

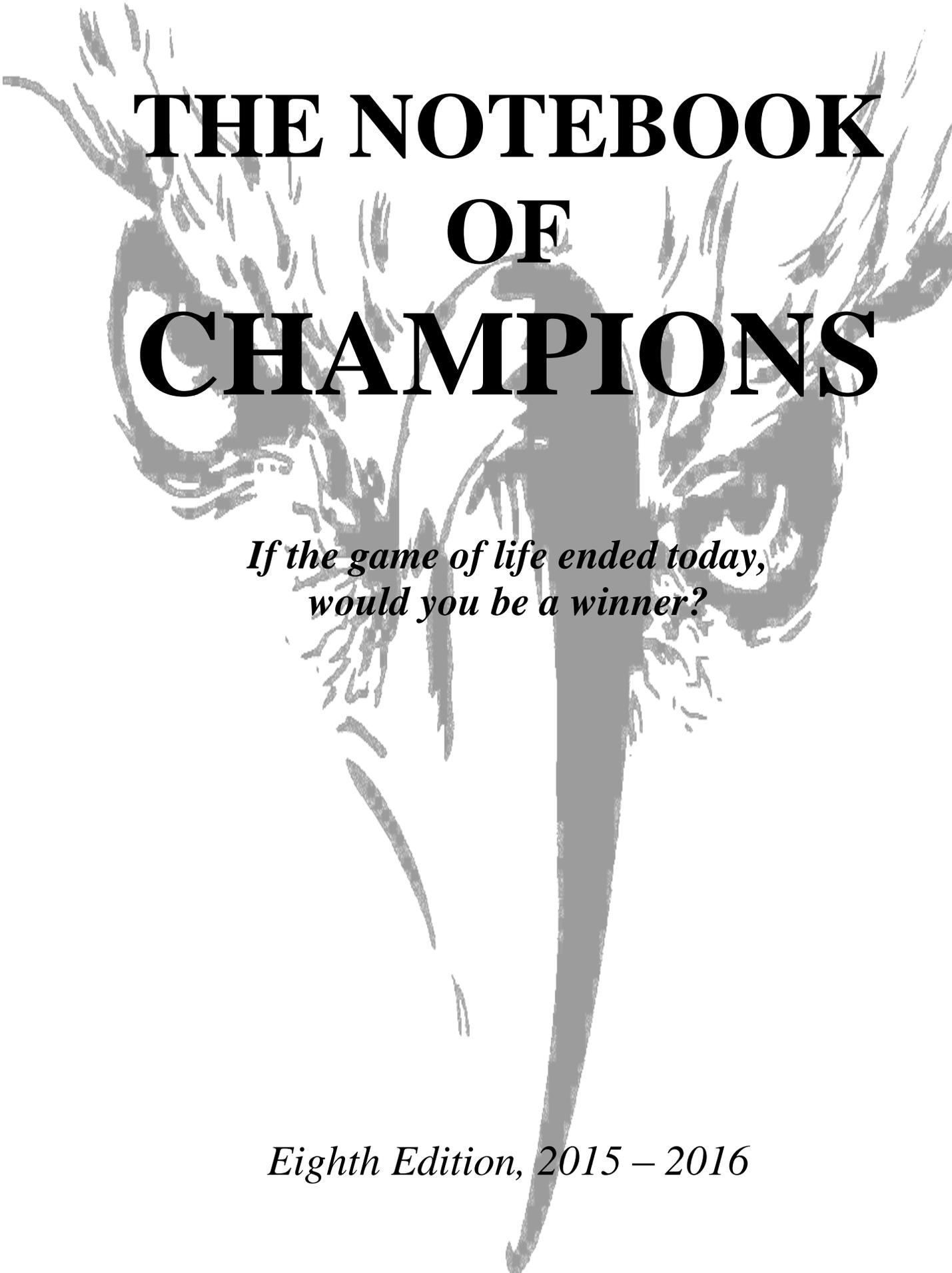
THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS

BUILDING SUCCESS ONE VICTORY AT A TIME

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Eighth Edition, 2015 – 2016



THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS

*If the game of life ended today,
would you be a winner?*

Eighth Edition, 2015 – 2016

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 1: Basketball

Section 2: Pro Shot Shooting

Section 3: Attitude

Section 4: Leadership

Section 5: Self-Control

Section 6: Focus

Section 7: Competitive Greatness

Section 8: Faith

Section 9: Hard Work

Section 10: Success

Section 11: Love

Section 12: Responsibility

Section 13: Team (*Together Everyone Achieves More*)

Section 14: Fatherhood

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 1: Basketball

“What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player,” **John Wooden**

“Life is like a basketball, it just keeps bouncing up and down.”

“The invention of basketball was not an accident. It was developed to meet a need. Those boys simply would not play ‘Drop the Handkerchief,’” **James Naismith**

“Even when I'm old and grey, I won't be able to play it, but I'll still love the game,” **Michael Jordan**

“I treat every day like it is my last day with a basketball,” **LeBron James**

“My greatest gift that I have in life is basketball,” **Isiah Thomas**

“A lot of late nights in the gym, a lot of early mornings, especially when your friends are going out, you're going to the gym, those are the sacrifices that you have to make if you want to be an NBA basketball player,” **Jason Kidd**

“Everything negative -- pressure, challenges -- are all an opportunity for me to rise,” **Kobe Bryant**

“Great players are willing to give up their own personal achievement for the achievement of the group. It enhances everybody,” **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar**

“Once you are labeled the best you want to stay up there, and you can't do it by loafing around. If I don't keep changing, I'm history,” **Larry Bird**

“The game is my wife. It demands loyalty and responsibility, and it gives me back fulfillment and peace,” **Michael Jordan**

“I've got a theory that if you give 100 percent all of the time, somehow things will work out in the end,” **Larry Bird**

What Do I Want in a Player?

I want a player who is willing to make a commitment to being as good as he can be each time that he plays.

I want a player who is willing and ready to do what has to be done to make a positive contribution in the most difficult of games.

I want a player who competes in each game as though there is nothing he will ever do that will be more important.

I want a player who more than anything, wants our team to be the very best that it can be.

Is this too much for me to demand of you?

Is this too much for you to demand of yourself?

A Walsh Eagle Basketball Player

A Walsh Eagle basketball player can come in any size, shape or color. There is no common denominator except a love for the game and a desire to get the most out of his abilities. He is not only proud of his strengths but understands his weaknesses. He is first of all concerned with the good of his team and knows that individual recognition will come through team excellence.

A Walsh Eagle basketball player has the enthusiasm of an evangelist, the discipline of a monk, the heart of a warrior, and never loses the honesty and character of a small boy.

He appreciates the support of hundreds of fans, but he is much more aware of the example he is setting for some small boy watching from the sideline. He is happy when he scores a basket, but never forgets that a teammate threw him the ball. While he never lets up at either end of the floor, the other team is not his real opponent; it is the full extent of his own potential that he is always playing against. He lets the referees, with occasional assistance from his coach, do the officiating.

A Walsh Eagle basketball player is made and not born. He is constantly striving to reach his potential knowing that he will bypass other players who cannot withstand the strain of this quest for excellence. He realizes that the challenges and competition of today's world. He knows that the true measure of his performance is not recorded in wins or losses but in how much of himself he has given to the game.

A Walsh Eagle basketball player never realizes when the odds are stacked against him. He is one who can only be defeated by a clock that happens to run out of time. He is what every young boy wants to become and what an old man can look back upon with great pride that he once was.

The Walsh Eagle Image

There are little eyes upon you
And they're watching night and day
There are little ears that quickly
Take in every word you say;
There are little hands all eager
To do anything you do:
And a little boy who's dreaming
Of the day he'll be like you.

You're the little fellow's idol;
You're the wisest of the wise,
In his little mind about you,
No suspicions ever rise;
He believes in you devoutly,
Holds that all you say and do,
He will say and do, in your way
When he's a grown-up like you.

There's a wide-eyed little fellow,
Who believes you're always right,
And his ears are always open,
And he watches day and night;
You are setting an example
Every day in all you do,
For the little boy who's waiting
To grow up to be like you.

Basketball

Basketball is the All-American and the All Pro. It's a rag-tag kid shooting a worn-out ball through a broken rim. It's the guy who plays thirty-two minutes and the guy who just hopes to get in the game.

Basketball is pep bands and gyms packed with howling fans. It's long hours of practice before empty stands. It's adulation and recognition. It's a coach hollering at your every mistake. It's joy, ecstasy and triumph, but it can also be sadness, sorrow and dejection. Basketball is fun; but it is also blood, sweat, and tears; basketball banquets and half-time expectations and its memories are endless.

Basketball is American, it's hot dogs, popcorn, and the Star Spangled Banner. It's old folks listening to their favorite team on the radio; it's youngsters imitating every move of their favorite players. It's national championships and three-on-three in the school yard. It's rich people and poor people; it's black people and white people; it's big people and little people.

Basketball is all of this and a whole lot more! Most important of all is that you and I have a chance to be a part of it.

Beavers

I want beavers.

What do beavers do other than chop down trees?

NOTHING, they just chop down trees.

I want guys who just think basketball.

WALSH EAGLE BASKETBALL

COACHING PHILOSOPHY: COACH RENQUIST – COACH TURNER

Sports should always be enjoyable. The number one reason why athletes participate in a sport is because they enjoy the sport. Sports were originally created for academic reasons. Sports can teach us things we cannot learn in the classroom. Through sport's participation, we gain certain values: Leadership, Hard Work, Dedication, Mental Toughness, Teamwork, Humility, Discipline, Accept Consequences, Sportsmanship, Patience, Time Management, Pride, Self-Control, Focus, Responsibility, Perseverance, Unselfishness, Communication Skills, Leadership, Perspective, Respect for Others, Win / Lose with Dignity, Social Skills, Learn to Compete, Self Confidence, List Priorities: Faith, Family, Academics, Sports. It is the coach's job to instill these values in their players.

One of the most important benefits of sport's participation is the relationships that are formed. Players make lifelong relationships with their teammates, coaches, managers, fans, opponents, and everyone who helps manage the games (maintenance crews, scorekeepers, bus drivers, athletic directors, principals, superintendents, and even the referees). In today's technological world, networking is very important. Through sports participation, athletes have a far greater network than those who do not participate.

Sports give athletes opportunities that they may not normally have. Just being part of a team can be very important to certain athletes. Students who participate in sports have an enthusiasm to go to school. Athletes have higher G.P.A.'s, fewer discipline problems, and have better attendance. The NCAA did two separate studies to try to predict success in life. One study looked at A.C.T. scores, high school G.P.A., college G.P.A., and achievement in high school sports. The best predictor of success in life was achievement in high school sports. The second study looked at S.A.T. scores, high school G.P.A., college G.P.A., and participation in high school sports. The best predictor of success in life was participation in high school sports. It is important to have a high G.P.A. and to do well on college entrance exams, however, the best predictor of success is through sport's participation.

What is success? Is it the ability to acquire nice things (car, house, clothes, toys, etc.)? Or is it more than that? Sports help us define success. Success is the peace of mind that is the direct result from self-satisfaction in knowing you took your God given ability, and became the very best you were capable of becoming. To have success in the game of basketball, we believe that we must do each of the following items to the best of our ability.

1. We believe in playing man-to-man defense. Teams that play man have a better chance of doing something special than teams that do not. We will zone teams who can't shoot. We will also zone teams we can't guard. Whether we are playing man or zone, we want to be aggressive. We want to pressure the basketball all over the floor

without fouling. We also want to pressure away from the basketball so that the person with the ball has no way to escape the insurmountable pressure. We want to trap the ball when it is located in trap spots (corners). We want to trap the ball whenever the ballhandler has turned his back to the basket. We may trap outstanding players in the post and on the perimeter. We want to be in a position to help our teammates at all times. We want all players to talk on defense. It is vital that we wall off dribble penetration. Talk the help and help the helper. We want you in a stance paying attention to the ball and your man at all times. Whenever a pass is made, we want you to jump to the ball to secure the proper “ball-you-man” relationship. We $\frac{3}{4}$ wrap the low post. We do not want the ball to go into the post. We take away the lob with the helpside defenders. We cannot get screened. We must talk when a screen occurs. The person getting screened must fight through it. We must switch screens when appropriate. It is appropriate to switch screens between two defenders who can guard the same type of offensive player. It is also appropriate to switch screens when the man getting screened gets screened with no chance of effectively getting through it. Mismatches do not get the defense into trouble, wide open offensive players do. We believe in being aggressive on on ball screens. We may trap it, we may hedge and recover, we may get high with no hedge, we may even go underneath it with no hedge. We will be aggressive. We will not allow the offense to do what they want to do when they set on ball screens. We want to take away our opponent’s best scoring options. In fact, we want to take away whatever the other team wants to do. We want to be the aggressor. We want to dictate the tempo of the game. We want our opponent to call the first time out of each half. We want to force the other team to make mistakes. We want them to turn the ball over. We want them to get called for charges. We want them to take bad shots. We closeout on all perimeter players with our hands up. When a shot goes up, we want to contest the shot by getting up with the shooter without fouling him. When a shot goes up, we want all five of our defenders to account for all five of their offensive players. If a guy is not crashing from the perimeter, then we don’t need to block him out. But, everyone else must be aggressively blocked out. We keep the ball high on all rebounds and make sound passes to the outlet who is on that side of the floor. If a ball handler gets a rebound, he must quickly attack the opponent by dribble penetrating from the middle of the floor. We believe in being alert on all inbound plays. We do not give up cheap buckets. We try not to allow the other team to run their play. We want to check all cutters and call out all screens. We will only switch if we do a poor job of calling the screen and getting threw it.

2. The game of basketball is won in transition. We run the floor as fast as possible on fast breaks and defensive transition. We want to run after all turnovers or missed shots. We want to get the ball down the floor as quickly as possible, and make the offense pay for their mistake. We even want to run on made shots. After our opponent scores, we want the ball down the floor as quickly as possible. We want to hit them before they are ready. If teams decide to pressure us, we believe in attacking their pressure in a very aggressive manner. We want to score every time. We don’t just try to “break” a press. We try to score off of it. We use the pass to beat a zone press. We

use the dribble to defeat the man press. It is important to be sound while converting from offense to defense.

3. Converting from offense to defense is much easier if you take care of the basketball. We must value each possession by not turning the ball over. We cannot take bad shots either. In transition defense, we must stop the ball early. We do not want the ball handler dribbling into an uncontested three or getting into the lane. We must protect the basket, and find shooters. No one gets a layup or an open three in transition. If a layup shooter is out in front of our defense. We want to jump stop and block out the opponent's next person down the floor. The layup shooter does not need to be blocked out. Get the next guy!

4. Offensively, we want every player on the floor to be a threat to score. We want to pass the ball to an open teammate immediately. If everyone is closely guarded, then we want to use dribble penetration (penetrate and kick or penetrate and score). We believe in valuing the basketball. We are strong with the ball. We are sound with the ball when we dribble it. We know that the only reason to dribble is to make an immediate move to the basket, to get a better passing angle, to avoid a five second call, or to bring the ball down the floor. There are no other reasons to dribble! When we dribble, we dribble low (below the knee) with our head up. When we see an open teammate, we give it to him right away. We are not selfish. We make sound passes that are away from the defense. We want to hold the basketball below the strike zone on the perimeter so that we can pass, dribble, or shoot. We only hold the basketball above the strike zone on the perimeter when we are going to make an immediate deep pass to a teammate or we are using fakes to make a pass. Players who hold the ball above their heads are easy to pressure and are one dimensional (they can only pass). We want to be difficult to guard and three dimensional (pass, dribble or shoot). We take high percentage shots. We play for shots inside the paint or wide open perimeter shots. On post ups, we post a man, not a spot. When we pass to a post, we expect the post to utilize the post moves we teach in an effort to score. On the perimeter, we expect our players to utilize jab steps and shot fakes. If the defense reacts to it we take advantage of it by utilizing dribble penetration. We take open three-point shots after dribble penetrate. We take open three-point shots after a post throws the ball back out to the perimeter. We take open three-point shots whenever we are open and have hit some other perimeter shots. We believe in the Pro Shot Shooting methods. We send four to the boards after every shot (excluding the shooter – you don't have to rebound made shots!). We view every shot as a pass to a teammate. We are relentless after offensive rebounds. We form the rebounding triangle (both sides of the rim and middle of the lane). We work hard for positioning before the shot hits the rim. If we are unable to get the proper positioning, we try to pin our opponent under the basket (reverse block out). If our opponent has an inside position on a rebound that is coming directly to them, then we concede the rebound. We do not go over our opponent's back. When we get offensive rebounds, we keep the ball high. We are strong with the ball. We look to score immediately without hesitation. We will use shot fakes to try to get defenders in the air if the immediate score isn't available. We only pass the ball out if nearly the entire team has collapsed on the rebounder. We

- want to score and draw the foul on every offensive rebound. We rotate one man back to stop the opponent's fast break. Every player we put on the floor must be able to finish plays. We aren't just playing for a whistle. We want the contact and we want to make the shot. We thank the passer by pointing at him. The crowd will recognize the shooter. We will recognize the passer. We want to score on inbound plays. We understand our assignments and we execute them to the best of our abilities.
5. We play so hard that your coach has to take you out of the game. We play so hard that our opponent thinks, "I never want to play the WALSH EAGLES AGAIN!" We play hard and we are competitive. We want to win every possession with an intense amount of urgency (This possession may be the difference in the game). We get to every loose ball. We are the first one on the floor diving for a loose ball if necessary. We never let up on either end of the floor. We are not a light switch. You can't turn up your level of intensity when you feel like it and turn it down when you don't. We must play hard all the time. In practice, in individual workout sessions, and of course in the games. We show strength in our body language. We must project toughness and confidence through our body language. Do not hang your head. Do not act tired. Do not act defeated. We sprint to the bench at the end of every quarter or on timeouts. We sprint to the locker room at half time and at the end of the game. **PLAYING HARD IS NOT A SOME OF THE TIME THING – IT IS AN ALL OF THE TIME THING!!!** We are in great shape. The more wind you have the more wins you'll have! We make the sprint and distance ladder every time! We stay in great shape throughout the offseason. We show up to the first day of practice in tremendous physical condition by participating in an offseason strength and conditioning program (that program may include participation in football and / or track). We believe that basketball players are made in the offseason. Becoming an excellent basketball player doesn't just happen. Becoming great happens only through hard work. Working on becoming great has to almost be an obsession. You have to want to get better, and then be willing to do whatever it takes to get better. Players who are unwilling to do what it takes to get better during the offseason are usually the ones who complain about playing time during the season.
 6. We play smart. We believe that every player on our team has a role. It is the player's responsibility to know what their role is, and to perform his role to the best of his ability. After a mistake, we focus on the next play. We flush it and move on, except for the part that educates us. Within the last 30 seconds of a quarter, we play for the last shot unless we have a layup or a wide open three. In the fourth quarter, we constantly know the time and score, and we play based off of those two circumstances. If we have the lead, we run as much clock as the opponent will allow. We make them come out and guard us. When we attack, we are looking for lay ups and open perimeter shots (after dribble penetration or after a post entry pass). We are students of the game. We study our playbooks and our game plans. We take advantage of every opportunity to get better. We watch film, and learn from it. We watch college and professional basketball and try to learn from what we see and hear from the knowledgeable commentators. We participate in every offseason individual or team session that is provided. We must work on our individual skills every day not

just when we feel like it. We must motivate our teammates to do the same. We hand the basketball to the nearest referee. We play a difficult schedule: we play anyone – anywhere – any time! Tough schedules produce tough players. We make the most out of our practice time. Every practice is well thought out and precisely scheduled down to the very last minute. We practice ridiculously fast. There is no down time. We move quickly in and out of every drill. Our leaders help lead their teammates in and out of every drill at a rapid pace.

7. We play together. Our players are hard to play against, but easy to play with. We know that we cannot do it by ourselves. We must play unselfish and demand that our teammates do the same. We must inspire our teammates to do things that they may not want to do, but need to do for the betterment of the team. If your teammate is on the ground, then we get to our teammate first. You help him up. If your teammate makes or misses a free throw, you encourage him before his next shot. When someone comes out of the game, everyone will stand up for that player (he just played so hard for his team that his coach had to take him out of the game). Each player allows themselves to be coached. They must crave the opportunity to get better. Players must make eye contact with people who are speaking to them.

