide load is the process taught and learned, the ability to inhale adequate “fresh” air becomes easier and more successful since there is now room in the lungs. If the brain can be “schooled” to handle this situation, then the athlete would be able to push past this limitation of perceived air distress. This approach has now even come to rule present-day Navy SEAL training.

[The Physical Aspects of Harnessing Ambient Air](#)

There are many influences that come into play when working the breathing processes—what I call sufficient or insufficient “air-exchange.” Our health can change quickly when

encountering diseases of varying intensity that affect respiration. (While studying pathology in graduate school, my professor once opened a lecture with the question of how many of us smoked cigarettes and how many consumed alcohol on a regular basis. He then offered up a comment that if we knew what was out there waiting to “get” us, we would all hide in a cave, until we found out what was waiting for us in the cave. Interpretation: there is no safe place to hide so we better act appropriately and work to attain and maintain the best possible quality of health we can). Our health can be greatly influenced by our life styles and ambient surroundings. The intuitive activity of every athlete or participant in vigorous exercise is centered around the most important of life’s processes: keeping the air exchange accessible and in good working order no matter what we choose to put our bodies through. The body must always be in a state of adequate hydration for general health; so should the air we breathe.

We move faster, we breathe faster. The more intense the movement, the more intensely the body must satisfy the inevitable increase in demand for oxygen-laden air. When the quality and/or quantity of ambient air changes such that the body must acclimate, there is an immediate added stress to pulmonary functioning. The scandalously poor air quality in China for the 2008 Games placed great stress on many of the Olympians, some of whom were forced to endure breathing difficulties over extended time and great distances. There is almost always an obvious delay in the appropriate response to handle diminished air quality or quantity. When air becomes cold and dry as in winter months at northern latitudes, the quality of the air exchange is diminished due to lack of soothing warm moisture. If the home or place of activity becomes heated and, hence, dried to contain less than 50% humidity the nasal passages and bronchioles begin to dry out; mucous usually thickens, further interfering with an increased need for quality air exchange. The dry cotton-mouth feeling inhaling excessively dry air is just the early warning sign of the need for more moisture. The participant in sport or exercise should always hydrate before, during, and after an intense concentrated effort. Indoors at a chlorinated pool always demands adequate hydration; same for exercise in heat or extremely dry conditions. Most don’t realize

you sweat and lose physiologic moisture even in the water. And this can set up the athlete to become more susceptible to respiratory infections and irritants since the linings of the breathing tubes lose their ability to keep the mucus thin and flowing. Irritation over time leading into inflammation of the breathing process could develop into exercised-induced bronkospasm (athletic asthma) and diminished air flow when most needed. The best and most immediate form of treatment would be the use of a hot-steam or warm/moist air vaporizer. Many physicians recommend the use of a cool-mist unit but this is mostly for the reason of preventing the possibility of getting burned from the steam. Bacteria, molds, and viruses can more easily be transmitted and spread all over with cool mist equipment. The hot, soothing moist air from a steam-producer is sterile when it comes out of the unit and provides a better condition all around for the person seeking safe humidified air.

As we age, our lungs lose elasticity and the ability to exchange increasing amounts of inhaled air into our circulatory system. This markedly diminishes that which needs to be carried to where it will do the most good: the vital organs and the skeletal muscles for immediate movement. The total amount of air in the lungs, for the most part, remains the same but during the aging process the amount of oxygen-laden air for physiological use declines. The residual, or “dead air” increases over time and cannot be relied upon to deliver oxygen for our biochemical needs. We normally would have to endure what our lungs can provide with active exchangeable air. Expected decline in an aging healthy person is between eight and ten percent per decade. But this degradation can be cut in half with proper training and appropriate energy-supplementation. Inducing our physiology with the physical aspect of certain training sets to increase a specific group of enzymes involved with upgrading our VO₂max capacity (the facility to extract oxygen from our inhaled air) should be the goal of every quality coach and athlete for maximizing oxygenation of the active body. It is time-consuming and requires the right type of training over many months from someone familiar with inducing this type of pertinent physiology. The end result will hopefully be what every athlete seeks: being

able to strongly finish races.