By participating in the game of basketball, we gain so many values. Perhaps the most important is leadership. We believe leadership skills can be acquired by diving deeply into **The Notebook of Champions**, and by knowing what the coaches want to accomplish. Armed with the knowledge of what the coaches want to accomplish, our leaders can be an extension of the coaches on and off the court.

The Fist:

Five fingers held together in a tight formation, **a fist**, is far more effective and powerful than five fingers held outstretched and alone.

In basketball, the five individuals on the court must act as one, **as a fist**, in order to achieve the success that they could not find acting as five independent players.

Each separate finger that makes up **The Fist** symbolizes a fundamental quality that renders a team great. We will emphasize five terms: ***We Play Hard, We Play Smart, We Play Together, We Play Aggressive, We Communicate.*** Each one of these traits alone are important. But all five together are tough to beat.

Instead of giving high fives or patting one another on the back, we will give fists.

When teammates show each other their fist, we remind one another of the five terms that will bring us together and allow us to be the strongest that we can be.

WE PLAY HARD: *We give maximum effort at all times and in everything we do. We take charges, and are eager to dive for a loose ball.*

WE PLAY SMART: *We know our assignments and make wise decisions.*

WE PLAY TOGETHER: *Five people working together can achieve much more than five people working independently.*

WE PLAY AGGRESSIVE: *The most aggressive team will get all of the calls and win the game.*

WE COMMUNICATE: *We make eye contact with each other whenever someone is talking. We talk at all times when we are on the floor.*

Defining Toughness in College Hoops:

By: Jay Bilas, ESPN.com

I have heard the word "toughness" thrown around a lot lately. Reporters on television, radio and in print have opined about a team or player's "toughness" or quoted a coach talking about his team having to be "tougher" to win.

Then, in almost coordinated fashion, I would watch games and see player upon player thumping his chest after a routine play, angrily taunting an opponent after a blocked shot, getting into a shouting match with an opposing player, or squaring up nose-to-nose as if a fight might ensue. I see players jawing at each other, trying to "intimidate" other players. What a waste of time. That is nothing more than fake toughness, and it has no real value.

I often wonder: Do people really understand what coaches and experienced players mean when they emphasize "toughness" in basketball? Or is it just some buzzword that is thrown around haphazardly without clear definition or understanding? I thought it was the latter, and I wrote a short blog item about it a couple of weeks ago.

The response I received was overwhelming. Dozens of college basketball coaches called to tell me that they had put the article up in the locker room, put it in each player's locker, or had gone over it in detail with their teams. Memphis coach John Calipari called to say that he had his player's post the definition of toughness over their beds because he believed that true "toughness" was the one thing that his team needed to develop to reach its potential. I received messages from high school coaches who wanted to relay the definition of toughness to their players and wanted to talk about it further.

Well, I got the message that I should expound upon what I consider toughness to be. It may not be what you think. Toughness is something I had to learn the hard way, and something I had no real idea of until I played college basketball. When I played my first game in college, I thought that toughness was physical and based on how much punishment I could dish out and how much I could take. I thought I was tough. I found out pretty quickly that I wasn't, but I toughened up over time, and I got a pretty good understanding of toughness through playing in the ACC, for USA Basketball, in NBA training camps, and as a professional basketball player in Europe. I left my playing career a heck of a lot tougher than I started it, and my only regret is that I didn't truly "get it" much earlier in my playing career.

When I faced a tough opponent, I wasn't worried that I would get hit -- I was concerned that I would get sealed on ball reversal by a tough post man, or that I would get boxed out on every play, or that my assignment would sprint the floor on every possession and get something easy on me. The toughest guys I had to guard were the ones who made it tough on me. Toughness has nothing to do with size, physical strength or athleticism. Some players may be born tough, but I believe that toughness is a skill, and it is a skill

that can be developed and improved. Michigan State coach Tom Izzo always says, "Players play, but tough players win." He is right.

Here are some of the ways true toughness is exhibited in basketball:

Set a good screen: The toughest players to guard are the players who set good screens. When you set a good screen, you are improving the chances for a teammate to get open, and you are greatly improving your chances of getting open. A good screen can force the defense to make a mistake. A lazy or bad screen is a waste of everyone's time and energy. To be a tough player, you need to be a "screener/scorer," a player who screens hard and immediately looks for an opportunity on offense. On the 1984 U.S. Olympic Team, Bob Knight made Michael Jordan set a screen before he could get a shot. If it is good enough for Jordan, arguably the toughest player ever, it is good enough for you.

Set up your cut: The toughest players make hard cuts, and set up their cuts. Basketball is about deception. Take your defender one way, and then plant the foot opposite of the direction you want to go and cut hard. A hard cut may get you a basket, but it may also get a teammate a basket. If you do not make a hard cut, you will not get anyone open. Setting up your cut, making the proper read of the defense, and making a hard cut require alertness, good conditioning and good concentration. Davidson's Stephen Curry is hardly a physical muscle-man, but he is a tough player because he is in constant motion, he changes speeds, he sets up his cuts, and he cuts hard. Curry is hard to guard, and he is a tough player.

Talk on defense: The toughest players talk on defense, and communicate with their teammates. It is almost impossible to talk on defense and not be in a stance, down and ready, with a vision of man and ball. If you talk, you let your teammates know you are there, and make them and yourself better defenders. It also lets your opponent know that you are fully engaged.

Jump to the ball: When on defense, the tough defenders move as the ball moves. The toughest players move on the flight of the ball, not when it gets to its destination. And the toughest players jump to the ball and take away the ball side of the cut. Tough players don't let cutters cut across their face -- they make the cutter change his path.

Don't get screened: No coach can give a player the proper footwork to get through every screen. Tough players have a sense of urgency not to get screened and to get through screens so that the cutter cannot catch the ball where he wants to. A tough player makes the catch difficult.

Get your hands up: A pass discouraged is just as good as a pass denied. Tough players play with their hands up to take away vision, get deflections and to discourage a pass in order to allow a teammate to cover up. Cutters and post players will get open, if only for a count. If your hands are up, you can keep the passer from seeing a momentary opening.

Play the ball, see your man: Most defenders see the ball and hug their man, because they are afraid to get beat. A tough defender plays the ball and sees his man. There is a difference.

Get on the floor: In my first road game as a freshman, there was a loose ball that I thought I could pick up and take the other way for an easy one. While I was bending over at the waist, one of my opponents dived on the floor and got possession of the ball. My coach was livid. We lost possession of the ball because I wasn't tough enough to get on the floor for it. I tried like hell never to get out-toughed like that again. The first player to get to the floor is usually the one to come up with any loose ball.

Close out under control: It is too easy to fly at a shooter and think you are a tough defender. A tough defender closes out under control, takes away a straight line drive and takes away the shot. A tough player has a sense of urgency but has the discipline to do it the right way.

Post your man, not a spot: Most post players just blindly run to the low block and get into a shoving match for a spot on the floor. The toughest post players are posting their defensive man. A tough post player is always open, and working to get the ball to the proper angle to get a post feed. Tough post players seal on ball reversal and call for the ball, and they continue to post strong even if their teammates miss them.

Run the floor: Tough players sprint the floor, which drags the defense and opens up things for others. Tough players run hard and get "easy" baskets, even though there is nothing easy about them. Easy baskets are hard to get. Tough players don't take tough shots -- they work hard to make them easy.

Play so hard, your coach has to take you out: I was a really hard worker in high school and college. But I worked and trained exceptionally hard to make playing easier. I was wrong. I once read that Bob Knight had criticized a player of his by saying, "You just want to be comfortable out there!" Well, that was me, and when I read that, it clicked with me. I needed to work to increase my capacity for work, not to make it easier to play. I needed to work in order to be more productive in my time on the floor. Tough players play so hard that their coaches have to take them out to get rest so they can put them back in. The toughest players don't pace themselves.

Get to your teammate first: When your teammate lays his body on the line to dive on the floor or take a charge, the tough players get to him first to help him back up. If your teammate misses a free throw, tough players get to him right away. Tough players are also great teammates.

Take responsibility for your teammates: Tough players expect a lot from their teammates, but they also put them first. When the bus leaves at 9 a.m., tough players not only get themselves there, but they also make sure their teammates are up and get there, too. Tough players take responsibility for others in addition to themselves. They make

sure their teammates eat first, and they give credit to their teammates before taking it themselves.

Take a charge: Tough players are in a stance, playing the ball, and alert in coming over from the weak side and taking a charge. Tough players understand the difference between being in the right spot and being in the right spot with the intention of stopping somebody. Some players will look puzzled and say, "But I was in the right spot." Tough players know that they have to get to the right spot with the sense of urgency to stop someone. The toughest players never shy away from taking a charge.

Get in a stance: Tough players don't play straight up and down and put themselves in the position of having to get ready to get ready. Tough players are down in a stance on both ends of the floor, with feet staggered and ready to move. Tough players are the aggressor, and the aggressor is in a stance.

Finish plays: Tough players don't just get fouled, they get fouled and complete the play. They don't give up on a play or assume that a teammate will do it. A tough player plays through to the end of the play and works to finish every play.

Work on your pass: A tough player doesn't have his passes deflected. A tough player gets down, pivots, pass fakes, and works to get the proper angle to pass away from the defense and deliver the ball.

Throw yourself into your team's defense: A tough player fills his tank on the defensive end, not on offense. A tough player is not deterred by a missed shot. A tough player values his performance first by how well he defended.

Take and give criticism the right way: Tough players can take criticism without feeling the need to answer back or give excuses. They are open to getting better and expect to be challenged and hear tough things. You will never again in your life have the opportunity you have now at the college level: a coaching staff that is totally and completely dedicated to making you and your team better. Tough players listen and are not afraid to say what other teammates may not want to hear, but need to hear.

Show strength in your body language: Tough players project confidence and security with their body language. They do not hang their heads, do not react negatively to a mistake of a teammate, and do not whine and complain to officials. Tough players project strength, and do not cause their teammates to worry about them. Tough players do their jobs, and their body language communicates that to their teammates -- and to their opponents.

Catch and face: Teams that press and trap are banking on the receiver's falling apart and making a mistake. When pressed, tough players set up their cuts, cut hard to an open area and present themselves as a receiver to the passer. Tough players catch, face the defense, and make the right read and play, and they do it with poise. Tough players do not just catch and dribble; they catch and face.

Don't get split: If you trap, a tough player gets shoulder-to-shoulder with his teammate and does not allow the handler to split the trap and gain an advantage on the back side of the trap.

Be alert: Tough players are not "cool." Tough players are alert and active, and tough players communicate with teammates so that they are alert, too. Tough players echo commands until everyone is on the same page. They understand the best teams play five as one. Tough players are alert in transition and get back to protect the basket and the 3-point line. Tough players don't just run back to find their man, they run back to stop the ball and protect the basket.

Concentrate, and encourage your teammates to concentrate: Concentration is a skill, and tough players work hard to concentrate on every play. Tough players go as hard as they can for as long as they can. No team can be great defensively without communication and concentration.

It's not your shot; it's our shot: Tough players don't take bad shots, and they certainly don't worry about getting "my" shots. Tough players work for good shots and understand that it is not "my" shot, it is "our" shot. Tough players celebrate when "we" score.

Box out and go to the glass every time: Tough players are disciplined enough to lay a body on someone. They make first contact and go after the ball. And tough players do it on every possession, not just when they feel like it. They understand defense is not complete until they secure the ball.

Take responsibility for your actions: Tough players make no excuses. They take responsibility for their actions. Take James Johnson for example. With 17 seconds to go in Wake's game against Duke on Wednesday, Jon Scheyer missed a 3-pointer that bounced right to Johnson. But instead of aggressively pursuing the ball with a sense of urgency, Johnson stood there and waited for the ball to come to him. It never did. Scheyer grabbed it, called a timeout and the Blue Devils hit a game-tying shot on a possession they never should've had. Going after the loose ball is toughness -- and Johnson didn't show it on that play. But what happened next? He refocused, slipped a screen for the winning basket, and after the game -- when he could've been basking only in the glow of victory -- manned up to the mistake that could've cost his team the win. "That was my responsibility -- I should have had that," Johnson said of the goof. No excuses. Shouldering the responsibility. That's toughness.

Look your coaches and teammates in the eye: Tough players never drop their heads. They always look coaches and teammates in the eye, because if they are talking, it is important to them and to you.

Move on to the next play: Tough players don't waste time celebrating a good play or lamenting a bad one. They understand that basketball is too fast a game to waste time

and opportunities with celebratory gestures or angry reactions. Tough players move on to the next play. They know that the most important play in any game is the next one.

Be hard to play against, and easy to play with: Tough players make their teammates' jobs easier, and their opponents' jobs tougher.

Make every game important: Tough players don't categorize opponents and games. They know that if they are playing, it is important. Tough players understand that if they want to play in championship games, they must treat every game as a championship game.

Make getting better every day your goal: Tough players come to work every day to get better, and keep their horizons short. They meet victory and defeat the same way: They get up the next day and go to work to be better than they were the day before. Tough players hate losing but are not shaken or deterred by a loss. Tough players enjoy winning but are never satisfied. For tough players, a championship or a trophy is not a goal; it is a destination. The goal is to get better every day. When I was playing, the players I respected most were not the best or most talented players. The players I respected most were the toughest players. I don't remember anything about the players who talked a good game or blocked a shot and acted like a fool. I remember the players who were tough to play against. Anybody can talk. Not anybody can be tough.

Practice:

By: Greg Tuchek, Pro Shot Trainer, Venice Beach Basketball Hall of Fame Player

I don't get these guys nowadays. Don't get me wrong, I hated running... But, I looked forward to competing. My goal was to take your spot, or keep mine. I looked forward to getting better every day! I wanted to win every sprint or at least come in the top three. My speed developed so much running sprints. At Long Beach City, Red was the first team. White was the second. I was on white my whole freshman year. I was new to organized basketball and just happy to be a part of the team. I wasn't tainted by the "superstar" mentality. I played hard EVERY possession. I would get the red team so mad! I would sneak in for an offensive rebound and coach would go ballistic. I just thought that is how you were supposed to play. Like a "Rudy," but with more talent.

I was a good teammate and we could be cool after, but, you had what I wanted. I tell my kids and players, "try to be a part of every play." For example, every free throw, I try different things when we are shooting. If I am up against a big dude, I try to sneak around him and get to the ball. Or, I will try to time it and tap it out. On "D" my hands were always active. Got my hand on so many balls. My son is just like me. He is the deflection king! I tried to get every rebound. I followed my teammates on easy layups. I got so many follow up baskets like that. I was hoping they would miss! Play every play!!!

How Watching Tiger Woods Can Improve the Mental Aspects of Your Basketball Game

By Don Kelbick

I had some thoughts while watching Tiger in the U. S. Open and how it can help with basketball. I think that more than any other sport, golfers have to deal with more mental aspects than anyone. I love to compare the mental aspect of golf with what is necessary to be a good basketball player.

For my money, Tiger Woods is the best player ever in any sport and also the most influential. You can talk about others but I don't remember anyone raising the baskets because of Michael Jordan or the fences getting longer because of Barry Bonds. I am aware of golf courses trying to become "Tiger proof" by adding length, hazards, etc. as a result of the way Tiger plays the course. The PGA Tour now has a traveling gym so players can work out and the players travel with personal trainers, all in an attempt to keep up. We weekend golfers feel that effect as well. High compression balls, 460 cc drivers, titanium shafts with high torque and stiff tips, etc. are all "Tiger effects" to help us think we play the same game as he does.

Talent and skill aside, Tiger shows 2 things that set him apart from other players:

1. He shows no fear and lives in the moment. Each shot is a game unto itself. If he hits a good shot or bad shot, it has no effect on his next shot. If he tries to play a draw off the tee and it turns into a hook that winds up three fairways over, it will not deter him from hitting a draw the next time the shot calls for one. If he hits a bad shot (and there are plenty of them) he does not think about what he did to get there. He only thinks about the next shot and what he needs to do to get to where he wants to be.
2. He understands what he can control. Of his putt on 18 on Sunday to tie the tournament he said, "The grass was uneven and I wasn't sure of the break. The only thing I can control is to make a solid and true stroke. I do that, if it goes in or not, I can live with it."

Compare that thought process to basketball players who turn the ball over or miss a few shots in a row. Sports is an exercise in failure, if you play - you will fail. Your success is determined by how you handle it when situations don't go right.

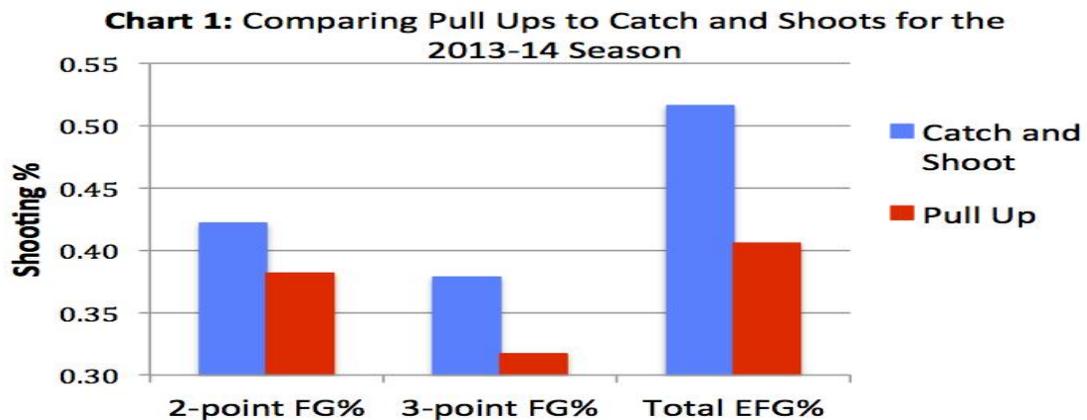
By the way, the best golfer ever, Tiger Woods, loses about 75% of the tournaments he plays in.

Dribble, Dribble, Dribble, MISS!

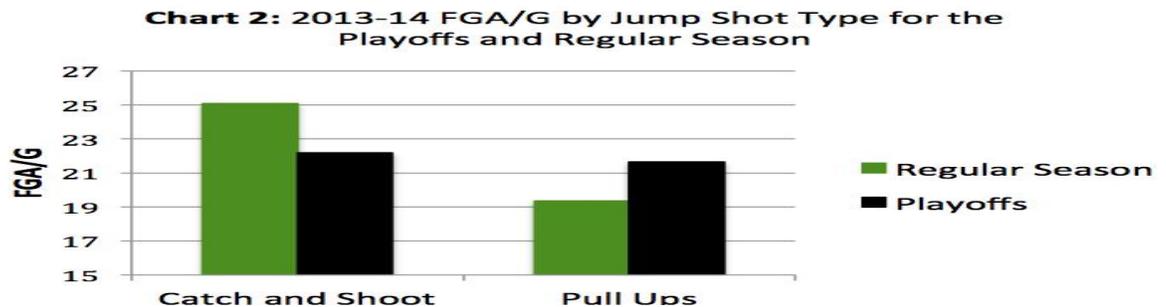
By Stephen Shea, Ph.D

On August 2, 2014, @Shane Battier tweeted, “Kids, bottom line. Don’t take dribble jumpers unless your last name is Nowitzki. Thank me later.”

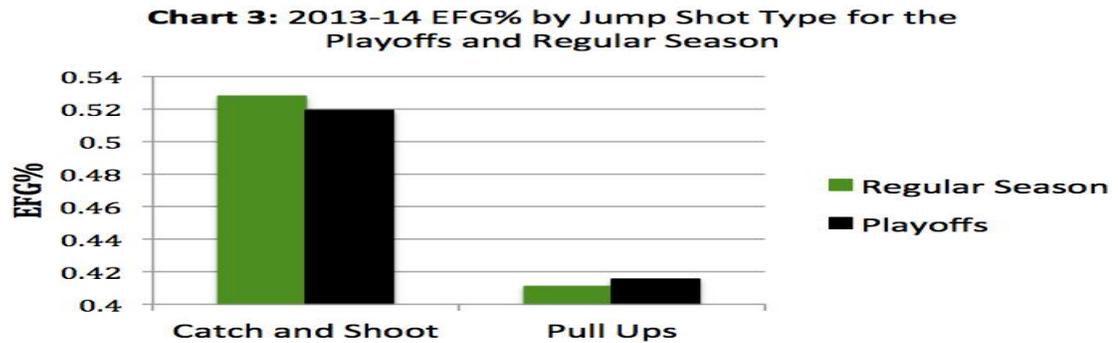
SportVU’s new spatial tracking statistics on NBA.com split jump shots by whether or not the shooter dribbled before the attempt. If the shooter dribbled, the shot is a pull up jump shot. Otherwise, it is called a catch and shoot. Chart 1 below shows the FG% and EFG% for pull ups and catch and shoots for the 2013-14 regular season. It appears that Battier was correct. Individual anomalies (like Dirk) aside, pull up shots are quite inefficient in comparison to catch and shoot jump shots.



Not all minutes are equal in their importance for a team. When a team is up 20 in the fourth quarter, it is unlikely that they will call their best plays or play their best players. In contrast, playoff basketball is dense with meaningful minutes. Partly due to the increased defensive intensity, teams up the number of pull ups relative to catch and shoots when the playoffs come around. See Chart 2. (Note that for Chart 2, we only used the 16 playoff teams in the calculation of regular season numbers.)



In the playoffs, teams take more pull ups, but these field goal attempts are still the far inferior shot. Chart 3 displays the EFG% for each shot type in the 2013-14 regular season and playoffs. (Again, regular season means only the regular season production of the 16 teams that made the playoffs.)



Charts 1 and 3 show that jump shots off the dribble are significantly less efficient than jump shots off the pass. However, it is too simple to conclude that players need to stop taking dribble jump shots.

Players do not have equal opportunities to take high quality catch and shoot jumpers. Yes, certain players are better at moving without the ball and putting themselves in position to catch and shoot. Yes, other players tend to force dribble jumpers with plenty of time on the shot clock or when a teammate is in position to take a better shot. Still, there are differences in opportunities.

Game situation and quality of teammates are contributing variables. Players can be forced into dribble jumpers after a play breaks down and the shot clock is running out. A player may benefit from more open looks on the perimeter because his teammate (such as LeBron) draws double teams. Simply put, the specific percentage of shots a player gets off the pass in comparison to off the dribble is partly a reflection of the activity of the team around him.

On November 19, 2014, a match between the NBA champion Spurs and LeBron's new Cleveland crew went down to the wire. With 26 seconds on the clock and 15 seconds on the shot clock, Manu Ginobili stood out by half-court as the Spurs held a 1-point lead. It was a pivotal possession—the type of possession where we would expect to see a star work in isolation. This is the type of situation where Durant, LeBron or Carmelo might be given the ball in isolation and asked to work their magic. Often, the star would dribble a few times make a move and try beat the opponent on the drive or step back to a jumper. In either case, it would be a shot off the dribble. The Spurs—the consummate team—showed that there are other (perhaps easier) ways to finish a game. Ginobili passed to Parker with 22

seconds on the clock. Ginobili then moved to the block as Parker passed to Duncan (after no dribbles and with 20 seconds on the clock). Ginobili faked like he was going to break to the perimeter. His defender (rookie Joe Harris) bit, and Duncan dumped the ball to Ginobili for an uncontested layup with 19 seconds left on the clock. Three passes in 3 seconds and Ginobili had an easy bucket. Ginobili did not have to break down a defender and dribble to the hoop. The great passing of the Spurs negated the need for moves with the ball. It was a reminder of how experience, chemistry and passing ability can trump one-on-one skills. The Spurs won the game 92-90.

This season, NBA.com has added new sections to their stats pages. Now, each team and player has dashboards. One of these is a shots dashboard. Among the new statistics on this page is dribbles before the shot (as captured by SportVU). Here, all shots are included (not just jump shots). So, the Ginobili layup would register as a shot with no dribbles. Table 4 presents the league total splits of 2 and 3-pointers by number of dribbles for 2014-15 (prior to the games on Friday, November 21). The table also splits EFG% by number of dribbles. Shots after no dribbles tend to be more efficient.

Table 4: Dribbles before the Shot for 2014-15

Dribbles	2PM	2PA	3PM	3PA	EFG%	% of Total 3PA	% of Total 2PA	% of Total FGA
0	4485	8198	2071	5672	0.547	0.712	0.314	0.407
1	1793	3787	176	610	0.468	0.077	0.145	0.129
2	1155	2723	76	254	0.426	0.032	0.104	0.087
3 to 6	1614	3606	142	474	0.448	0.060	0.138	0.120
≥7	3469	7763	283	952	0.447	0.120	0.298	0.256

The new dashboards on NBA.com provide another level of detail on player shot types. Unfortunately, they are still not optimally split for certain types of analysis. For example, it would be nice to see these numbers split by whether or not the shot occurred in transition.

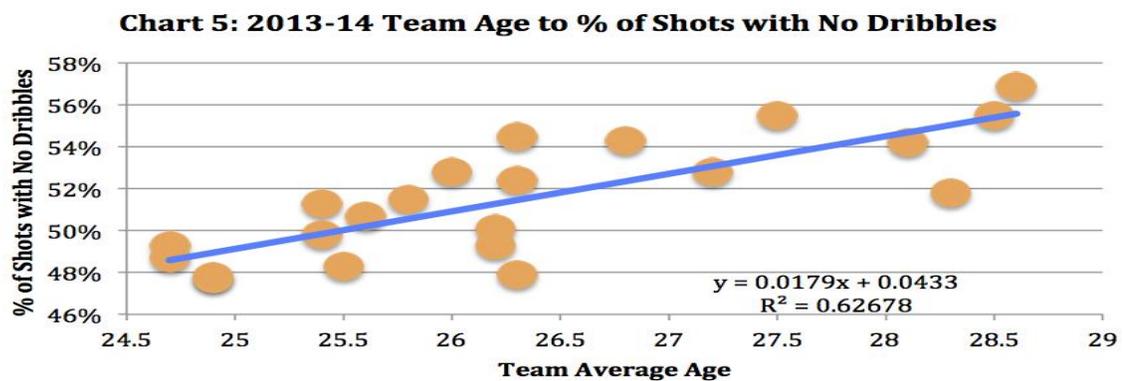
Although not presented with an ideal level of detail, these new dashboard statistics are still interesting and provide information that was not previously available.

Our data on pull ups vs. catch and shoots shows that jump shots off the pass are far preferable to jump shots off the dribble. Table 4 shows that this relationship persists when we include more than just jump shots. But players and teams cannot simply wake up one day and decide to only take shots off the pass. The play described above involved three players that are in their 13th season of playing together. That type of ball movement, which

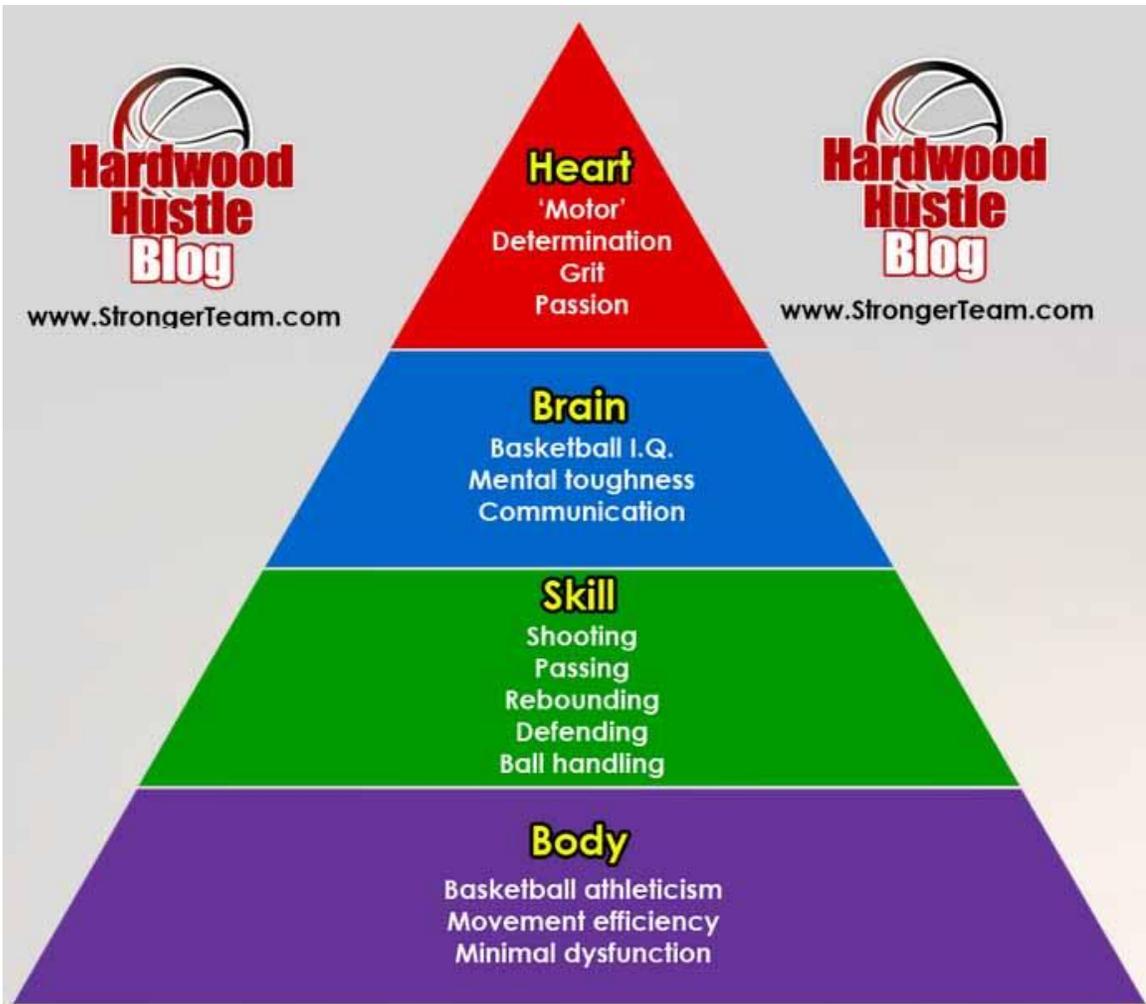
was executed perfectly at a crucial moment in the game, comes with maturity and experience. Or does it?

I went back and compared a team's average age in the 2013-14 season to their % of FGA on no dribbles. Ideally, one should weight the average age by playing time as many very good teams carry older veterans at the end of the bench and rebuilding squads fill those spots with young players that are more parts potential than production. Instead, I'll take the lazy way out and just exclude the 4 youngest and 4 oldest teams. This had the added benefit of removing the Nets who added significant pieces in Garnett and Pierce in the offseason, had a first year coach and lost center Brook Lopez early in the season. All of these could hinder the team's ability to execute seamlessly on offense (at least early in the season). At the younger end of the spectrum, we removed Philadelphia, a team that is ...well...ummmm....planning for the future?

Chart 5 displays a surprisingly high correlation for this simple study. It certainly appears as though players learn how to better set up teammates and players learn to look less for shots off the dribble as the team matures.



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THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 2: Pro Shot Shooting

No More Misses – Only Swishes!

“I can only show you the door. You’re the one that has to walk through it.”
Laurence Fishburne as Morpheus from “The Matrix”

“I don’t think anyone can shoot. It’s because of what I call the ESPNization of the game. How do you get on ESPN highlights? You make some giant move. They don’t show a guy hitting 8-10 shots from 20 feet. That’s not news. What’s news is the guy that drives the middle, flips around in the air and tosses it up or does a giant dunk. That’s what they put on TV. So kids are, ‘Well, that’s what I want to do.’ And they don’t put in time shooting.”
Bill Bradley

“A Jump shot will get you...

A shoe deal

A supermodel

A posse

A screen test

A new car

A big house

A jet plane

A book deal

A recording contract

But none of these things will get you a jump shot.” **Reebok**

“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.” **Charles Darwin**

“I always believed that if you put in the work, the results will come. I don’t do things half-heartedly. Because I know if I do, then I can expect half-hearted results.” **Michael Jordan**

“I guess you have to be a little crazy to want to spend hours and hours in a gym by yourself.” **Kiki Vandeweghe**

The Shooting Finger

- The most important aspect of shooting is the shooting finger.
- The index finger is the only straight finger you have. If you use it correctly, your shot will always be straight.
- When shooting, put your index finger above and through the rim.
- While following through, pinch your index finger and your thumb. The other three fingers will stick up almost like a small group of stairs.

The Shooting Shoulder

- The shooter must square his shooting shoulder to the rim.

The Shooting Stance

- Your feet should be slightly off-center. The feet should be at about 10 o'clock for right handers and at 2 o'clock for left handers.
- The feet should be 1-3 inches apart. A shooter's feet should be quiet throughout the duration of the shot.
- Players should always flex their knees but should NEVER bend them.
- It is important that your feet point down when you shoot. A shooter must get a great majority of his spring from his toes.

The V Position

- The elbow, forearm, and bicep need to be in a comfortable "V" position.
- If you hold the ball wrong, chances are that you will shoot the ball wrong. The shooting hand should always be under the ball. The index finger should be placed in the middle with one thumb on one side, and the other three fingers on the other side.
- The elbow's mechanics are similar to a sling shot. To get additional power on a slingshot, you pull it back further. The same theory applies to the elbow in shooting. The further back you pull the elbow, the more power the shooter receives. However, you don't want to pull your elbow back too far. Pulling the elbow back too far will cause tension.
- The ball should be held 3-6 inches from the chest.

The One Eyed Shooter

- When shooting with the proper form, the ball will block the vision of a right-handed shooter's right eye (left eye for a left-hander). Shooting with one eye will keep the arm and the shot straight.

The Release

- As the shooting arm extends to shoot the ball, it must fully lock at the elbow. As it locks, the shooter puts his index finger through the rim.
- The release is 70-80% of a shot. Therefore, it makes sense that the only thought a shooter needs to have is, "Finger through the rim."

The Sway

- Your feet should be in front of your body. This will allow your shoulders to “sway” back. When learning the sway it is crucial to shoot many shots without the ball to get used to the feet forward and the shoulders back.
- You must focus on keeping your feet narrow as you sway.
- When landing, it is essential that a player narrows his feet even further.
- The further you are away from the rim, the more sway you will need. A free throw shooter only needs about a 1-3 inch sway. However, a three-point shooter needs to sway somewhere around six inches.

Hold Your Follow Through

- Quality shooters hold their follow-through on every shot. The duration a player should hold his follow-through is until the ball hits the rim or net.
- You may follow your shot after you have finished your shot.
- The ball generally bounces the same distance it was shot from. The shooter is automatically in a great position on the floor to get his rebound.

The Off Hand

- A Player’s off hand is a crucial part of shooting with accuracy. The off hand serves as a guide for the shot, but more importantly, it helps to balance the entire body.
- The shooter must shoot through the guide hand. It is important that a shooter keep his thumbs far apart. This will help the shooter use his guide hand properly.
- When following through on a shot, it is okay for your off hand to lightly touch your shooting hand. In fact, for grade school shooters, it is very important that their off hand touch their shooting hand. When players get to high school, their off hand might not touch their shooting hand, but it is still okay if they do lightly touch.

Backspin

- Proper backspin on the ball is used to help it bounce into the net when it hits the rim.
- First and foremost be concerned if the shot is straight. You can have all the backspin you want, but if your release is off to the side, you will miss it each and every time.

The Starting Point

- In general, the starting point for the jump shot is the chest area.
- When shooting off the pass, the starting point is where the pass is actually caught. Most basketball passes are chest passes which means the pass is generally caught in the chest region. This is where you start your shot. It is critical that the shooter does not bring the ball down after receiving the pass. The lowest the ball should ever dip (unless it’s a low pass) when attempting a shot is the shoulder region. If the pass is high, the shooter may have to bring the ball down to the shoulder region.
- Make sure that you are ready to shoot when you receive a pass. The elbows should both be in. The only time the elbows would be out is if you are closely guarded.
- When shooting off the dribble, shoot from the chest area.

The Pull Up Jumper

- The footwork of a pull-up jump shot must be somewhat similar to the way you would spring off a diving board. Imagine running on a diving board and springing off it into a jump shot. This becomes the footwork for a pull-up. Remember that when you use a diving board you do not fall off it, but instead you jump off of it.
- Always work on your pull up jumper. It is what will make you great.

The Hop Off the Pass

- When the pass is in the air, your body should also be in the air. You will catch the ball in the air, your feet will hit the floor, and then you will instantly spring up. When catching the pass, make sure that you catch the ball at the top of your jump or as you're descending to that point. It is important that you don't catch the ball as you're coming down.
- When you are open for a shot, you must hold the ball lightly with the shooting hand void of any tension. If the defender is closely guarding you, then hold the ball tighter.
- If you are open, you should wait for the pass to come to you. If you are guarded closely, you need to meet the pass. Before the ball is thrown, you need to ask yourself, "am I open?" If you're open, be patient and let the ball come to you. You should catch the ball anywhere from 3-6 inches from your chest. If you're being guarded, meet the pass.

Tension and Pressure

- Shooting should always be an easy motion.
- Don't use your neck to shoot. Good shooters shoot with their arms and never do they tense their neck or shoulder muscles.
- Great shooters rarely tense their shoulder muscles. Poor shooters, on the other hand, tense their shoulders and neck muscles constantly.
- How soft your shot is greatly depends on how rigid and tense your shoulders become. If your shoulders are loose, often times your shot will be soft.
- To see how much pressure you possess in your shot, try this tip. Start at the top of the key and begin humming loud enough so you can hear it. Now bounce three times and continue humming. After the third bounce shoot the ball at the basket. Only stop humming after you have released the ball. Did you hear your humming become louder at any point or did your voice crack? If you did hear this then it means you have tension in that part of your shot. When person's voice rises, it means they are becoming tenser. If you noticed that your humming stopped before your release occurred, then you stopped breathing, which will also force your body to become tense.

Common Errors in Shooting

- **The chin:** The chin needs to stay the same distance from the chest throughout the shot. As the shoulders sway back, the head needs to follow. Young players will often put their chin down into their chest as they shoot. To correct this have the shooter practice shooting into a mirror.
- **Shooting too high:** When players shoot too high, the arms naturally rise and the shoulders and neck suddenly tense. Shoot into a mirror to correct this habit. The shooting bicep should be right around the jaw area when taking a jump shot.

Missing Long, Short, Left, or Right

- Good shooters generally only miss straight. Poor shooters, however, will miss all four ways and can actually miss two ways at the same time. Anytime you miss, you must give your brain feedback as how to fix it.

Missing to the Left or Right

- Missing right or left is usually due to the ball coming off the wrong finger. The shooter needs to focus on the ball coming off the index finger.
- Missing to the right or to the left may be because the shooting arm is pulling to the side. The shot must stay straight which means the finger and the arm must be straight.
- A shooter may also miss to the right or to the left because he is fading to the side. It is okay to fade away backwards, but fading to the side usually does more damage than good.

Missing Short

- Shooters may miss short because they have too much tension in their shoulders or neck.
- Missing short may also be because the shooter is being lazy with his release. He is releasing too low. Your elbow must be locked on your shooting arm before you release the basketball.
- Finally, a shooter might miss short simply due to a lack of power. This usually means that the shooting elbow is out (not directly under the ball). Remember, the elbow is the primary source for power in any shot.

Missing Long

- Shooters generally miss long because they are trying too hard to make the shot. This occurs when the shooter uses too much power and force. Shooters may also be tense in their shoulders, neck, or hands. When you're tense, your muscles can contract giving limited power, or they can contract giving you a seizure-like shot.

Shooting Slumps

- A player should never stop shooting in a game no matter how poorly he is missing. Instead of shutting it down, ask yourself, “how am I missing?”
- The best advice for players when they are mired in a mini shooting slump is to refocus on the finger, figure out why they’re missing, and refuse to miss that way again. Then take a deep breath and smile. If a player has a look of frustration, he normally is playing and shooting poorly. If a player is smiling, he is usually playing and shooting well. In other words, how you look is usually how you’re playing.

Daily shooting practice

- It’s better to shoot in a “game speed” for 30 minutes than shoot for four hours without working up a sweat. The best shooters only shoot for 30-60 minutes per day, but when they shoot, they work at “game speed.” Every time you shoot, it needs to be at “game speed” from spots on the floor where you shoot from. To become a good shooter, you must shoot constantly. Don’t take days off and expect to come back at 100%. The best shooters in the world feel incredibly guilty if they take just one day off.
- Jump when you shoot. Make sure you never stand in one spot. Constantly move and remember to use your toes not your heels when shooting.
- Having an imagination is very crucial to becoming a first rate shooter. When you’re shooting by yourself, imagine as if it’s a real game. Try to believe a great defender is closely guarding you. Think as if your next shot is for the district title. Get confidence, be quick, have imagination and focus. Try to see yourself shooting over the best defender in your league on every shot.
- Work on your moves when your shooting. Use shot fakes and jab steps.
- Player one-on-one. Playing one-on-one greatly helps players learn to shoot with a hand in the face. When playing one-on-one, make sure you also have structured rules which include three dribbles or less. The ball should be checked after every rebound. Make sure you’re taking it serious when you play. Injuries often occur when you mess around. Play to win! If you have three players, play one-on-one-on-one. If played correctly, it is a great competitive game.