Training at altitude has its positive effect on causing the body to increase its oxygen transport and utilization systems but this, too, takes dedication over several weeks to months to induce the proper adaptation for increased oxygen-usage. The protein complex in the blood that is mainly involved with this shuttling of oxygen to where it is needed quickly and consistently is hemoglobin.. We have all heard of those athletes (so inclined as to give up the sportsman’s code to win at all costs) who have been seen to instill their own concentrated hemoglobin back into their circulation with intent to maximize oxygen-carrying capacity without having to worry about certain markers (drugs or foreign bodies) showing up that would indicate a cheating protocol on blood tests. But if the hemoglobin is way too concentrated as compared with laboratory guidelines, it would indicate nefarious intentions. Also, as with many things in life, there is a strong potential for abuse and dangerous outcomes. The excess heme can thicken the blood and hinder its movement with formation of clots. The dangerous sequelae are obvious if this develops. Is winning or improving performance possibly worth this risk...not on your life!

And, of course, the obvious: inhaled irritants can wreak havoc on the breathing process. United States Swimming has banned smoking near pool decks and in venues. Many colognes and perfumes also have irritating properties, as does traffic exhaust which seems even more disturbing because water has a unique physical property of drawing fumes to it and concentrating these vaporous compounds right where the swimmers need air. And it is not just human athletes that can be affected by poor air quality as mentioned above with the Beijing Games. When brought to race during certain months in the Tri-State Metropolitan area (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut) having the air cool, dry, and laden with particulate matter from pollution, thoroughbred horses were often seen to bleed from their noses after several days of running. The body can often overcome this type of insult if it is infrequent, but not if continuous exposure becomes the norm. There will be a price to pay for having to continuously and forcefully exchange

unhealthy air such that our breathing apparatus becomes compromised and performances will definitely be diminished.

There have been a few physical procedures that have been and are still being utilized to hopefully aid in the breathing and recovery processes. But these simply don't provide for the benefits they were hoped for. The breathing in of pure oxygen to help recovery is, for the most part, useless. In the past we have seen professional football players on sidelines, to name one sport, mask-over-face inhaling from oxygen tanks. The body cannot store oxygen, and it cannot increase its ability to immediately carry oxygen to demanding tissue, even at mild altitude. If the athlete thinks inhaled pure oxygen is his salvation, he is being incorrectly advised; rather, it is his physiologic condition and training that needs to be brought into question. His preparation for intense repeated movement simply has been improper and inadequate.

Also, the use of pinched breathing snorkels while swimming to supposedly increase the resistance to inhalation requiring more power of the breathing apparatus when under physiologic stress has proven to be non-beneficial. Yet, this still seems to be a very popular training mode for many programs. But in actuality, it is a waste of time and energy. This apparatus does not increase the strength and endurance of the intercostal muscles (between the ribs) to help the athlete inhale more air with each breathing cycle. The breathing muscles are exercised adequately through regular and dedicated training. Rather, the exact opposite is what should be stressed. It is the EXHALE rather than the inhale that aids the process of air-exchange more thoroughly and efficiently as explained previously.

The Physiological & Biochemical Adaptations to Better Utilize Ambient Air

As touched upon above in the physical aspects of breathing, the actual cellular-level biochemistry and physiology that is driven by the quality of the breathing process can and should be stressed such that the body will consistently benefit from enhanced air-exchange to more strongly finish races. As I am fond of saying to my athletes: "It's not

how far you swim, nor how fast you swim; rather, it is how far can you swim fast?!" What has been shared so far is how we utilize our ambient air initiated with the natural procedure of inhalation. With the science of physiology and the concomitant biochemical study of the processes within our bodies, sophisticated and daring experiments from the lab to the athletic venue have shown that remarkable adaptations can be developed to enhance how the body can utilize its air supply over time and distance. This now brings in the concept of enzyme-induction.

It is the wise coach, biological scientist, and dedicated athlete who combine to form the winning combination in establishing pertinent protocols for enhanced air-utilization. All around exchange of information from experimental results with observant notation can bring about amazing results. But there first must be the desire to understand what goes on inside the body. As such, know that all major biochemical processes are influenced by enzymes and enzyme groups. And there are several that need to be induced to produce a quality athlete.

Enzymes are protein compounds that act as catalysts and drivers of how the body reacts and adapts to various types of physiological stress. The enzyme group that governs aerobic capacity or maximum oxygen consumption (VO₂ max) is an extremely important one. If the body cannot extract sufficient amounts of oxygen for its needs from inhaled air over time and distance, quality movement will be short-lived, and performances less than stellar will be seen in mid-distance and distance events.

VO₂max is influenced by size and mass of the athlete more with land-base and weight-bearing activities (with bigger usually allowing for greater values) than with gravity-free and non-weight bearing activities such as swimming and cycling. In the latter types of exercise, the extracted and consumed amounts of oxygen per unit time are more concerned with the ability to simply extract the needed amounts of oxygen from ambient air than the actual size of the athlete. BUT, we also must not discount the actual physical dimensions of the athlete with regards to actual lung size and subsequent usable oxygen transfer to demanding organs and tissues. Maximum

increase in capacity for oxygen extraction and utilization from the ambient air is the goal for building aerobic capacity and is usually optimized by eight to 12 weeks of appropriate training where distances of repeat 300 yards or meters have been shown to provide adequate physiological adaptation along with relatively short rest intervals at 75%-80% perceived effort. Even lesser distances can be utilized appropriately to enhance this capacity as long as work and rest segments are correctly used in tandem. Keep in mind that even the 100-meter distance for each swimming event, and its equivalent on land in time and energy cost (a 400-meter run) takes enough time and consumes enough energy to require an important percentage of aerobic capacity.

So once the body has been adapted to inhale and absorb increasing amounts of oxygen-laden air, what next in the chain of functions is necessary to allow ever-more intense biochemical activity to proceed smoothly? The body has to have receptors available to grab hold and direct newly-arrived oxygen to where and how it can do the most good... producing prodigious amounts of energy for maintaining speed and power.

The answer is the extremely important production of mitochondria throughout the skeletal musculature and vital organs. These organelles (small parts or subdivisions of organ tissue) are the only substances that can produce energy and manufacture the fuel for movement: adenosine Tri-phosphate (ATP). The more of this we have in store and able to quickly make available, the stronger, longer, faster the athlete can move. Again, there are training sets to produce more and more of this vital substance along with newly-discovered energy supplements. The appropriate utilization of both can combine to produce still sought-after optimum results. ■

If the reader has further interest in learning the type of enzyme-inducing sets and physiologic energy supplements that are state-of-the-art science, the author can be contacted directly by e-mail: ednessel@aol.com. Specific questions would be appreciated for ease of communication. Dr. Nessel's next book, KEEPING THE ATHLETE HEALTHY is due out in mid-2014.

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FIGHT

By Craig Impelman, The John R. Wooden Course

On the left side of the Pyramid of Success, below faith, there are four additional pieces of mortar: ambition, adaptability, resourcefulness and fight. These are qualities that encompass the resolve, ingenuity and resilience of the human spirit. This week we will discuss fight.

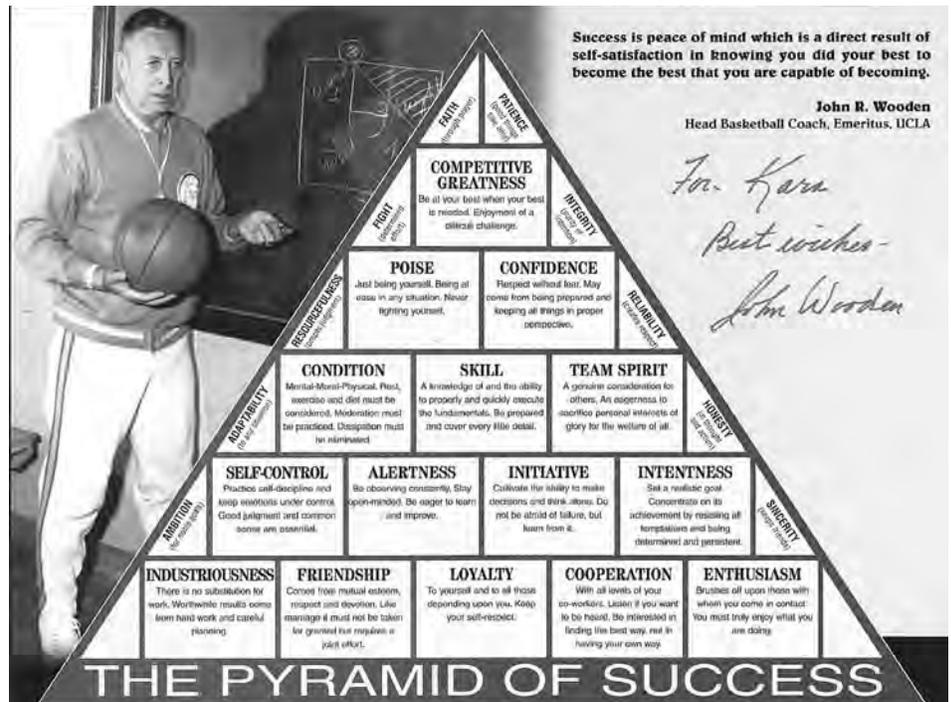
In his book, *Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success with Jay Carty*, Coach Wooden defined fight and it's important in the following manner: Fight is a determined effort to do the very best we can do... It's digging in, gritting our teeth, standing our ground.