Warming Up

- Disciplined players always warm-up for at least five minutes shooting one handed or stationary.
- Most great shooters will warm up by themselves for 10-15 minutes shooting nothing but one handed and stationary shots. They do not talk to anyone while they are warming up. They are focused and concentrating on the task at hand.
- Being a consistent shooter begins with mentally focusing each time you step onto a basketball court.

Visualization

- The brain can't comprehend the difference between reality and fantasy.
- When you visualize, make sure that only positive results occur. Great players visualize themselves succeeding and never consider failing or miss a last second shot. Most great clutch performers practiced their last second heroics growing up. They would play mind games with themselves by creating the image that a top-notch defender is blanketing them with time running out.

Handling Pressure

- All great shooter are calm and rarely show any emotion.
- Great "clutch" players shoot the ball and take the last shot with the same lack of pressure as if they are attempting the first shot of the game.
- The players that handle pressure well never think of missing or making. They don't hear the little voice inside the head that is always informing the player of the consequences of the shot. They focus, relax, and shoot. They tune everything else out including crowd distractions.
- It is also imperative for the player to want the ball late in a game. You can't be the clutch player if you do not have the ball. Clutch performers not only want the ball, but they expect it and often times demand it.

Strength – Speed – Accuracy

- To become a great shooter, you must increase your strength, speed and accuracy. All of these activities should be practiced 4-5 times per week.

Strength

- **On ball pushups:** Put both hands on a ball in a pushup position. Do as many as you can without stopping.
- **Two ball pushups:** Put one hand on a ball and your other hand on another ball. Do as many as you can.

Speed

- **Jump Rope:** Be creative and disciplined. Work hard. You should jump rope a minimum of 10 minutes per day. Some types of rope work you should do are: two feet hitting the floor at the same time, two feet hitting the floor in an alternating fashion, skier (two feet side to side), one foot (isolate right or left foot).
- **Miller Drill:** Stand at the top of the key with your back to the basket. Jump and turn 180 degrees in the air while shooting.
- **Backwards Hops:** Start at or near the block facing the basket. Hop three times backwards with quick and rhythmic bounces. Make sure all three hops are exactly the same. After hopping the third time, shoot the ball in a relaxed manner. This drills helps relax the shoulders and increase speed.
- **Block to Elbow:** Start on a block with your back to the basket. Dribble a ball long to the opposite elbow. While the ball is in the air, turn towards the basket squaring up your shooting shoulder. Catch and shoot.

Accuracy

- **On Your Back Shooting:** Lie on your back and shoot the ball. Concentrate on your shooting finger only.
- **Shooting Without a Ball:** Good Shooters shoot all the time without a basketball. They are always trying to improve their muscle memory. One of the best drills to improve muscle memory is shooting without a basketball. Make sure that you don't just go through the motions.
- **Line Shooting:** Find a line on the floor. Square your shoulder up to the line and shoot stationary shots. Make sure your shot is straight and has proper backspin. Use the guide hand and shooting hand properly.
- **One Hand:** By shooting a few feet from the basket with one hand, this forces the shooter to stay straight and extend his release. Start in a 90 degree angles so the arm looks like a capital "L." This drill helps with extension and keeping the ball straight.
- **One Hand Against the Backboard:** Line up about 5-8 feet from the side of the backboard. Shoot the ball against the side of the backboard with one hand. Always hold your follow through until the ball hits the ground. You should aim right above the padding.
- **Arm Extensions:** Extend your arm into a locked position while placing the ball in your shooting hand. Stand five feet away from the basket and shoot. Flexing your knees and using toes will greatly help.
- **Finger Focus:** Turn your feet to the side. For right handers – turn to the left and left handers – turn to the right. Shoot the ball focusing only on the upper body and putting your finger through the rim.
- **Chair Shooting:** Sit back in a chair, relax and shoot. This drill will greatly help assist your overall strength and your shoulders will experience less tension. By sitting back in the chair, your shoulders will experience less tension and automatically become relaxed. This is a great drill for tense shooters. You can get a lot more reps if you do this drill with a partner.
- **Stationary Shooting:** Shoot from a spot on the floor relatively close to the basket. Don't move into the shot. Get into a set and motionless position and work only on your technique.
- **Fast Break Jumpers – No Dribbles:** Start at half court. Run into a shot without dribbling. When we eliminate the dribble, players have a tendency to use more toes and get a quicker hop. Only until the player masters the pull-up without the dribble do we them to dribble.
- **Bird Shooting:** A passer / rebounder and a shooter are involved. The shooter should stand 10-15 feet from the basket. The passer must give accurate passes and the shooter will catch and shoot the ball without jumping. Everything here is focusing on upper body techniques, which includes the release.
- **Defended Shooting:** Have a defender run at the shooter. The defensive player tries to block or alter the shot. The offensive player must catch and shoot quickly.
- **Hop & Shoot:** The shooter begins on the low block, he takes two hops into the lane, squares, then shoots.

Free Throw Shooting

- Dr. Tom Amberry is in the Guinness Book of World Records for making 2,750 consecutive free throws. The key to free throw shooting according to Dr. Tom Amberry is focus and concentration.
- Good free throw shooters must work on their skills every day.
- There are seven keys to free throw shooting:
 1. **Find the dot:** The first thing you should do when you approach the line is find the center of the free throw line. When you find this center point, you should line up your shooting foot next to it. There is usually a nail or a dot at the center of a free throw line. The shooter's foot must be lined up with this nail or dot. Shooters can either face both feet directly at the rim, or he can angle his feet similar to how he shoots a jump shot. The shooter can experiment with both methods to see what works best for him.
 2. **Avoid Eye Contact with the Rim:** Staring at the rim does not help you at the line. Your eyes can play tricks on you if you continually stare at the rim. Shooters must avoid looking at the rim at all in the beginning stages of free throw shooting.
 3. **Use a Dribble Routine:** Once you receive the ball from the referee, you must take the same amount of dribbles on each free throw attempt. Your dribbles should be on your side and straight down as you prepare to shoot the ball.
 4. **Pause Before You Shoot:** After taking your dribbles, bring the ball up to your chest area and pause.
 5. **Use a Breathing Routine:** Failing to breathe can cause the muscles to become tight and the shot will be tense. After pausing, the shooter must breathe. Typically a breathing routine is breath in and breath out.
 6. **Look at the Rim:** After going through your breathing routine, it is now time to look at the rim. Don't actually stare at the rim. The Shooter should actually look at the middle of the rim.
 7. **The Release:** As you begin your shot, the only thought in your head needs to be, "finger through the rim." The lower body needs to add power to the shot. The knees should be flexed, and the shooter should lift his body upwards by using his toes. Use the sway method at the free throw line. Slightly sway your shoulders as you approach the shot.

Reasons for Missing Free Throws

- Many shooters miss free throws because they simply do not put their finger through the rim.
- Others may miss free throws long or short due to tension in the shoulders or neck. Players need to relax their shoulders and sway them back as they begin their shot.

Shooting Myths

- 1. Squaring Up:** When you ask most coaches to name the most important element of shooting they often times will answer, “Squaring up to the basket.” These coaches will remind their players each day to square up with their feet. In return these coaches produce players that will always be struggling with their shoulders due to too much tension. Once again it is important to focus on squaring up the player’s dominant shooting shoulder to the basket and NOT the feet.
- 2. Four Fingers Down:** Very few coaches and players understand the importance of the index finger when shooting. Their normal response is to snap the wrist and use all four fingers when shooting. This flawed technique will make you into an inconstant shooter at best. Snapping your follow-through with four fingers down will cause you to miss to the left and right.
- 3. Bend Your Knees:** This is possibly the biggest myth in sports. The more you bend, the slower your shot becomes. If you bend too much, you actually lose power in your shot. Flex your knees, but don’t bend them.
- 4. Shoot Straight Up and Down:** Coaches say this so their players won’t fade. Shooting a basketball is impossible by going straight up and down. The shoulders and neck will tense, which forces the shot to become spastic.
- 5. Thinking of Nothing When You Shoot:** This may be correct if you’re a NBA three point specialist, but if you’re a young player attempting to get shooting fundamentals and accuracy down, I strongly advise against this. If you are a young shooter and think of nothing when you shoot, your shot will generally have no discipline and the release will be inconsistent at best.
- 6. Thinking of Making It When You Shoot:** It is important to be positive when shooting. A player needs to focus on the process and not the outcome.
- 7. Meet the Pass:** You should only meet the pass when you are being tightly guarded. If you meet a pass with your hands extended, when you’re open, you will have to bring the ball back into your shooting pocket.
- 8. Focus on the Front of the Rim or the Back of the Rim:** If you focus on the front or back of the rim, chances are you will hit these spots. Most great shooters focus on the middle of the rim. After all, if you want the ball to go through the middle of the rim, shouldn’t you focus in that area?
- 9. Backspin is Important:** Physics tests have confirmed that backspin is only important if the ball hits the rim. The backspin gives it a soft touch to roll in.
- 10. Shooting the Same Way Every time:** Coaches will constantly claim that each shot should be the same when practicing. This belief, however, is only half true. When a player shoots the release hand and the off hand are always in the same location and should always be doing the same action. Everything else after that can change depending on where the defender is, the quality of the defender, location on the floor, and the time remaining on the clock.
- 11. Follow Your Shot:** *You don’t need to rebound made shots!* Telling a shooter to follow his shot actually makes the shooter think he is going to miss the shot before he even shoots it. From the age we first shoot we are told by our coaches to always follow our shots. By doing so, they forget to properly hold their follow-through. While it is important to follow your shot, don’t be consumed by it. It can actually do great damage to your shot.

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 3: Attitude

“There is no reason to have a plan B because it distracts from plan A,”
Will Smith

*Attitude is a little thing that makes a **BIG** difference.*

“Good talent with bad attitude equals bad talent,” **Bill Walsh**

“You don't play against opponents, you play against the game of basketball,” **Bob Knight**

“The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind,” **William James**

“Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be,”
Abraham Lincoln

“I have learned how to be content with whatever I have,” **Philippians 4:11**

“Nothing is worth more than this day,” **Goethe**

“Your life is either a celebration or a chore. The choice is yours,”
Author Unknown

“If you're a positive person, you're an automatic motivator. You can get people to do things they don't think they're capable of.”
Cotton Fitzsimmons

“If you want your life to be a magnificent story, then begin by realizing that you are the author and everyday you have the opportunity to write a new page.” **Mark Houlahan**

“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong attitude.”
President Thomas Jefferson

Commencement Address to University of Texas Class of 2014, abridged

By: Admiral William H. McRaven, Commander, Navy SEAL

The average American will meet 10,000 people in their lifetime. If we each change the lives of 10 people, and they change the lives of 10 people, and they all change the lives of 10 people, and so on, in 5 generations, the 30 people in our family will have changed the lives of 300,000 people. Lives can be changed anywhere, and by anyone. The Navy SEALs seek to find individuals that can lead in an environment of constant stress, hardships, chaos, and failure. While the stakes are not the same, do we not perform in an environment of stress, hardships, chaos, and failure? We need to develop the same qualities in our Family as that of highly trained military personnel.

10 Lessons From Navy SEAL Training to Help Us Change the World

1. Make your bed, and make it well. If you accomplish a small task to begin your day, you will have completed one task well, and it will encourage you to complete another task, then another, and another. Reinforce the fact that **THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER**. If we can't do the little things, we will never do the big things. **If you want to change the world, make your bed.**
2. Every morning, trainees would paddle their boat through the San Diego surf, and then swim to their final destination. They had to all paddle, in unison, at the coxswain's direction. In life, we cannot change the world alone. We need the help of family, friends, colleagues, and complete strangers, and a strong coxswain to lead us. **If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.**
3. During Admiral McRaven's training, the strongest boat crew was a group of men, all under 5-foot 5. The crew was an American Indian, African American, Polish American, Greek American, Italian American, and two tough kids from the Midwest. They outpaddled, outswam, and outran all the other boat crews, while being mocked for their "tiny little flippers". Nothing matters but your will to succeed. Not your size, your ethnic background, or your socioeconomic status. **If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart, not the size of their flippers.**
4. Trainees have routine uniform inspections. No matter how hard they tried to have a perfect uniform, instructors found imperfections. They were not going to let trainees succeed. An imperfect uniform meant jumping into the freezing cold ocean, clothes on, and rolling around in the sand, until their entire body was covered. They earned the name "sugar cookie". Sometimes, no matter how hard you work, how hard you prepare, you won't succeed. **If you want to change the world, get over being a sugar cookie, and keep moving forward.**
5. Trainees had routine fitness challenge tests. If they didn't make their times, they would get 2 extra hours of calisthenics, called "circuses". Guys who had a lot of circuses, but didn't quit, and kept working hard, got stronger, faster, and built inner toughness. You will find you will fail. You will fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times, it will test you to your very core. **If you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.**

6. They had an obstacle course that they kept times on, and a record that had stood for years. One obstacle required you to hang from all fours from a rope and ease yourself down, hand over hand, from one tower to another. One trainee, determined to break the record, went down the rope head first, doing it in half the time as everyone else. It was a dangerous move that could have resulted in serious injury. He broke the record. **If you want to change the world, sometimes you have to slide down obstacles head first.**

7. During night swims they had to swim in an area known to have high shark activity. If they were circled by a shark, they were instructed to remain calm, don't get scared, and if the shark came at them, punch it in the snout and it would swim away. There are a lot of sharks in the world. You will have to deal with them. **If you want to change the world, don't back down from the sharks.**

8. One of their missions involved swimming underwater for 2 miles, to find the keel of a large ship. Once they got under the ship, all light was blocked out. They couldn't see their hand in front of their face. The noise from the ship's machinery was deafening. It was easy to become disoriented and panic. During times of great tension around you, you must remain calm. **If you want to change the world, you must be your very best in the darkest moments.**

9. During Hell Week, on a Wednesday, they were taken out to the mud flats. After a minor violation, they were all ordered into the flats, literally up to their neck in freezing mud. They had to remain in the mud overnight. They were told if 5 people quit, they could get out. The sound of chattering teeth was loud around them. All of a sudden, one trainee began to sing. Then another, and another, until the whole group was singing. The mud didn't seem as cold anymore. Give people hope. The power of hope, the power of one person, can change the world by giving people hope. **If you want to change the world, start singing if you're up to your neck in mud.**

10. There was a large bell in the center of the SEAL training compound. If a recruit wanted to quit, they would ring the bell and leave. **If you want to change the world, don't ever, EVER, ring the bell.**

Start each day with a task completed, find someone to help you through each season, respect everyone, know basketball is not fair and you will fail often. But, if you take some risks, step up when times are toughest, face down the bullies, lift up the downtrodden, and never, ever give up, then our program will be far better when you leave than it was when you got here.

How I Had Surgery, Had a Baby, Beat Cancer, and Lost My Job

By: Matt Renquist

At the age of 25, I had surgery, a premature baby with my wife, completed chemotherapy, and lost my job. Most people would say that's a rough couple years for any person. It all happened to me in eleven weeks. How did I manage to avoid a nervous breakdown? Well, I would say it all started with a few simple words from my grandfather.

When I was younger, my family had a tradition. All the girls of the family would go to tea the day after Thanksgiving. Since it was mostly women in my family, this usually meant one thing; I would be alone with my grandpa for the entire afternoon. Times that would usually be spent watching football, going to eat at McDonalds, or driving around the neighborhoods. Looking back now, it reminds me of a quote in a book by Mitch Albom, called "Tuesdays with Morrie," in which Mitch describes them as being "Tuesday People." I guess you could call us "Friday People."

On one particular day, I remember driving around with my grandpa, and we were talking about something we often did; my future. He wanted me to go to the Colorado School of Mines for college, said it was a great school. Advice maybe I should have followed. I remember telling him I couldn't wait to go to college, get out of my small town, and begin my life. Then my grandpa said something that many years later, would get me through the toughest part of my life: "Don't wish your life away."

In May of 2012, I had surgery to remove a tumor. It was a difficult experience, and an easy time to be angry at life. Why did this happen to me? But, with a baby due in a few weeks, being angry would have tainted one of the happiest experiences of my life; the birth of my first child. I remembered my grandpa's words vividly here. Knowing I couldn't change the unfortunate luck I had, I didn't wish for anything. Instead, I enjoyed the time I had off work with my wife, and awaited the arrival of my son. This, despite everything that was happening, was still the happiest day of my life. One week after he was born, I began chemotherapy.

Three weeks. That's how long my treatment would last. An exhausting three weeks was ahead of me. Another opportunity for me to hope three weeks would just be up already. But there it was again, the words of my grandfather. In that three weeks, I would have missed out on my son's first car ride, his first time coming home, and the many family and friends that came by to visit. One week after I finished chemo, I went back to work. One month later was my last day; I had lost my job.

If you're starting to feel sorry for my circumstances; don't. I had wonderful family and friends that have assisted me beyond belief, and received much help from many people, many who may even be reading this. I also had the wisdom of my grandpa. Instead of wishing this didn't happen, or wishing to get a new job, I have taken advantage of the opportunity. I started focusing on taking control of my own life, and doing things I enjoy. That is why I started this blog, in addition to my wife and I's new business venture.

Unfortunately, my grandpa wasn't here for any of this. He passed away five years ago. I still remember the day, and you shouldn't be surprised; it was a Friday.

Play for a Losing Team / Sit for a Winning Team:

Laken Alley, Class of 2011

LAKEN'S FRESHMAN YEAR:

Team Record: 2-18

Percentage of players who would prefer to sit for a winning team: 33%

Laken's Response: *"I would definitely rather sit the bench for a winning team because for one, who wants to play all the time and lose when you can win and be part of a team? Also, a team means everyone on that team. Even if I did sit the bench, I would support my winning team all the time, as much as I could instead of throwing a fit for not getting to play. Definitely, I would sit the bench for a winning team."*

LAKEN'S SOPHOMORE YEAR:

Team Record: 3-16

Percentage of players who would prefer to sit for a winning team: 20%

Laken's Response: *"I would rather sit for a winning team because no matter how many individual achievements you have, it means absolutely nothing if you can't transform that into a winning effort."*

LAKEN'S JUNIOR YEAR:

Team Record: 14-10

Percentage of players who would prefer to sit for a winning team: 69%

Laken's Response: *"Definitely sit on the bench for a winning team. In a team, every single person is important, every single person. If every person puts in what they need to, then the team will be successful. If you play for a losing team, then what are you accomplishing? The goal is to WIN not to START."*

LAKEN'S SENIOR YEAR:

Team Record: 20-5 (Third Place at State)

Percentage of players who would prefer to sit for a winning team: 73%

Laken's Response: *"I've played on many losing teams early in my career. The result is always the same. Sure you're recognized individually for having played, and yeah, those losing teams I played for tried hard and we gave a lot, but there wasn't that memorable feeling to take from the season, to say, "we won and I was a part of it." I would much rather sit the bench for a winning team. Every single person on that team has a role, and is important. Though you may not start you are still on a winning team."*

No Regrets

By: Aubree Powers

*Laughter flooded a love – immersed home
It rang sweetly in my ears
As did the sound of a telephone
My feet suddenly running – Snatch
A trembling voice asked for my Mom
Not here I spoke – then Granny held
The unexpected call in her hand.
Screaming – oh NO! I heard her shout
A terrified, never – before seen look in her face.
She hung up – Quick
A frantic rush to the car – Down the road – Desperation, Confusion
Blood – stained highway – Shattered glass
Sorrowful – Regretful faces of six young Walsh Eagles
Screaming, crying, adrenaline in full force
The ambulance zoomed away
Past the old brick high where an athlete
Would never again wear the jerseys of Royal Purple.
Would never again sprint down a grass field with fans cheering him on,
Nor pitch a ball to a determined set of eyes, bat in hand, behind a plate
Nor feel the pain and glory of finishing a race – breaking the finish line once again.
Many earthly rewards were prepared for this Freshman at the athletic awards that night.
But, the world changed – Walsh changed the night of May 10th, 1999.
A mother's worst nightmare came true.
The town didn't know what to do –
Why? Many pleaded for mercy
How could life be taken so quickly?
So young, so full of life, so talented and loved by all.
That was the day I learned that life is short and fragile.
So listen to the cry from the ones who stood in this gym,
Sweat on this floor, and bled for another W in the books.
Listen to the voices of regret from six lives who made an unwise choice.
It cost them a best friend, a teammate, a leader
Listen to the voice of the body that became lifeless after 15 years of age.
Would he tell us to live to the fullest?
To give our best in whatever we do?
Would he tell us not to miss any opportunity to love another human being?
Would he tell us not to take life for granted? But be thankful for all we have?
To wear purple with pride?
To find something we've never seen before, we're never aware of,
Deep within our souls?
A strength - A courage - A faith - A desire to be the best person we can be?
Listen from the one who lived with few regrets – and do the same.
Life is short – so live it to the fullest.*

The Promise

By: Tim Tebow

I promise you one thing, a lot
Of good will come out of this.
You will never see any player in
The entire country play as hard
As I will play the rest of the
Season. You will never see
Someone push the rest of the
Team as hard as I will push
Everybody the rest of the season.
You will never see a team
Play harder than we will
The rest of the season.
God Bless.

"SLOW DANCE"

by

DAVID WEATHERFORD

Have you ever watched kids on a merry-go-round
Or listened to rain slapping on the ground?
Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight
Or gazed at the sun fading into the night?
You better slow down, don't dance so fast,
Time is short, the music won't last.

Do you run through each day on the fly?
When you ask, "How are you?" do you hear the reply?
When the day is done, do you lie in your bed
With the next hundred chores running through your head?
You better slow down, don't dance so fast,
Time is short, the music won't last.

Ever told your child, "We'll do it tomorrow,"
And in your haste not seen his sorrow?
Ever lost touch, let a good friendship die,
'Cause you never had time to call and say hi?
You better slow down, don't dance so fast,
Time is short, the music won't last.

When you run so fast to get somewhere,
You miss half the fun of getting there.
When you worry and hurry through your day,
It's like an unopened gift thrown away.
Life is not a race, so take it slower,
Hear the music before your song is over.

ALWAYS MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Many years ago, a large American shoe manufacturer sent two sales reps out to different parts of the Australian outback to see if they could drum up some business among the aborigines. Some time later, the company received telegrams from both agents. The first one said, "No business here...natives don't wear shoes." The second one said, "Great opportunity here...natives don't wear shoes!"

THE GOLDEN EAGLE

A man found an eagle's egg and put it in the nest of a backyard hen. The eaglet hatched with the brood of chicks and grew up with them.

All his life the eagle did what the backyard chickens did, thinking he was a backyard chicken. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He clucked and cackled. And he would thrash his wings and fly a few feet into the air.

Years passed and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the cloudless sky. It glided in graceful majesty among the powerful wind currents, with scarcely a beat of its strong golden wings.

The old eagle looked up in awe, "Who's that?" he asked.

"That's the eagle, the king of the birds," said his neighbor. "He belongs to the sky. We belong to the earth--we're chickens."

So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that's what he thought he was.

Look me in the Eye

By: Michael Jordan

Submitted By: Jonathan England, 2012

It's ok if you're scared, so am I.

But we're scared for different reasons.

I'm scared of what I won't become, and you're scared of what I could become.

Look at me.

I won't let myself end where I started.

I won't let myself finish where I begin.

I know what is within me.

Even if you can't see it yet.

Look me in the eyes.

I have something more important than courage.

I have patience.

I will become what I know I am.

The Wolf Inside

Submitted By: Cullen Hair, 2012

An old Cherokee is telling his grandson about a fight that is going on inside himself. He said it is between two wolves.

One wolf is evil: anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego...

The other wolf is good: joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith...

The grandson thought about it for a minute, and asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replies, "The one I feed."

Attitude

By: Charles Swindoll

The longer I live, the more I realize
the impact of ATTITUDE, on life.

ATTITUDE, to me, is more
important than facts.

It is more important than the past,
than education, than money, than
circumstances, than failures, than
successes, than what other people
think or say or do.

It is more important than
appearance, giftedness or skill.

It will make or break a
company... a church... a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a
choice every day regarding the
ATTITUDE we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past... we
cannot change the fact that people
will act in a certain way.

We can not change the inevitable.

The only thing we can do is play
on the one string we have, and that
is our ATTITUDE...

I am convinced that life is 10%
what happens to me and 90% how
I react to it.

And so it is with you...

We are in charge of our
ATTITUDES.

Humility:

In basketball, we can value a player for his speed, shooting ability, or how he jumps. But, ultimately, it's the humble superstar that most guys seem to admire and want to emulate. Humility is a quality worth desiring.

If we are really humble, after a game you won't be able to tell whether we've won or lost. Or whether people are saying nice things about us or criticizing us. A truly humble person is constantly deflecting praise to their teammates and recognizing others for their efforts.

Many of our losses are designed to humble us and shape us into the people we want to be. We have to let those times do their work on us.

"If we were humble, nothing would change us – neither praise nor discouragement," **Mother Teresa**

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." **Philippians 2: 3 – 5**

Enthusiasm:

“If your work is not fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm,” **John Mazur.**

The word *enthusiasm* comes from the Greek word *entheos*, which means “full of spirit, full of God.” Nothing of any significance was ever formed without enthusiasm. You have to be passionate about what you do, almost to the point of obsession.

Enthusiastic people have a glow about them. They are the people that are going 1,000 miles per hour at all times. They are the people we consider crazy, gung ho, bubbly, positive, energetic, or perky. We must be careful, there will be negative people throwing stones at those who constantly display an enthusiasm for life.

“A little spark kindles a great fire,” **Spanish Proverb.**

If you're having troubles getting excited, go in the closet and give yourself a pep talk. Do whatever it takes to get excited about what we do.

Chuck Tanner, the manager for the 1987 world champion Pittsburgh Pirates, said, *“You have to play everyday like it's Opening Day.”* In baseball, it is easy to get excited about opening day. The stands are packed. The locker room is filled with optimism about the upcoming season. We have to capture that Opening Day Enthusiasm and release it before every practice and every game.

Nothing is Stronger than Gentleness

By: John Wooden

We had a team of mules named Jack and Kate on our farm. Kate would often get stubborn and lie down on me when I was plowing. I couldn't get her up no matter how roughly I treated her. Dad would see my predicament and walk across the field until he was close enough to say "Kate." Then she'd get up and start working again. He never touched her in anger.

It took me a long time to understand that even a stubborn mule responds to gentleness.

I remember a young man whipping a short-tempered team of horses, trying to get them to come out of a gravel pit. They were pulling against each other, jumping back and forth, fretting and stomping. By talking to each of them and patting them, he quieted them down. Then he went behind them and took the reins, let go, and they immediately pulled out together. His gentleness made all the difference.

13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do

BY AMY MORIN

Mentally strong people have healthy habits. They manage their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in ways that set them up for success in life. Check out these things that mentally strong people don't do so that you too can become more mentally strong.

1. They Don't Waste Time Feeling Sorry for Themselves *Mentally strong people don't sit around feeling sorry about their circumstances or how others have treated them. Instead, they take responsibility for their role in life and understand that life isn't always easy or fair.*

2. They Don't Give Away Their Power *They don't allow others to control them, and they don't give someone else power over them. They don't say things like, "My boss makes me feel bad," because they understand that they are in control over their own emotions and they have a choice in how they respond.*

3. They Don't Shy Away from Change *Mentally strong people don't try to avoid change. Instead, they welcome positive change and are willing to be flexible. They understand that change is inevitable and believe in their abilities to adapt.*

4. They Don't Waste Energy on Things They Can't Control *You won't hear a mentally strong person complaining over lost luggage or traffic jams. Instead, they focus on what they can control in their lives. They recognize that sometimes, the only thing they can control is their attitude.*

5. They Don't Worry About Pleasing Everyone *Mentally strong people recognize that they don't need to please everyone all the time. They're not afraid to say no or speak up when necessary. They strive to be kind and fair, but can handle other people being upset if they didn't make them happy.*

6. They Don't Fear Taking Calculated Risks *They don't take reckless or foolish risks, but don't mind taking calculated risks. Mentally strong people spend time weighing the risks and benefits before making a big decision, and they're fully informed of the potential downsides before they take action.*

7. They Don't Dwell on the Past *Mentally strong people don't waste time dwelling on the past and wishing things could be different. They acknowledge their past and can say what they've learned from it. However, they don't constantly relive bad experiences or fantasize about the glory days. Instead, they live for the present and plan for the future.*

8. They Don't Make the Same Mistakes Over and Over *Mentally strong people accept responsibility for their behavior and learn from their past mistakes. As a result, they don't keep repeating those mistakes over and over. Instead, they move on and make better decisions in the future.*

9. They Don't Resent Other People's Success *Mentally strong people can [appreciate and celebrate other people's success](#) in life. They don't grow jealous or feel cheated when others surpass them. Instead, they recognize that success comes with hard work, and they are willing to work hard for their own chance at success.*

10. They Don't Give Up After the First Failure *Mentally strong people don't view failure as a reason to give up. Instead, they use failure as an opportunity to grow and improve. They are willing to keep trying until they get it right.*

11. They Don't Fear Alone Time *Mentally strong people can tolerate being alone and they don't fear silence. They aren't afraid to be alone with their thoughts and they can use downtime to be productive. They enjoy their own company and aren't dependent on others for companionship and entertainment all the time but instead can be [happy alone](#).*

12. They Don't Feel the World Owes Them Anything *Mentally strong people don't feel entitled to things in life. They weren't born with a mentality that others would take care of them or that the world must give them something. Instead, they look for opportunities based on their own merits.*

13. They Don't Expect Immediate Results *Whether they are working on improving their health or getting a new business off the ground, mentally strong people don't expect immediate results. Instead, they apply their skills and time to the best of their ability and understand that real change takes time.*

Are You Looking for the Right Things?

By: John Wooden

There's an old story about a fellow who went to a small town in Indiana with the thought of possibly moving his family there. "What kind of people live around here?" he asked the attendant at the local filling station.

"Well," the attendant replied as he checked the oil, "what kind of people live back where you're from?"

The visitor took a swallow of his cherry soda and replied, "They're ornery, mean, and dishonest."

The attendant looked up and answered, "Mister, you'll find them about like that around here, too."

A few weeks later, another gentleman stopped by the gas station on a muggy July afternoon with the same question. "Excuse me," he said as he mopped off his brow. "I'm thinking of moving to your town with my family. What kind of people live around these parts?"

Again the attendant asked, "Well, what kind of people live back where you're from?"

The stranger thought for a moment and replied, "I find them to be kind, decent, and honest folks."

The gas station attendant looked up and said, "Mister, you'll find them about like that around here, too."

It's so true. You often find what you're looking for.

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 4: Leadership

lead•er/'lēdər/

- Noun: 1. The person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country.
2. A person followed by others.

A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the quality of his actions and the integrity of his intent. In the end, leaders are much like EAGLES... they don't flock, you find them one at a time.

*“What you do; how you do it; and who you associate with on a daily basis will determine your image and your impact!” **Kevin Eastman***

Leadership is like gravity. You know it's there, you know it exists, but how do you define it?

*“Surprisingly for some, research conducted by the Leadership Research Institute has shown that in times of crisis, people gravitate toward the person of highest character, not necessarily the person who is in charge or even the person they believe to be the most competent. Rather, people will tend to build a relationship with and follow the person they view as the most trustworthy, who cares the most, and who is willing to always do the right thing.” **Tony Dungy***

*“Leadership is diving for a loose ball, getting the crowd involved, getting other players involved. It's being able to take it as well as dish it out. That's the only way you're going to get respect from the players,” **Larry Bird***

*“Instead of asking, how can I lead my company, my team, or my family to a higher level of success? We should be asking ourselves, how do others around me flourish as a result of my leadership?” **Tony Dungy***

*“I never thought a role model should be negative,” **Michael Jordan***

Be a Leader – Take Control of the Huddle

Peyton Manning

"Twenty years ago, I wanted to be a game-changer when I signed a football scholarship at the University of Tennessee. And I still remembered the first time I ran into the huddle as the quarterback with the starting team. We were playing up at UCLA at the Rose Bowl, and it was an ABC nationally televised game, Keith Jackson and Bob Griese were broadcasting the game.

"UCLA was unranked, the Tennessee Vols were ranked ninth, opening game of the season. I was third-team on the depth chart, kind of just happy to be in the stadium that day, not expected to play at all. On the seventh play of the game, our starting quarterback tears his knee. Boom — he's out for the year. Our backup quarterback, you may have heard of him, was named Todd Helton. Well, Todd, he wasn't real crazy about going in the game either, he had that baseball signing bonus he was about to get (audience laughter). Long story short, we're down 21-0 and they take Todd out. Coach Fulmer comes to me and says, 'Peyton, you're going in to play.' I remember something, as I'm jogging into the huddle, that my dad had told me.

He said, 'Son, if you ever get in the huddle with the starting team at any point in the season, it may be at practice, it may be in the fourth quarter of a blowout, it doesn't matter — you have to be the leader and take control of that huddle. You're 18 years old, doesn't matter.'

"Well, our team's down 21-0 and not in a real good mood, but I get in the huddle and say: 'All right guys, I know I'm just a freshman, but I can take us down the field, right now, get us a touchdown, get us back in the game, let's go!' And our big left tackle, Jason Layman, about 6-5, 330 pounds, grabs me by the shoulder and says: 'Hey freshman, shut the blank up and call the blanking play.' And I said, 'Yes, sir.' That was really great advice from my dad, I really appreciated it."

What is a Leader?

- **A LEADER, LEADS BY EXAMPLE:** A leader must be a positive role model at all times. Every word spoken has to be a positive word. Every act he does must be a positive act. A leader can never be negative. He must be a shining example of what it takes to be great.
- **A LEADER BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS:** A leader must be the type of person that others want to be like. He has to inspire his teammates to be their very best.
- **A LEADER IS AN EXTENSION OF THE COACH:** Most players are well behaved when the coach is around. However, when the coach is not around, negative things can occur. Any type of negative talk, about the team or another player, is detrimental to the team. A leader does not try to cut corners in any way. He knows what the team and school rules are and does not break them himself, or allow others to break them.
- **A LEADER IS A HARD WORKER:** A leader must enjoy serving others. He must want to do the things that are necessary for a team to have success. A leader is always trying to think of ways he can help improve the team.
- **A LEADER PUTS THE TEAM FIRST:** It is easy to come up with excuses why we can't get a task done. I hear those excuses all the time. If you want to do something, you can almost always do it. If you don't want to do something, you can almost always find an excuse so that you don't have to do it. I want people who I can count on to be there. I want people who are committed to basketball **all year – not just during the season.**
- **A LEADER TRULY WANTS TO BE A SERVANT:** You can't fake it, you either want to be a **positive** servant to your team, or you don't. The leaders of this team do not have to be the best players. In fact, I think it is neat when someone who isn't a great player steps up and takes on a leadership role. Your job as a member of this team is to find some way to make a positive contribution to the team. For some that contribution may be providing leadership.

Leading by Helping Others:

If you think it ever was about you as a leader, you are wrong. Leadership is about others. Great leaders love and care about others more than themselves.

Here are four tips to help you love and care about those you lead. However, let me preface these tips by saying that the most important thing you need to do is not fake caring. Either you really love those you lead or you don't. If don't feel it, don't fake it. Faking it will erode your trust as a leader very quickly. People know when leaders are genuine and when they are not.

1. **Serve.** There is a positive correlation between serving others and love. The more you serve others, the more you will care for and love them. The more you care and love, the greater desire you will have to serve. It can be as easy as sending a heartfelt card during a tender time in an employee's life, or doing something nice for their family. There are many opportunities to serve those we lead, we just need to be aware and look for them.
2. **Be empathetic.** See those you lead as people with needs just like you. I was talking to a colleague of mine the other day who has an employee with a very sick father who lives clear across the country. She can't afford an airline ticket to see him. This kind and generous leader is going to buy her a ticket so she can see her father, and he is doing it anonymously. He has truly seen those he leads as people just like him that he can reach out and serve.
3. **See the positive.** Everybody has good in them. The more you think and speak positively of others the more you will care. If you are always seeing the negative; it is difficult to care because those feelings are in direct conflict with caring. Some of you might be saying, "well, that is fine and dandy, but there is negative, and I have to address that too." And I agree. But **look for the positive first** and then address the negative because you love that person, not because you are upset or angry.
4. **Express it.** Now, you don't need to say "I love you." That could be construed as something different than what you are trying convey. But telling those you lead that you really do care about them; that you appreciate them, and feeling it as you say it, will increase your love for them. There is a real connection that occurs when you express how you feel genuinely to others.

Leading is Caring:

President and CEO of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Paul Levy is one of those leaders. He doesn't just say he cares, but shows it. Faced with the prospect of laying off 600 employees, he just couldn't bring himself to do it. This is a leader who truly understands that the "C" and "E" in CEO should stand for caring and empathy. He saw these 600 employees as people with families. Many of them were lower wage workers who if given a "pink slip" would only be a paycheck or two from losing their homes.

So, instead of taking the easy way out with layoffs, Paul Levy went to the employees themselves to work on a solution. He held a town meeting in which he explained the situation: "I want to run an idea by you that I think is important, and I'd like to get your reaction to it," Levy said. "I'd like to do what we can to protect the lower-wage earners - the transporters, the housekeepers, the food service people. A lot of these people work really hard, and I don't want to put an additional burden on them."

"Now, if we protect these workers, it means the rest of us will have to make a bigger sacrifice," he continued. "It means that others will have to give up more of their salary or benefits."

Levy received a rousing and emotional ovation from those in attendance. He followed up after the town meeting and used e-mail and social media to solicit ideas, including Facebook. He received 2,700 suggestions in all.

70 people were eventually laid off, but as an organization they were able to save 530 jobs! Leaders like Levy are inspirational. This type of approach is refreshing. I guarantee when Paul Levy says something people listen and they listen with great respect and adoration for a leader they know truly cares about them.

What can you do to show your teammates that you care about them?

Leadership in Battle:

The Civil War was a bloody and vicious war. At least 618,000 Americans died and some say the toll reached 700,000. Casualties exceeded all of America's other wars from the Revolution through Vietnam.

In the winter of 1862 General Robert E. Lee's forces had claimed several key battlefields in the Eastern Campaign. One of those key battles was as one-sided a victory as a battle could be. It was the Battle of Fredericksburg. On December 13, 1862, Union forces began what was termed a desperate and eventual doomed assault on a heavily fortified position known as the "stone wall at the sunken road."

After crossing a river the Union confidently took the town of Fredericksburg with little resistance. The confederate army had voluntarily given up the town so that they might fortify themselves along a stone wall at the base of a sloping hill. As the union army began to approach the wall they were attacked and by the morning of December 14th over 8,000 Union soldiers had been shot in front of the stone wall. Many of those remaining on the battlefield were still alive, but suffering from their wounds, the cold and thirst.

During that night both sides were forced to listen to the cries and moans of those soldiers for hours. A Confederate soldier stationed near the wall later stated that it was "weird, unearthly, terrible to hear and bear the cries of dying soldiers filling the air - lying crippled on a hillside so many miles from home - breaking the hearts of soldiers on both sides of the battlefield."

Richard Rowland Kirkland, an infantry sergeant for the Confederacy could not rest or sleep due to the suffering of the Union soldiers and that morning asked his commanding officer if he could scale the wall and provide water for the suffering Union troops. The commanding officer was reluctant at first because of the danger to Richard, but later allowed him to. As Richard climbed the wall several shots were instantly fired thinking that Kirkland's motives were to wound more, but after realizing what was happening shooting ceased. Richard Rowland Kirkland made his way to each soldier comforting them the best he could by laying his jacket over one and providing water to the thirsty lips of all. For the next hour and a half he would scale the wall a number of times with his canteen to get more water for his enemy. It was a moment that temporarily stopped the Civil War.

10 Ways to Lead with Your Example:

"Your example when it comes to influencing others is not the main thing, it is the only thing," Don Meyer – Northern State University

1. How You Talk

- Let your words reflect your actions and your actions reflect your words
- Let your words be driven by your heart
- Be quick to listen and slow to speak – Wisdom.