When we have fight, we are always ready to respond. We are quick but we don't hurry. We make fewer mistakes because we have the level of our intensity under control. A player with fight has a contained fire burning in his or her belly. This emerges as focused passion. Players with fight never lose a game; they just run out of time.

Perhaps I should have chosen a different word. Fight has some negative connotations that I don't want to communicate. In no way is this mortar quality about an opponent. There was a time when I would talk about "being better than the opponent." I don't anymore. Make no mistake; I always want to win, but I never fight with an opponent. My fight is within me—it is the struggle to be the best I can be at whatever I do.

There is no such thing as losing when we've made the effort to do the best we can. If we use our fight and determination to do our best, success will take care of itself.

Under each piece of mortar on the Pyramid, in the parentheses, there is some brief application advice or a description of that mortar. In the original Pyramid under



"Fight," Coach wrote; "effort and hustle." Later, when Coach revised and perfected the Pyramid, he changed the description to read: "determined effort." Coach's motivation for the change was clear. He wanted to make certain we understood that just making an effort was not real fight.

Fight isn't about simply expanding energy; it's about determination, which is having a fixed purpose or fixation of will. This clear sense of purpose is a key adjective for the kind of fight Coach believed in. It means that this effort has a "never say never" attitude attached to it.

Fight is one of the pieces of mortar that holds the pyramid block Competitive Greatness in place. When we have fight and competitive greatness, we are not fearful of adversity nor are we deterred when we face it.

A person who has fight is following two great pieces of advice from Coach Wooden:

1. "The person who is afraid to risk failure seldom has to face success," and
2. "The person who is not afraid of failure seldom has to face it."

Coach described adversity this way: "Adversity is the state in which man most easily becomes acquainted with himself, being especially free of admirers then."

Fight enables us to rise to the occasion- and that's a pretty good trait for any character!

Yours in coaching,

CRAIG IMPELMAN
The John R. Wooden Course



THE ATHLETE

We ALL WANT

By Coach Jackson Leonard



We have a young gentleman on our team. He is 12 and often has to talk up to large 10 and 11 year olds. Our lightest med-balls have the capability of knocking him over if thrown too hard. But, he listens. And he wants to swim. He taught himself to swim two years ago by watching instructional YouTube videos. His parents were not athletes, in any sport. They do not encourage him to go to practice, though they make every effort to get him there when he pushes them out the door.

The young man has been attentive to instruction and eager to make changes since my first day. His humility often gets in the way of his practice habits, as he starts in the back of the lane each day. I have to remind him that 10 year olds girls should not be swimming in front of him. His best repeats in practice are always, without fail, the last repetitions of any 1500+ meter set. He builds and builds and continues without relenting.

The first week of practice, he heard me chastise a few young people for quitting in the middle of a set due to cramps and soreness and stray eyelashes... he hasn't stopped since day one, although I know he's been hurting.

The gentleman is leaving our team in three weeks. Their family wants to travel to Switzerland, then Asia, and when they return they will live in California. This young man only cares about making a JO cut, though, and being a part of the "winning team mentality" we are cultivating. He made a deal with his parents that if he made a JO cut, he would leave to be with family for the first leg of their family trip, but then would return to live with his aunt here in town to get ready for JO's before moving. The problem is... the young man is 3-4 seconds off every 50 and 100 meter race time standard in the Florida Gold Coast.

Last Friday night, our Distance session was cancelled due to rain. The meet committee chose to swim the Womens 800s Saturday morning very early, and the Men's 1500s Sunday morning very early. The gentleman's father asked if it was absolutely necessary he swim the 1500 since it was so early. Though there was a chance he might not be allowed to race due to distance event entry caps, I strongly encouraged the young man to attend and warm up with the intention of racing a 1500, not just swimming one. I did not need to say anything more; the young man would be there on his

own volition. He owns his swimming.

He arrived at 5:45 AM and warmed up with a purpose. An hour and 15 minutes later, after watching three heats of the 1500, he was up. He held 1:28 highs for the first 1100 before he started to slip into the high 1:30s and low 1:31s. We don't do enough yardage yet for him to have a reason to have finished that race particularly well. But we do kick 65% of workout and we do technique the remainder. So, he recommitted to his legs and quit crossing his midline the last 300 (maybe because I was walking up and down the middle 40 meters with him and wildly waving my arms like a windmill, maybe because he knew he was deteriorating, the jury is still out on that...). He hit the last flip turn and came off the wall like a Wild Man. As a group, we had discussed the omnipresent thirty seconds—thirty seconds of anaerobic ability humans have at the end of arduous aerobic activity—for those willing to commit. He blasted away with the proverbial "boom-chicka-boom" legs and finished in 22:13:68. Three seconds under the JO cut.