2. How You Treat People

- Kindness
- Kindness is the language that the blind can see and deaf can hear – Mark Twain
- Do something for someone who can't do anything for you
- Treat people with great respect – handle conflict respectfully as well

3. Keep Your Word & Promises

- Sometimes this may mean promising less, so you can deliver more
- All we have is our word, without that we are nothing
- Keep your word, and you will garner great respect in your daily relationships
- Trust is earned in a relationship when a promise is kept –Build Trusting Relationships

4. Work Ethic

- Be the hardest working person on your team or in your department
- Stay educated and knowledgeable to give your team a chance to succeed
- NEVER GIVE UP/ ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO WIN TO HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION
- Do more/Say less

5. Your Attitude & Effort

- You can control two things in your life: Your Effort and your Attitude
- It is easy to work hard and have a great attitude when things are going well,
- What is your attitude and work ethic like, when things are not going well???
- Attitude and Effort are great measures of a person's character.
- No discipline seems pleasant at the time..... – Hebrews 12:11

6. **Say “Please”, “[Thank You](#)” and “You’re Welcome”**
 - These are lost words in our society today
 - These words can have a long lasting impact on your daily relationships
 - These words are a great way to show respect to others
 - Saying these words will make people in your relationships want to help you again when the time comes.

7. **Be on Time/Stay Late**
 - Be the first one in the office, and the last one to leave
 - Have your staff see you when they enter the office in the morning, and have them see you when they leave the office for the day
 - Great work ethic throughout the office or team starts at the top – show them how to work hard with your example.

8. **Write Personal Notes & Thank You Notes**
 - You will never know the power of a thank you note, until you receive one
 - A great way to show appreciation in your daily relationships, is to take the time to sit down and write a personal or thank you note to someone.
 - Personal notes of praise are a great way to build confidence and let players/staff know they are doing a great job.

9. **Delegate Responsibility**
 - Delegating responsibility builds leaders within your staff or department
 - Delegating also builds trust within the relationships in your department or staff
 - Delegating allows you to stay sharp and fresh
 - Delegating allows you time to focus on the vision or strategic plan for your department, staff or team.
 - YOU CAN’T BUILD LEADERS, IF YOU NEVER GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO LEAD

10. **Live a Life of Servant Leadership**
 - Use the Bible as a model and a guide – Jesus was the best servant leader EVER during his time on earth
 - Servant leadership shows that you care about others more than you care about yourself – SELFLESS
 - Servant leadership is the best feeling – it is almost addicting

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 5: Self-Control

“Discipline yourself and others won’t need to!”

“Confidence, self-esteem, discipline, motivation. All these things I learned, whether I knew I was learning them or not, through sports.” **Mia Hamm, Soccer Hall of Famer**

“Self-Control is when you tell yourself to do something and you don’t talk back,” **W.K. Hope**

“Self-Control is essential for discipline and mastery of emotions,”
John Wooden

“It is not enough to get things done; they must be done right,”
Arthur T. Hadley

“If you don’t have time to do things right, when will you have time to do it over?” **Mike Shannahan**

“Those who work the hardest, who subject themselves to the strictest discipline, who give up certain pleasurable things in order to achieve a goal, are the happiest,” **Brutus Hamilton, Olympic Decathlete and Coach**

“Start by doing what’s necessary, then what’s possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible,” **Saint Francis of Assisi**

“As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? ... No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it’s painful! But, afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.” **Hebrews 12:7, 11**

“One of the greatest lessons I’ve learned in athletics is that you’ve got to discipline your life. No matter how good you may be, you’ve got to be willing to cut out of your life those things that keep you from going to the top,” **Bob Richards**

Self-Discipline: The Greatest of All Success Principles

By: Kop Kopmeyer

Kop Kopmeyer wrote four large books, each of which contained 250 success principles that had been derived from more than fifty years of research and study.

When asked which success principle he felt was most important, he said, “The most important success principle of all was stated by Thomas Huxley many years ago. He said, **‘Do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not.’**”

He went on to say, **“There are 999 other success principles that I have found in my reading and experience, but without self-discipline, none of them work.”**

Next Play

By: Mike Krzyzewski

In basketball and in life, I have always maintained the philosophy of “next play.” Essentially, what it means is that *whatever you have just done is not nearly as important as what you are doing now.*

The “next play” philosophy emphasizes the fact that the most important play of the game or life moment on which you should always focus is the next one. It is not about the turnover I committed last time down the court, it’s not even about the three-pointer I hit to tie the game, it is about what’s next. To waste time lamenting a mistake or celebrating a success is distracting and can leave you and your team unprepared for what you are about to face. It robs you of the ability to do your best at that moment and to give your full concentration. It’s why I love basketball. Plays happen with rapidity and there may be no stop-action. Basketball is a game that favors the quick thinker and the person who can go on to the next play the fastest.

It is the same in life. If one of my daughters brought home a bad grade on a report card, of course my wife and I would be concerned and feel compelled to take action. However, it is fruitless to continue to harp on what she should have done last semester to raise her grade. That is all in the past. The grade is what it is and will remain as such. However, it becomes imperative to focus on what’s next: the next homework assignment, the next study session she can attend, the next test. These upcoming events grant the opportunity for improvement, that the next report card could show an A. If we work together to focus on this next play, we will all feel good that we have addressed the problem and not merely bemoaned what we should or could have done in the past.

Flush it!

By Jim Thompson

I first learned about "flushing mistakes" from Mike Legarza, then basketball coach at Cañada College in Northern California. Mike (lifetime winning record of 85%) had his players make a flushing motion with their hand whenever they made a mistake, and I remember Mike often yelling to his players, "Don't worry. Flush it!" I watched as opposing teams played aggressively until crunch time, when they became tentative. Mike's players, on the other hand, played as aggressively in crunch time and rarely lost a close game.

Ken Ravizza, sports psychology professor at Cal State Fullerton and consultant to many college and professional teams, has developed the concept further. Ken, helped Cal State Fullerton turn around its season to win the NCAA Baseball Championship in '04. More recently Tampa Rays star Evan Longoria credited Ravizza with helping him deal with mistakes.

The flush played a major role in LSU's successful quest for the NCAA baseball title. Ryan Schimpf, quoted at NOLA.com after hitting a homerun in the Super Regional to beat Rice on June 5: "I had two terrible at-bats previously and I just tried to flush it." Pitcher Anthony Ranaudo, quoted at LSUREveille.com after a bad outing against Virginia: "I just have to be able to flush it mentally and go out there with a new attitude and approach." He then allowed only 4 hits in 6 shutout innings to defeat Arkansas in the College World Series. LSU head coach Paul Mainieri, quoted at BayouBuzz.com after losing to Texas in the finals: "This just wasn't our night. We have to flush this loss and come out ready to play for the national championship on Wednesday night."

Oh, and who was that pitcher who picked up the win for LSU in the deciding game against Texas? Frequent flusher Anthony Ranaudo.

I like making a flushing motion like I'm flushing the mistake down the toilet, but some coaches use "no sweat" and gesture like they are flicking sweat off their brow. Some coaches actually have their players write "Next" on one of their shoes and "Play" on the other so if they hang their head after a mistake they see "Next Play" staring up at them.

The real test is at crunch time. A player makes a mistake that really hurts. What you do then is crucial. If you turn away, scowl or throw your clipboard on the ground, your players won't learn to bounce back from mistakes. Instead make a flushing motion with your hand and say, "That's okay, big guy. Flush it!"

The Most Important Play is the NEXT Play:

Here is Stanford women's volleyball coach John Dunning, whose teams have won three NCAA titles, on the NEXT Play:

“So many kids think they’re great competitors because they growl the loudest or cuss the loudest. I define a competitor as the person who is most often ready to play and win the NEXT Play. You’ve got to get the last play out of your mind, except the part that educates you. The person who consistently is most ready to win the NEXT Play is the person I want on my side of the net – not the growler.”

Control Your Emotions with a Self-Control Routine:

By: Jim Thompson

Players who let their emotions control them can't play their best. That doesn't mean you have to be an emotionless robot. Competition brings out some of our strongest emotions: fear, anger, frustration, elation. That's natural. A key to elevating your game is developing an ability to channel those emotions productively. You need to control your emotions rather than allowing them to control you.

How do you handle your emotions when you are getting beat by a lesser opponent, being yelled at by your coach, feeling the sting of a cheap shot, or dealing with a bad call? That's key. Because if you retaliate, lose focus on the next play, sulk, or lash out at teammates or officials, you'll hurt your performance and that of others around you.

So what can you do? Develop a self-control routine. It might involve deep breaths, self-talk ("Let it go!"), or tapping your helmet. You might walk to a different location and separate yourself from the action momentarily. A tennis player may go to the back fence and refocus. A pitcher might leave the mound momentarily. In sports where breaks don't happen, you'll need to refocus more quickly and do it in your mind only. That's okay. You be in charge. Don't let negative and destructive emotions run the show.

Self-talk is a big idea in sport psychology because "we are what we eat" mentally as well as physically. If you feed yourself a lot of negative statements about yourself, it harms both your sense of possibility and your performance.

Everyone engages in self-talk. And even though most of the time most people aren't aware of it, it has a big impact on us. Most of the self-talk people engage in is negative. "I better not strike out." So often we focus on the negative. And when we make a mistake, we tend to come down hard on ourselves and make blistering statements about how bad we are.

Imagine trying to play your best if your mind is filled with negative garbage. A player on the receiving end of negative self-talk is not a pretty sight.

Here's a three-step process called "Transformational Self-Talk" to counteract negative self-talk and get back on the right track.

1. Make your self-talk a true statement by expressing it as a feeling. When I screw up, I often say to myself, "You are an idiot!" Am I an idiot? Maybe, maybe not. But what is absolutely true is that I feel like an idiot. To make my self-talk absolutely true, I change it to, "I feel like an idiot."
2. Use the Power of a Big BUT. The word "but" is powerful. When we use it we degrade or devalue whatever comes before. We all know when someone says "but" it means something negative is coming to devalue what was just said. So add "but" to your feeling statement to degrade it. I feel like an idiot, but...
3. End with "I'm-the-kind-of-person-who." Think about the kind of competitor you want to be, and tell yourself what will help you in this moment. Remember, you are what you eat, so end your statement with something that reinforces your ability to keep going. "I feel like an idiot, BUT I'm the kind of person who refuses to give up!"

Nails in the Fence:

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all.

He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. But it won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound will still be there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one."

A Lesson on Emotion and Language:

By: John Wooden

My older brother, Maurice, and I were cleaning our adjoining stalls in the barn early one Saturday morning when he tossed a pitchfork's worth of manure in my face. I was furious and went after him. He was three years older than me, so I couldn't do much against him at the time. But in the process I called him a name I shouldn't have.

My father overheard it and gave me the only real licking I ever got. I knew I had it coming, so I accepted it a little better than I might have otherwise. Maurice got a good smacking, too. I believe it was even harder than mine.

For whatever reasons, I learned something that has stayed with me to this very day and has been very important to me throughout my life: **control your temper and don't use profanity.**

Of course, it's a lot easier to avoid the latter if you remember the former.

Discipline:

By: Bob Knight

“Do what has to be done,

When it has to be done,

As well as it can be done,

And do it that way all the time.”

The word discipline comes from the word disciple, meaning to follow God. It follows that the word discipline means to follow certain rules or laws set by man or God. In today’s society, the word discipline can almost bring on a negative connotation. We tend to think of a disciplined life as one that has certain restrictions or limitations – discipline makes life no fun. In reality a disciplined life makes for a life of freedom and choices. Parents discipline their children because they love them and want to see them pointed in the right direction, not because they want to make their life undesirable.

Discipline is what you do when no one else is looking. Discipline is having good personal habits. You are polite, on time, and take care of business with pride. We must be disciplined as individuals first and then as a team.

Discipline in basketball is executing fundamentals and techniques the right way under pressure; do it right, do it hard, or do it again.

Reframing to Increase Resilience:

By: Jim Thompson

By the end of the third quarter in Game 3 of the 2010 NBA Finals, the Los Angeles Lakers' 17-point lead had shrunk to six, and the Boston Celtics had momentum going into the fourth quarter. Realizing his Lakers' teammates were demoralized, Derek Fisher asked if someone had told them before the game that they would start the fourth quarter ahead by six, would they have been happy about it? They all agreed they would have loved going into the last quarter with a six-point lead, which is, after all, where they were. Fisher's "reframing" question elevated their spirits, and the Lakers went on to win by seven points.

Reframing is a three-step process:

1. Something disrupts your plans.
2. You experience negative emotions, like disappointment, discouragement, or sadness.
3. Rather than allowing that initial reaction to stick, you reframe and ask how you can make something good come from it.

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 6: Focus

“The only thing a player can control at golf is his own game; so concern about what other competitors may or may not be doing is both a useless distraction and a waste of energy.” **Jack Nicklaus**

“Now is everything you have to work with. When you live it fully, it is more than enough,” **Ralph Marston**

“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal.” **Hannah More**

“The man who succeeds above his fellow is the one who early in life clearly discerns his object, and towards that object, and towards that object habitually directs his power.” **Earl Nightingale**

“Keep your rear end and your mind in the same place,” **Gordon Larson**

“Start by doing what’s necessary, then what’s possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible,” **Saint Francis of Assisi**

“As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? ... No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it’s painful! But, afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.,” **Hebrews 12:7, 11**

“One of the greatest lessons I’ve learned in athletics is that you’ve got to discipline your life. No matter how good you may be, you’ve got to be willing to cut out of your life those things that keep you from going to the top,” **Bob Richards**

Getting a Mental Edge: Preparing to Compete:

By: Jim Thompson

Athletes without mental games do well if things go well. If not, they can't adjust to adversity and fail to perform to their ability. But some athletes develop a mental game they can rely on when things go bad so they are not at the mercy of events. They can give their best effort even when everything seems to be going wrong.

Becoming an Intentional Visualizer: Visualization has become a staple of great performers in all realms, but especially sports. It may seem mysterious, but we do it all the time. Visualization is so much a part of our lives that we often don't even recognize it as such.

For example, if someone asks you how to get to your school, you mentally rehearse how you would make the trip yourself. "Go down two blocks and make a left at Colfax Road. Then you go three blocks..." That is visualization.

Mental Rehearsal: Here's Hall-of-Fame pitcher Nolan Ryan on visualization:

"The night before a game I lie down, close my eyes, relax my body, and prepare myself for the game. I go through the entire lineup of the other team, one batter at a time. I visualize exactly how I am going to pitch to each hitter and I see and feel myself throwing exactly the pitches that I want to throw. Before I ever begin to warm up at the ballpark, I've faced all of the opposition's hitters four times and I've gotten my body ready for exactly what it is I want to do."

Begin by visualizing yourself successfully completing a skill such as making a catch, a putt, or a serve. Find a quiet place to sit and picture yourself completing the skill with perfect form. It's crucial that you see yourself doing it exactly right because practice doesn't make perfect, but perfect practice does.

Visualize yourself in the zone – making the big plays, making your teammates better, handling whatever happens with calmness and class. Start small. Nolan Ryan probably didn't start out by visualizing an entire game. Start with the beginning of the competition and see yourself doing what you want to do. Then pick out some challenging situations and see yourself successfully doing what you want.

One study showed that players who practiced shooting for 30 minutes and visualizing free throws for 30 minutes each day improved significantly more than players who practiced their shot for 60 minutes each day. Visualization with practice improved performance more than the same amount of time of practice alone. So give it a try.

Catastrophization: When Nancy Ditz set her sights on winning the Los Angeles Marathon in 1987, the heat concerned her. She feared not having a water bottle available when she needed it late in the race. She visualized remaining calm, not wasting energy on

things she couldn't control. At one point during the race, her water bottle wasn't where it should have been, but she remained calm, just as she had visualized. She went on to win the L.A. Marathon because she had prepared for the worst with a tool I call "catastrophization."

A catastrophe is something that goes terribly wrong. With catastrophization, you visualize things happening exactly as you hope they will not happen. And then – and this is crucial – you visualize yourself continuing on with your best effort and prevailing.

You imagine everything going wrong at the beginning of a competition. You dribble the ball off your foot and miss an easy lay-up. You see yourself remain calm, confident you can do the only thing you have to do right now – make the NEXT Play!

It is comforting to feel in your bones that you can prevail in a worst – case situation. Catastrophization helps you develop your mental game so you never let the emotional discomfort of being in a tough spot keep you from persevering.

Internal and External Cameras: You can visualize as you see out your own eyes with what I call the "internal camera," which is good for rehearsing a skill. Feel yourself serving, see your serve hit just as it does when you actually hit the ball.

Also visualize with the "external camera," as if you were watching yourself on videotape to show what you look like when you are doing it right. Experiment with both cameras because both will help you develop your "visualization muscle." The external camera helps you develop a mental blueprint of the proper motion you want to do, while the internal camera gives a taste of what your actual experience in the moment will be.

Preparing for "Off Days": Most athletes have a Plan A, the way they like to compete that plays to their strengths. Former Boston Celtics great Larry Bird was a fantastic outside shooter and liked to shoot the three-pointer to set up his drives to the basket. But some days his outside shot wasn't dropping. Rather than get discouraged, Bird kept himself in the game with Plan B – work to get inside position for offensive rebounds. His Plan C was to move to open spaces to free up his teammates, set picks, and do whatever else was needed to help his team.

You'll improve your performance on off days if you have back-up plans. Knowing ahead of time what you will do if Plan A isn't working can help you quickly transition to Plan B. A great Plan B is to focus on effort. If your offense isn't clicking, focus on working harder on defense. In many sports offensive attacks are started by tough defense.

Whatever your sport, you can hone your mental game by identifying your Plan A and preparing plans for what to do when it isn't working.

Make Each Day your Masterpiece:

By: John Wooden

When I was teaching basketball, I urged my players to try their hardest to improve on that very day, to make that practice a masterpiece.

Too often we get distracted by what is outside our control. You can't do anything about yesterday. The door to the past has been shut and the key thrown away. You can do nothing about tomorrow. It is yet to come. However, tomorrow is in large part determined by what you do today. So make today a masterpiece. You have control over that.

This rule is even more important in life than basketball. You have to apply yourself each day to become a little better. By applying yourself to the task of becoming a little better each and every day over a period of time, you will become a lot better. Only then will you be able to approach being the best you can be. It begins by trying to make each day count and knowing you can never make up for a lost day.

If a player appeared to be taking it easy in practice, I told him, "Don't think you can make up for it by working twice as hard tomorrow. If you have it within your power to work twice as hard, why aren't you doing it now?"

If you sincerely try to do your best to make each day a masterpiece, angels can do no better.

86,400 Seconds:

By: Robert G. Lee

If every morning your bank credited your account with \$86,400 but every evening canceled whatever part of the amount you failed to use, what would you do? Spend every cent – of course!

Well, you have such a bank account – it is called time. Every day it credits you with 86,400 seconds. At midnight, whatever you failed to use is lost. A balance is not carried over to the next day and you're not allowed overdrafts. Each day the bank named Time opens a new account with you. Each night it burns the records of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours.

How will you spend your 86,400 seconds today?

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 7: Competitive Greatness

“Anytime you challenge a warrior – a warrior is going to respond,” **Ray Lewis**

“It is time to start living the life you’ve imagined,” **Henry James**

“In life, winning breeds winning. The more you do it, the more you expect to do it, and the more you believe you can do it. It informs and brightens your attitude, making you more positive and, consequently, nearly impossible to beat,” **Mike Shannahan**

“Life is often compared to a marathon, but I think it is more like being a sprinter; long stretches of hard work punctuated by brief moments in which we are given the opportunity to perform at our best.” **Michael Johnson**

“It isn’t hard to be good from time to time in sports. What’s tough is being good every day,” **Willie Mays**

“Risk more than others think is safe. Care more than others think is wise. Dream more than others think is possible,”
Cadet Maxim, U.S. Military Academy

“The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.” **Vince Lombardi**

“I’m hungrier than those other guys out there. Every rebound is a personal challenge. I want to do for rebounds what Michael Jordan did for dunks.”
Dennis Rodman

“Champions aren’t made in gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them – a desire, a dream, a vision.” **Muhammad Ali**

“The number one problem that keeps people from winning in the United States today is lack of belief in themselves.” **Art Williams**

“We don’t care about how we do,

we’re just here to have fun,”

said no **CHAMPION**, EVER!

Return to Dominance:

Every time you put on a Walsh Eagle uniform, you are being given an opportunity to be a part of an institution of excellence. Throughout the years, the Walsh Eagles have won fourteen state championships.

State Championships at Walsh High School:

2012	Boy's Track
2011	Boy's Track
2001	Football
1997	Girl's Basketball
1988	Football
1988	Boy's Track
1973	Boy's Track
1972	Football
1972	Boy's Track
1972	Boy's Basketball
1971	Football
1971	Boy's Basketball
1970	Football
1968	Boy's Basketball

Feed a man a steak, and he will be satisfied for a day.

Buy him a car, and he will be satisfied for three days.

Take him on a cruise, and he will be satisfied for a week.

Win the lottery, and he will be satisfied for a year.

Win a state championship at Walsh High School, and he will be satisfied for a lifetime.

Competitive Greatness

By: John Wooden

What is competitive greatness? It's being at your best when your best is needed. It's enjoying the challenge when things become difficult, even very difficult.

True competitors know it's exhilarating to be involved in something that's very challenging. They don't fear it. They seek it. Is it fun to do that which is ordinary, easy, simple, something anyone can do? Not at all.

Yet most of the tasks we do in our everyday lives are very simple. Anybody could do them. They will not produce the joy that comes from being involved with something that challenges your body, mind, and spirit.

Competitors love that challenge. They know it offers the chance to produce their very finest. It brings forth their competitive greatness.

The Habit of Winning

By: Vince Lombardi

Winning is not a sometime thing. You don't win once in a while. You don't do things right once in a while. You do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing. Every time a football player goes out to play, he's got to play from the ground up from the soles of his feet right up to his head. Every inch of him has to play. Some guys play with their heads. That's okay. You've got to be smart to be no. 1 in any business, but more important, you've got to play with your heart and every fiber of your body. If you're lucky enough to find a guy with a lot of head and a lot of heart, he's never going to come off the field second.

It is a reality of life that men are competitive and the most competitive games draw the most competitive men. That's why they're there to compete. They know the rules and objectives when they get into the game. The objective is to win fairly, squarely, decently, by the rules but to win. In truth, I have never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, did not appreciate the grind and the discipline. There is something in good men that really yearns for, needs discipline and the harsh reality of head to head combat.

I don't believe in the brute nature of man, or that men must be brutalized to be combative. I believe in God and I believe in human decency. I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, his greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear, is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle victorious.

Excellence:

By: Mike Krzyzewski

When I sign autographs for kids, I almost always put the same message: “Always try your best.” If they get nothing else from meeting me, I want them to remember these words.

Excellence is not measured the same way for everyone. A .500 season may be a perfect standard of success for one team, while a National Championship is the standard for another. Define your own success and failure; only you know whether or not you have given it your all. The persistent pursuit of excellence determines winners, not the score of the game.

To be excellent, you must be yourself. Do the very best that you can do. In giving your best every day, improvement will come naturally. Giving your all makes you better; it’s that simple. Remember that there is a vital distinction between excellence and perfection. If you ask a young person to be excellent, he or she may think, “oh, man, I have to be perfect? I can’t do that.” But if you ask him or her to just do their personal best, anybody can do that.

In the context of a team, there are many times when you are not the best individual on the team in a particular activity. You can sometimes have the tendency to look at the best person and say that he or she is excellent and you are not. This is a big mistake. Each person can be excellent, but one person may have more ability or expertise at a given time and in a given situation. This happens every year on a basketball team. What I tell my players is, “You have to run your own race individually while we are running our collective race as a team.”

Uncommon:

By: Tim Tebow

I never wanted to “fit in.” As I look back now, it was clear that very early on the seeds of that concept began taking root and sprouting within me in everything I did. As I got older and heard kids talk about wanting to “fit in,” or wanting to be “normal,” I never quite understood why they felt that way. What’s the point of being “normal”? That sounds average to me, and I never felt like I was created to be average.

I remember reading Tony Dungy’s book *Uncommon* and in it his challenge to so many, especially those of us within the younger generation, to not be “common.” From lessons in his own life, he encouraged us to always strive to be “uncommon” and align our lives with the ways of the Lord.

So if everybody was doing the same thing, the normal and usual thing, I looked for a different way. The crowd, by definition, gravitates toward average, which could tend toward middle of the road or toward mediocrity. If we’re all special in the same way, then nobody really is. A view of that kind of life, I believe, discounts the belief that God created each of us special, each with gifts and abilities like no one else’s. He created each of us different, fully intending that we would use our unique gifts and abilities to do what He created us to do.

You and I were created by God to be so much more than normal. My parents always told us that was true of each of my siblings and me.

Following the crowd is not a winning approach to life. In the end it’s a loser’s game, because we never become who God created us to be by trying to be like everybody else. I figured that out when I was five, but I couldn’t have expressed it then. I just knew that I wanted to be different in those areas that excited me. I wanted to be me – and then I began to understand that I wanted to be who God created me to be.

Competition:

Question asked to Kobe Bryant: *“What makes one guy a champion and the other one not?”* *“It’s drive. It’s the will. There are certain people that have a tremendous hunger. There are certain people that have a will, determination and hunger that you need to be the best in the world. Those people – and those people alone – become champions,”* **Kobe Bryant, Los Angeles Lakers**

“As a competitor and player in college or in the NFL, no matter what your role – starter, backup or practice-squad guy – you’re trying to prove yourself every day,” **Matt Schaub, Quarterback, Houston Texans**

“I think every year you have something to prove. That’s the way I approach it. This, probably more so than any other year because I’m with a new team. I’m going to approach it that way. I’m always motivated, excited to play,” **LaDarian Tomlinson, Running Back, New York Jets**

“I’ve spent time and time again shooting thousands of shots. The way I look at it is I only have to make one,” **Kobe Bryant, Los Angeles Lakers**

“I expect great things out of myself. I expect to make great plays, great moves. In my mind, I can never be good enough,” **Reggie Bush, 2010 Super Bowl Champion**

“I’m competing with the best, and I want to be the best... I work hard to be the best. I know I’m competing with Adrian Peterson, and that’s important to me. I’m just trying to make the whole world recognize that I’m one of those type players like a LeBron or Jordan or Kobe,” **Chris Johnson, Running Back, Tennessee Titans**

“There are a lot of great teams out there – having three star players is great, but five guys play at the same time. It’s never about one, two, or three players – it’s all five. You have to go out there and earn it.” **Steve Blake, Los Angeles Lakers**

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 8: Faith

“Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve,” **Napoleon Hill**

“Success comes in cans, not cannots,” **John Ralston**

“Be courageous! Have faith! Go forward!” **Thomas Edison**

“Faith doesn’t mean the absence of fear. It means having the energy to go ahead, right alongside the fear,” **Sharon Salzberg**

“Always have faith that things will work out the way they should. We must believe that things will work out as they should as long as we do as we should.” **John Wooden**

“In my dreams, I’ve always wanted it, and I’ve thought under the perfect circumstances, I could do it. Believing all along that I could do it goes a long way.” **Michael Phelps on winning eight gold medals**

“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see,” **Hebrews 11:1**

“The Hall of Fame is only good as long as time shall be, but keep in mind, God’s Hall of Fame is for eternity! To have your name inscribed up there is greater more by far, than all the fame and all the praise of every man-made star!” **Author Unknown**

“Faith is believing what we do not see. The reward of faith is to see what we believe.” **Saint Augustine**

“All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.” **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

“We must care for our bodies as though we were going to live forever, but we must care for our souls as if we are going to die tomorrow.”

Ethan Hallmark:

January 23, 2001 - September 26, 2014

"My biggest fear isn't dying. My biggest fear is that others will blame God for my death and not believe in Him. I don't want people angry at God or even blaming Him. I mean, there is so much more than just this life. Just because He didn't heal me on earth doesn't mean He won't heal me in Heaven."

Imagine this...

You're driving home from work next Monday after a long day. You tune in your radio. You hear a blurb about a little village in India where some villagers have died suddenly, strangely, of a flu that has never been seen before. It's not influenza, but three or four people are dead, and it's kind of interesting, and they are sending some doctors over there to investigate it. You don't think much about it, but coming home from church on Sunday you hear another radio spot. Only they say it's not three villagers, it's 30,000 villagers in the back hills of this particular area of India, and it's on TV that night. CNN runs a little blurb: people are heading there from the disease center in Atlanta because this disease strain has never been seen before.

By Monday morning when you get up, it's the lead story. It's not just India; it's Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and before you know it, you're hearing this story everywhere, and they have now coined it as "the mystery flu." The President has made some comment that he and his family are praying and hoping that all will go well over there. But everyone is wondering, "How are we going to contain it?"

That's when the President of France makes an announcement that shocks Europe. He is closing their borders. No flights from India, Pakistan, or any of the countries where this thing has been seen. And that's why that night you are watching a little bit of CNN before going to bed. Your jaw hits your chest when a weeping woman is translated into English from a French news program. There's a man lying in a hospital in Paris, dying of the mystery flu. It has come to Europe.

Panic strikes. As best they can tell, after contracting the disease, you have it for a week before you even know it. Then you have four days of unbelievable symptoms. And then you die. Britain closes its borders, but it's too late. South Hampton, Liverpool, North Hampton, and it's Tuesday morning when the President of the United States makes the following announcement: "Due to a national-security risk, all flights to and from Europe and Asia have been canceled. If your loved ones are overseas, I'm sorry. They cannot come back until we find a cure for this thing."

Within four days, our nation has been plunged into an unbelievable fear. People are wondering, "What if it comes to this country?" And preachers on Tuesday are saying it's the scourge of God. It's Wednesday night, and you are at a church prayer meeting when somebody runs in from the parking lot and yells, "Turn on a radio, turn on a radio!" And while everyone in church listens to a little transistor radio with a microphone stuck up to it, the announcement is made. Two women are lying in a Long Island hospital, dying from the mystery flu. Within hours it seems, the disease envelops the country.

People are working around the clock, trying to find an antidote. Nothing is working. California, Oregon, Arizona, Florida, Massachusetts. It's as though it's just sweeping in from the borders.

And then all of a sudden the news comes out. The code has been broken. A cure can be found. A vaccine can be made. It's going to take the blood of somebody who hasn't been infected, and so, sure enough, all through the Midwest, through all those channels of emergency broadcasting, everyone is asked to do one simple thing: Go to your downtown hospital and have your blood analyzed. That's all we ask of you. When you hear the sirens go off in your neighborhood, please make your way quickly, quietly, and safely to the hospitals.

Sure enough, when you and your family get down there late on that Friday night, there is a long line, and they've got nurses and doctors coming out and pricking fingers and taking blood and putting labels on it. Your spouse and your kids are out there, and they take your blood and say, "Wait here in the parking lot, and if we call your name, you can be dismissed and go home." You

stand around, scared, with your neighbors, wondering what on earth is going on, and if this is the end of the world.

Suddenly, a young man comes running out of the hospital screaming. He's yelling a name and waving a clipboard. What? He yells it again! And your son tugs on your jacket and says, "Daddy, that's me." Before you know it they have grabbed your boy. "Wait a minute. Hold on!" And they say, "It's okay, his blood is clean. His blood is pure. We want to make sure he doesn't have the disease. We think he has the right blood type."

Five tense minutes later, out come the doctors and nurses crying and hugging one another – some are even laughing. It's the first time you have seen anybody laugh in a week, and an old doctor walks up to you and says, "Thank you, sir. Your son's blood is perfect. It's clean, it is pure, and we can make the vaccine."

As the word begins to spread all across that parking lot full of folks, people are screaming and praying and laughing and crying. But then the gray-haired doctor pulls you aside and says, "May we see you for a moment? We didn't realize that the donor would be a minor and we... we need you to sign a consent form."

You begin to sign, and then you see that the box for the number of pints of blood to be taken is empty. "H-h-h-how many pints?" And that is when the old doctor's smile fades, and he says, "We had no idea it would be a little child. We weren't prepared. WE need it all!" "But... but... I don't understand. He's my only son!" "We are talking about the whole world here. Please sign. We... we... need to hurry!"

"But can't you give him a transfusion?" "If we had clean blood we would. Please, will you please sign?"

In numb silence you do. Then they say, "Would you like to have a moment with him before we begin?"

Could you walk back? Could you walk back to that room where he sits on a table saying, "Daddy? Mommy? What's going on?" Could you take his hands and say, "Son, your mommy and I love you, and we would never, ever let anything happen to you that didn't just have to be! Do you understand that?" And when that old doctor comes back in and says, "I'm sorry, we've got to get started. People all over the world are dying," could you leave? Could you walk out while he is saying, "Dad? Mom? Dad? Why... why have you abandoned me?"

And then next week, when they have the ceremony to honor your son, and some folks sleep through it, and some folks don't even bother to come because they have better things to do, and some folks come with a pretentious smile and just pretend to care, would you want to jump up and say, "EXCUSE ME! MY SON DIED FOR YOU! DON'T YOU EVEN CARE? DOES IT MEAN NOTHING TO YOU?"

I wonder, is that what God wants to say? "MY SON DIED FOR YOU! DOES IT MEAN NOTHING? DON'T YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I CARE?"

Father, seeing it from your eyes should break our hearts. Maybe now we can begin to comprehend the great love you have for us.

The Man and the Birds as told by Paul Harvey

The man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man.

"I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he'd much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound... Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a thud... At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it. Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in. So he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted wide open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them... He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms... Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn.

And then, he realized that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me... That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him.

"If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safe, warm...to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see, and hear and understand." At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells - listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow.

Cherokee Legend:

The legend of the Cherokee Indian youth's rite of passage.

His father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through it. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night, he is a MAN.

He cannot tell the other boys of this experience, because each lad must come into manhood on his own. The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm.

The wind blew the grass and earth, and shook his stump, but he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man!

Finally , after a horrific night the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold. It was then that he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him. He had been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm.

We, too, are never alone. Even when we don't know it, God is watching over us, sitting on the stump beside us.

The Burial of a Mule:

A farmer discovers that his mule has fallen into a dry well. The farmer heard the mule making noise and discovered the poor animal's misfortune. After assessing the situation, the farmer decided the mule wasn't worth the time and expense it would take to save it. Essentially, he lost hope in the old mule. So he called his neighbors together and asked them to help him haul dirt to bury the animal and put it out of its misery.

When the first shovelfuls of dirt came down, the mule became hysterical and began to kick. But as the dirt continued to hit his back, it dawned on the creature that he should shake it off each time and step up on the growing mound of dirt beneath him. Load after load of dirt hit him square in the back, but no matter how painful it was, he shook the dirt off and stepped on it.

Before long, the accumulation of dirt was such that the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of the well. The dirt that had been meant to bury him had actually saved his life because of the manner in which he responded to the situation.

There are not a lot of things in our daily lives that we cannot overcome! We must see negative situations as merely stepping stones. We must have faith that our problems can actually propel us toward our goals rather than hinder us.

The Little Girl and the Atheist:

An atheist was seated next to a little girl on an airplane and he turned to her and said, "Do you want to talk? Flights go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger."

The little girl, who had just started to read her book, replied to the total stranger, "What would you want to talk about?"

"Oh, I don't know," said the atheist. "How about why there is no God, or no Heaven or Hell, or no life after death?" as he smiled smugly.

"OK," she said. "Those could be interesting topics but let me ask you a question first. A horse, a cow, and a deer all eat the same stuff -grass. Yet a deer excretes little pellets, while a cow turns out a flat patty, but a horse produces clumps. Why do you suppose that is?"

The atheist, visibly surprised by the little girl's intelligence, thinks about it and says, "Hmmm, I have no idea."

To which the little girl replies, "Do you really feel qualified to discuss why there is no God, or no Heaven or Hell, or no life after death, when you don't know crap?" And then she went back to reading her book.

The Bear and the Atheist:

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods.

“What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!” he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes. Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him. He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster. He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him. At that instant the atheist cried out, "Oh my God!"

Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent.

It was then that bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying, "You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?"

The atheist looked directly into the light, "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?"

Very well," said the voice.

The light went out. The sounds of the forest resumed.

The bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke, "Lord, bless this food for which I am about to receive, for I am truly thankful."

Hanging on for Dear Life:

A man fell off a cliff. On the way down he managed to grab a branch. Hanging on for dear life, he appealed to God, “Help me, please! I’ll do anything you ask!”

Immediately he heard a booming voice, “Yes, I will help you. But you will have to do what I say.”

“Anything, anything. Just help me!” the man yelled.

“All right. Let go of the branch.”

The man thought about it and then said, “Is there anyone else up there?”

“When God leads you to the edge of the cliff, trust Him fully and let go. Only one of two things will happen; either He’ll catch you when you fall, or He’ll teach you how to fly!” Revelations 3:8

Faith

By: Saint Augustine

I began to consider the countless things I believed that I had not seen, or that had happened with me not there – so many things in the history of nations, so many facts about places and cities that I had never seen, so many things told to me by friends, by doctors, by this person, by that person: and unless we accepted these things, we could do nothing at all in this life. Most strongly of all it struck me how firmly and unshakably I believed that I was born of a particular father and mother, which I could not possibly know unless I believed it on the word of others.

Footprints:

One night I had a dream. I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonging to me and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of my life.

This really bothered me and I questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way, however I noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed you most you would leave me."

The Lord replied, "my precious, precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

The Ten Commandments:

The First Commandment: Thou shalt have no other gods.

The Second Commandment: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

The Third Commandment: Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.

The Fourth Commandment: Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother (that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long upon the earth).

The Fifth Commandment: Thou shalt not kill.

The Sixth Commandment: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

The Seventh Commandment: Thou shalt not steal.

The Eighth Commandment: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

The Ninth Commandment: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

The Tenth Commandment: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is his.

The Teen Commandments:

1. God is #1
2. Watch your language
3. Make faith a priority
4. Respect adults
5. Increase peace
6. Practice abstinence
7. Don't do anything you have to lie about
8. Be positive, true, and kind
9. The things that matter are not even "things" at all
10. Do all this and you can't go wrong

You Gotta Believe:

When Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Tug McGraw – father of legendary country singer Tim McGraw – struck out batter Willie Wilson to earn the Phillies the 1980 World Series title, *Sports Illustrated* captured an immortal image of elation on the pitcher's mound – an image few people know was played out exactly as McGraw had planned it.

“It was as if I'd been there a thousand times before,” he said, “When I was growing up, I would pitch to my father in the backyard. We would always get to where it was the bottom of the ninth in the World Series with two outs and three men on base. I would always bear down and strike them out.” Tug had conditioned his brain day after day in the backyard, the day eventually arrived where he was living that dream for real.

Bring your Umbrella:

Some years ago, when there was a severe drought, farmers were growing ever more anxious about the loss of crops and the erosion of the top-soil. In one country parish a special prayer vigil was organized. The church was crowded with people praying for rain. After hours of prayers, they heard the very faintest patter on the roof.

Gradually it grew heavier and heavier. The whole church thanked God in their final prayers before leaving for home. By that time, though, the rain had become so heavy that they all had to stand on the porch and wait for the storm to pass.

All but one little girl. She was the only one who had brought her umbrella.

Often we say we believe in something but we don't live out that belief in our actions.

The Farmer and the Mouse:

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning. "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

The mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone. That very night a sound was heard throughout the house. It was the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught.

The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital. She returned home with a fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

His wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well; she died.

So many people came for her funeral, that the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them. The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

The next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember, when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk. We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage each other.

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 9: Hard Work

“I’ve always believed that if you put in the work, the results will come. I don’t do things half-heartedly. Because I know if I do, then I can expect half-hearted results,” **Michael Jordan**

“If they can make penicillin out of moldy bread, they can sure make something out of you,” **Muhammad Ali**

“Whenever you start – give it your best. The opportunities are there to be anything you want to be. But wanting to be someone isn’t enough; dreaming about it isn’t enough; thinking about it isn’t enough. You’ve got to study for it, work for it, fight for it with all your heart and soul, because nobody is going to hand it to you.” **General Colin Powell**

“I’ve read that I flew up the hills and mountains of France. But you don’t fly up a hill. You struggle slowly and painfully up a hill, and maybe, if you work very hard, you get to the top ahead of everybody else.”