He only has the one cut. It probably won't score a single point at JO's. But he earned it. ■

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A Psychiatrist Says *This Skill* is the
BEST INDICATOR
OF A PERSON'S
ABILITY to SUCCEED

JACQUELYN SMITH

We all face obstacles in our lives and careers — and while they can make us better and stronger, they can also put us over the edge.

It turns out, the ability to get over those hurdles and persevere is the strongest sign of our ability to succeed, according to Mark Goulston, a psychiatrist, author, and former FBI hostage-negotiation trainer.

“Possessing the skill of handling obstacles well demonstrates a high level of self-reliance, good judgment, and resourcefulness,” he says. “The more proactive and resourceful you are, and the better your judgment calls and decision-making are when you’re dealing with an obstacle, the greater the trust and confidence others will have in you.” And where there’s trust, there’s success.

Goulston says savvy hiring managers will use the interview to determine whether you have mastered this skill and possess these traits.

“If you give any indication that you don’t handle obstacles well, the employer will assume you’re the type of person who will just dump your problems on your boss,” he says.

And nobody wants to hire that guy.

Goulston, who now works as a business adviser and consultant for executives and employees at big corporations, including GE, IBM, and Goldman Sachs, says he worked with a head-hunting firm to come up with the best questions for identify the top candidates for jobs.

He suggests employers ask these questions and candidates be ready to answer them (with concrete examples for each):

Give me an example of an obstacle you faced and what you did that involved:

- Not having the skills to do what was expected of you.
- Not being able to develop skills you needed and having to attain and use resources outside yourself and your group/department.
- Having to attain and use resources outside your company.
- Not being clear with what you were being

asked by a superior who intimidated you.

- Having to gain cooperation from people within your group or from another part of your organization who appeared non-cooperative or kept putting you off.
- Dealing with downsizing in your department or group.
- Dealing with a reprimand or negative performance review.
- Having to hold accountable and confront a difficult person about something they were doing wrong or something they were failing to do.
- Dealing with a mistake you’ve made.
- Dealing with the biggest setback in your career. ■

Jacquelyn Smith joined Business Insider as the careers editor in February 2014. She previously worked as a leadership reporter for Forbes. She is the coauthor of “Find and Keep Your Dream Job: The Definitive Careers Guide From Forbes.”



FEAR OF FAILURE

SETH GODIN'S
"WHAT TO DO WHEN
IT'S YOUR TURN"

Reviewed by
COACH DON SWARTZ

In the industrialized world, the world of driveways, parkways, dishwashers, parkways, dishwashers, and dumbwaiters, a rational fear for our individual survival isn't even in the top ten. Wild animals don't threaten our existence, the diseases that were rampant a century ago do not exist, and crime in our biggest cities is more rare than ever before.

So what is there to be afraid of?
Failure.

Our schools, our marketers, and our culture reinforce this fear daily. The heartbreak of psoriasis, the humiliation of underarm odor, but most of all, the utter horror of trying and failing.

Failure is almost never as bad as we fear it will

be, but it's our fear that we feel, not the failure.

Worst of all, we've so amplified our internal narrative that we can't help but associate freedom with failure.

And so our fear of failure transfers effortlessly into fear of freedom.

Consider our avoidance of feeling tired. If you're unwilling to be tired, unwilling to feel fatigue in your legs, you can't run a marathon. Successful marathon runners haven't figured out how to avoid being tired, you can't run.

If you're not willing to imagine failure, you're unable to be free.

In just a few generations, we've gone from "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself,"

to "The fear we feel is the fear of freedom."

This book is not just fabulous; it is mind bending and eye opening at the same moment. We encourage you to put it on your "buy now" list. Thank you Seth Godin... hundreds of times over... the passage above is page 63 in his book. As we told our team when we read them this page at Saturday's team meeting, there are rarely new words invented.

What is constantly evolving is authors' ability to use words in more meaningful ways. Godin is one of those authors. ■

Coach Don Swartz is an ASCA Hall of Fame Honoree, and still coaching in California. His blog, Swim Coach Direct, is a rich source of coach education and inspiration.



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