Lance Armstrong

“Success doesn’t come to you... you go to it,” **Marva Gibran**

“Work is love made visible.” **Khalil Gibran**

“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.” **Colossians 3:23**

“There are no traffic jams along the extra mile,” **Roger Staubach**

“The dictionary is the only place that success comes before work. Hard work is the price we must pay for success. I think you can accomplish anything if you're willing to pay the price,” **Vince Lombardi**

“You never plow a field by turning it over in your mind,” **Irish Proverb**

“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there,” **Will Rogers**

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it’s dressed in overalls and looks like work,” **Thomas Edison**

“If things came easy, then everybody would be great at what they did, let's face it,” **Mike Ditka**

“Once you’ve done the mental work, there comes a point you have to throw yourself into the action and put your heart on the line. That means not only being brave, but being compassionate towards yourself, your teammates and your opponents,” **Phil Jackson**

“You have to work, and work hard. Worthwhile things only come from hard work. There is a price to be paid in order to achieve anything of significance. You have to be willing to pay the price.” **John Wooden**

“Genius: it’s one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration. No one has ever drowned in sweat.” **Lou Holtz and Thomas Edison**

“When I was fifteen, I had lucky underwear. When that failed, I had a lucky hairdo, then a lucky race number, even lucky race days. After fifteen years, I’ve found the secret to success is simple. It’s hard work.”
Margaret Gross

“The will to win is not as important as the will to prepare to win.” **Bob Knight**

“The harder I work, the luckier I get.” **George Allen**

“A man who wakes up and finds himself a success has not been sleeping.”
Frank Lane

“If what we did yesterday still looks big to you, you haven’t done much today.” **Wid Matthews**

“They may outsmart me, or be luckier, but they can’t outwork me.”
Woody Hayes

“It's better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret.”
Jacki Joyner-Kersey

When I train I work as hard as
humanly possible.

I envision my opponent working just
as hard.

When I am exhausted and the
workout is done,

I envision my opponent doing one
more,

So I do one more.

Then I envision my opponent
gleaming with satisfaction, packing
their bags, and going home.

SO I DO ONE MORE!

Work

By: Mike Krzyzewski

One of my favorite quotes about hard work was said by one of the greatest coaches of all time, John Wooden. He said, "***Nothing will work unless you do.***" In other words, you can have the best plans, the most perfect offensive and defensive schemes, and even a great amount of talent. But if you and your team are not willing to put in hard work, your plans will never be realized.

Another quote I often share with my players was by NBA legend Jerry West. He said, "***You don't get much done if you only work on the days that you feel good.***" Hard work cannot be sporadic. It cannot take place only on the sunny days. If you want your best to become a habit, you must engage in intensive, intelligent, and persistent practice. I believe you play like you practice, so when you practice hard every day, playing hard will seem natural when the game is on the line.

A final quote about work that I share with my team is Roger Staubach's: "***Spectacular achievements are always preceded by unspectacular preparation.***" Hard work is not pretty, or glamorous, or even fun. But, as I learned from my coach Bob Knight, winners prepare to win. Of course, everybody would like to win. But real winners put forth the time and effort to make it happen. And, in fact, by putting in the work, you make yourself worthy of winning. And I truly believe that you will not win consistently unless you are worthy.

I love hard work. It is a staple of all that I do and all that I ask of my teams. A lot of people hear the words "hard work" and say, "Oh, no. I don't want to do that." I want to coach kids who hear that they are going to have to work hard and then get excited about how much they will improve as a result.

I grew up in an environment of hard work. My father was an elevator operator in Chicago and my mother scrubbed floors at night at the Chicago Athletic Club. Even if they were sick or tired, they always went to work and worked hard. They truly believed that there was dignity in their work. I attended Catholic schools my whole life, and then West Point, where the lesson was reinforced by my teachers and coaches.

212°: The Extra Degree

By: Sam Parker and Mac Anderson

At 211°, water is hot.

At 212°, it boils.

And with boiling water, comes steam.

And steam can power a locomotive.

One extra degree makes all the difference.

And, the one extra degree of effort in business and in life separates the good from the great!

The average margin of victory for the last 25 years in all major professional golf tournaments combined was less than three strokes.

The average margin for victory between an Olympic Gold Metal and no metal at all is extremely small. In the 2004 mens 800m race, the margin of victory was 0.71 seconds.

At the Indy 500, the average margin for victory for the past 10 years has been 1.54 seconds. On average, the winner took home \$1,278,813, the second place prize was \$621,321, a difference of \$657,492.

It's your life.

You are responsible for the results of it.

It's time to turn up the heat.

To get what we've never had, we must do what we've never done.

You are now aware.

You now have a target for everything you do.

Maybe

By: Michael Jordan

Maybe it's my fault.

Maybe I lead you to believe it was easy when it wasn't.

Maybe I made you to think my highlights started at the free throw line and not in the gym.

Maybe I made you think that every shot I took was a game winner. That my game was built on flash and not fire.

Maybe it's my fault that you didn't see that failure gave me strength, that my pain was my motivation.

Maybe I lead you to believe that basketball was a God given gift, and not something I worked for every single day of my life.

Maybe I destroyed the game, but maybe you're just making excuses.

Play Hard - Play Smart - Play Together:

By: Dean Smith

Playing Hard:

Maybe a player wasn't the fastest, the tallest, or the most athletic person on the court. In the course of any given game that was out of his control. But each of them could control the effort with which he played. "Never let anyone play harder than you," I told them. "That is part of the game you can control." If another team played harder than we did, we had no excuse for it. None. We worked on it in every practice. If a player didn't give maximum effort, we dealt with it right then. We stopped practice and had the entire team run sprints for the offending player. We played a style of basketball that was physically exhausting and made it impossible for a player to go full throttle for forty minutes. When he got tired, he flashed the tired signal, a raised fist, and we substituted for him. He could put himself back in the game once he had rested. We didn't want tired player on the court because they usually tried to rest on defense. That wouldn't work in our plan. Therefore we watched closely in practice and in games to make sure player played hard. If they slacked off, it was important to catch them and get them out of the game, or if it occurred in practice, to have the entire team run.

Playing Together:

Basketball is a game that counts on togetherness. I pointed out that seldom, if ever, did the nation's leading scorer play on a ranked team. He certainly didn't play on a championship team. I made them understand that our plan would fall apart if they didn't take care of one another: set screens; play team defense; box out; pass to the open man. One man who failed to do his job unselfishly could undermine the efforts of the four other players on the court.

Playing Smart:

The only way to have a smart team is to have one that is fundamentally sound. We didn't skimp on fundamentals. We worked on them hard in practice and repeated them until they were down cold. Our entire program was built around practice. If we practiced well and learned, we could play smart. It was another thing we could control.

Gary Player on Work Ethic:

Gary Player for years was a great competitor in national and international golf tournaments. People constantly said to him, "I'd give anything if I could hit a golf ball like you."

Upon hearing that comment one day, Player responded impatiently, "no, you wouldn't. You'd do anything to hit a golf ball like me, if it were easy! Do you know what you have to do to hit a golf ball like me? You've got to get up at 5:00 am every morning, go out to the golf course, and hit a thousand golf balls! Your hands start bleeding, and you walk to the clubhouse and wash the blood off your hands, slap a bandage on it, and go out and hit another thousand golf balls! That is what it takes to hit a golf ball like me!"

Effort as a Habit

By: Jim Thompson

"It always bugs me when people call me a natural shooter. I spent many years in a gym working hard to become a "natural" shooter." **Chris Mullin, Five-Time NBA All-Star**

NBA stars LeBron James and Carmello Anthony learned something important as members of the US Olympic basketball team that won the 2008 Gold Medal in Beijing. They saw firsthand how hard their teammate Kobe Bryant worked every day, often starting at 6:30 am to be the best basketball player he can be. Think about it. Kobe – rich, famous, arguably the best player in the world – gets up at dawn to practice. Many observers believe James and Anthony have both elevated their games, especially their defense – which is largely about effort – since being exposed to Bryant's work habits.

Building Your House

A carpenter was fixing to retire and tells the company he works for he was through building houses. They ask him to build one more before he retires. He agrees and through the process of building this last house he begins to cut corners, uses cheaper materials, doesn't use the same precision in which he used to and basically built an inferior home. When he's done he gives the keys to his boss and says here you go I'm done. The boss returns the key and says thanks for all your hard work and dedication to this company. This home is yours and we appreciate you. Obviously, had the carpenter known he was building his own house he would not have cut corners. You are building your house every day and you don't even know it."

The Lion and the Gazelle:

Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning, the lion wakes up. It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death. It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle, when the sun comes up, you'd better be running!

Competition:

"Competition is what made America great," **Jim Foster**

Why must I prove that I'm better than you? Why must you prove that you're better than me? Why have I to be stronger, braver, cleverer, faster, than you? Why should I have to use you to prove myself to myself, and to others? I can only measure my growth against how tall I was before. And mostly, only I know how tall I was before.

Perseverance: *The harder you fall, the higher you bounce.*

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education alone will not; the world is full of educated failures. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.” **Calvin Coolidge**

Born into poverty, Lincoln was faced with defeat throughout his life. He lost eight elections, twice failed in business and suffered a nervous breakdown. He could have quit many times - but he didn't and because he didn't quit, he became one of the greatest presidents in the history of our country.

“My foot slipped from under me. But I recovered and said to myself, ‘It’s a slip and not a fall,’” **Abraham Lincoln.**

Here is a sketch of Lincoln's road to the White House:

- 1816 His family was forced out of their home. He had to work to support them.
- 1818 His mother died.
- 1831 Failed in business.
- 1832 Ran for state legislature - lost.
- 1832 Also lost his job - wanted to go to law school but couldn't get in.
- 1833 Borrowed some money from a friend to begin a business and by the end of the year he was bankrupt. He spent the next 17 years of his life paying off this debt.
- 1834 Ran for state legislature again - won.
- 1835 Was engaged to be married, sweetheart died and his heart was broken.
- 1836 Had a total nervous breakdown and was in bed for six months.
- 1838 Sought to become speaker of the state legislature - defeated.
- 1840 Sought to become elector - defeated.
- 1843 Ran for Congress - lost.
- 1846 Ran for Congress again - this time he won - went to Washington and did a good job.
- 1848 Ran for re-election to Congress - lost.
- 1849 Sought the job of land officer in his home state - rejected.
- 1854 Ran for Senate of the United States - lost.
- 1856 Sought the Vice-Presidential nomination at his party's national convention - got less than 100 votes.
- 1858 Ran for U.S. Senate again - again he lost.
- 1860 Elected president of the United States.

The Ability to Persevere:

Michael Jordan: Jordan is the epitome of perseverance. This is a guy who was cut from his high school basketball team but was determined to play the game. He was the best who ever played the game. He was never afraid of missing a shot-never afraid to fail. We remember only the last-second shots he made-we don't remember the many more that he missed.

Dr. Seuss: The legendary Dr. Seuss's first book was rejected twenty-three times.

Bill Clinton: President Clinton was voted out of the governorship in Arkansas yet came back to reclaim his job and eventually go on to be president.

Beethoven: Beethoven was one of the world's greatest composers, even after he lost his hearing.

Henry Ford: Legendary automobile manufacturer Henry Ford went broke five times before making money on automobiles.

Helen Keller: Helen Keller was blind, deaf, and mute (she couldn't talk) yet she earned a college degree.

Sylvester Stallone: The classic film Rocky is now entrenched in the American lexicon, but before 1976 it was merely one man's vision. Stallone was not the best student, and counselors steered him to labor-intensive jobs, but Stallone wanted to be an actor. After watching Muhammad Ali fight Chuck Wepner, Stallone got the idea for the Rocky saga. He wrote the screenplay and began to shop it around to producers. Some liked the idea; some laughed at it. Stallone insisted that he play the part of Rocky Balboa, and even after he received offers for the screenplay, he turned them down because he was not guaranteed the part. Eventually, Rocky got made with Stallone as the star, and the rest is history.

Alexander Graham Bell: The inventor of the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell, offered the rights to the telephone for \$100,000 to Carl Orton, president of Western Union, Orton replied, "What use would this company make of an electrical toy?"

Stephen King: Novelist Stephen King almost made a multimillion-dollar mistake when he threw his Carrie manuscript in the garbage because he was tired of rejections. "We are not interested in science fiction which deals with negative utopias," he was told. "They do not sell." Luckily, his wife fished it out of the garbage. Eventually Carrie was printed by another publisher, sold more than 4 million copies, and was made into a blockbuster film.

Don't Be as Dumb as an Elephant:

A baby elephant is trained at birth to be confined to a very small space. Its trainer will tie its leg with a rope to a wooden post planted deep in the ground. This confines the baby elephant to an area determined by the length of the rope – the elephant's comfort zone. Though the baby elephant will initially try to break the rope, the rope is too strong, and so the baby elephant learns that it can't break the rope. It learns that it has to stay in the area defined by the length of the rope.

When the elephant grows up into a 5-ton colossus that could easily break the same rope, it doesn't even try because it learned as a baby that it couldn't break the rope. In this way, the largest elephant can be confined by the puniest little rope.

Perhaps this also describes you – still trapped in a comfort zone by something as puny and weak as the small rope and stake that controls the elephant, except your rope is made up of the limiting beliefs and images that you received and took on when you were young.

How many times have we taught that we couldn't do something simply because we couldn't do it in the past? Do not allow your past to stop you from doing what you want to do today. You're a different person today than you were yesterday. In short, "Don't be as Dumb as an Elephant."

Failure:

Whatever you do, do it passionately. Failure is an event, not a person. Every obstacle presents an opportunity... *if you're looking for it.* Relax! You only fail when you quit.

"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed,"

Michael Jordan

"Only a man who knows what it is like to be defeated can reach down to the bottom of his soul and come up with the extra ounce of power it takes to win when the match is even," **Muhammad Ali**

"Failure is good. It's fertilizer. Everything I've learned about coaching, I've learned from making mistakes," **Rick Pitino**

"The man who is afraid of failure, seldom has time to face success,"

John Wooden

Toughness:

"I will never look at a firefighter the same way again. What is in someone, hundreds of them, to compel them to run into a burning building while everyone else is running out, just to save people they don't even know? Their bravery has become part of our collective national legacy. Their bravery dignifies us all." **Bill Hybels**

"Everyone has a plan until they are hit." **Evander Holyfield**

"I hated every minute of training, but I said, "Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion." **Muhammad Ali**

"The vision of a champion is someone who is bent over, drenched in sweat, at the point of exhaustion when no else is watching." **Anson Dorrance**

"Fall down seven times, stand up eight." **Japanese Proverb**

"I go out there and get my eyes gouged, my nose busted, my body slammed. I love the pain of the game." **Dennis Rodman**

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 10: Success

“With champions, success is never unexpected; it’s a natural result that comes from continuous, unselfish, unrelenting determination to win; never letting down, never letting outside influence into the game.”

Harvey MacKay

“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”

James 1:2-4

“The high you get from winning isn’t nearly as high as the low is from losing.” **Bob Knight**

“Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall.”
Confucius

“There is no education like adversity.” **Benjamin Disraeli**

“I learn much more from losing than I do from winning.” **Jim Tressel**

“Success is a lousy teacher. It makes smart people think they can’t lose,”
Bill Gates

“A gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials,” **Chinese Proverb**

“There is no strength where there is no struggle,” **Jim Tressel**

“Face adversity promptly and without flinching, and you will reduce its impact. Never run from anything and never ever quit,” **Winston Churchill**

“The bigger the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it.” **Moliere**

“Success without honor is an unseasoned dish; it will satisfy your hunger, but it won’t taste good.” **Joe Paterno**

Success

By: John Wooden

John Wooden's definition of success: *"Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."*

Mr. Webster defines success as the accumulation of material possessions or the attainment of a position of power, prestige, or perhaps fame. I certainly think those things can be indicative of success, but they are not necessarily success in themselves.

I know many eminently successful people who never made a lot of money and never gained any high position or recognition. They simply and quietly raised a family, worked hard, and had a job that allowed them to take care of their family. These individuals and their families are a big success by my definition. Mr. Webster neglects to mention those folks in his book.

One of the things my dad tried to get across to me was that I should never try to be better than someone else. Then he always added, "But Johnny, never cease trying to be the best you can be. That is under your control. The other isn't."

You have little say over how big or how strong or how smart or rich someone else may be. You do have, at least you should have, control of yourself and the effort you give toward bringing out your best in whatever you're doing. This effort must be total, and when it is, I believe you have achieved personal success.

Try your hardest in all ways and you are a success. Period. Do less than that and you have failed to one degree or another.

"At God's footstool to confess, a poor soul knelt, and bowed his head. 'I failed!' He cried. The Master said, 'Thou didst thy best, that is success.'"

The Six Day Race

The year was 1983. In Australia, the long-distance foot race from Sydney to Melbourne was about to begin, covering 875 kilometers—more than 500 miles! About 150 world-class athletes had entered, for what was planned as a six-day event. So race officials were startled when a 61-year-old man approached and handed them his entry form.

His name was Cliff Young, and his "racing attire" included overalls and galoshes over his work boots.

At first, they refused to let him enter. So he explained that he'd grown up on a 2,000-acre farm, with thousands of sheep. His family could afford neither horses nor tractors so, when the storms came, his job was to round up the sheep. Sometimes, he said, it would take two or three days of running.

Finally, they let Cliff enter, and the race began. The others quickly left him way behind, shuffling along in his galoshes. But he didn't know the plan included stopping each night to rest, so he kept going.

By the fifth day, he had caught them all, won the race, and became a national hero. He continued to compete in long-distance races until well up in his seventies. He was an inspiration to millions and a great encourager of younger runners.

In his honor and memory, in 2004, the year after his death at age 81, the organizers of the race where he first gained fame permanently changed its name to the Cliff Young Australian Six Day Race.

What was the key to Cliff Young's success? It goes by various names: determination, perseverance, persistence, tenacity. It means keeping one's eye fixed steadfastly on a goal, and not stopping, no matter the difficulties or the obstacles, until that goal is achieved.

Fear of Failure

By: Nick Saban

If I put a 2 by 4 on the ground and asked you to walk across it, how many of you guys could do that? You could all do it, because you'd focus on the board. But what if I took the same 2 by 4 and put it 10 stories up, stretched between two buildings? It's hard to focus on the board, because you're focused on your fear of failing. Focus on your goals. Don't be distracted by your fears. Concentrate on the 2 by 4 and we'll get it done.

In the Arena:

By: Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is not effort without error or shortcoming; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of his achievement, and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat.

ALWAYS BE YOUR BEST!

**When you think it doesn't matter
if you fail or pass the test.
Keep in mind the reason why
you should always be your best.**

**While the whole world may not notice
if you tried to give your all,
there is a person in you
to whom it matters if you fall.**

**That little voice inside you -
which directs your thoughts each day -
will make the final judgement
if you won or lost each day.**

**Never can you fail yourself
if you give it all you've got.
The world extends a hand to you
when you give life your best shot.**

**For all that really matters
when you're finished with your test,
is not the final score at all -
but did you do your best?**

- Tom Krause

Throw Away Your Ores:

An ancient civilization wanted to build a church on a beautiful uninhabited island. This task had a very difficult obstacle to overcome. At a certain time each year, the weather on the island would get so bad that it would kill any person living on the island. If the church was not finished it would be destroyed by the storms.

Each year, the commander of the ancient civilization would lead his people to the island. Each year, they would leave the island without a fully constructed church.

The next year, the commander would send his people back to the island. They would have to start completely over because the storms destroyed what was previously done.

The people would again leave the island with an unfinished church.

This cycle went on for decades.

Finally, the commander died and a new one took over. The new commander was determined to successfully build the church that was promised to his people.

Upon entering the island, the first thing the commander did was throw his ores into the sea. His people knew that they had no way of returning home. If their church was not built by the time of the dangerous weather, they would be killed.

The people worked on the church with a sense of urgency. They knew their lives were on the line. That year, they built the church and were saved from the deadly weather. Decades of failure finally led to success through one simple act: ***Throw Away Your Ores.***

Finish the Race:

There is a story of a marathon runner in the 1968 Olympics held in Mexico City. The man, John Stephen Akhwari, hailed from Tanzania and was his country's lone representative in the marathon. Akhwari was not a top runner and, after falling and injuring himself, finished an hour behind the winner. Many of the officials and fans had already left. After he crossed the finish line, he was asked by a reporter why he didn't just quit when he was so far behind and the race was clearly over. "My country did not send me seven thousand miles to begin a race. They sent me to finish the race."

Two Feet Short:

A man was mining for gold out west. For two years, he dug and dug and did not find the gold he was so eagerly searching for. He got frustrated and gave up. He sold his claim to a newcomer, and that newcomer continued to dig where the miner had left off. He dug just two more feet in that mine and found more gold than you can imagine. How much farther would you have dug?

The Champion Creed By: Tom Hopkins

I am not judged by the number of times I fail, but by the number of times I succeed. The number of times I succeed is in direct proportion to the number of times I can fail and keep trying!

I never see failure as failure, but only as a LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

I never see failure as failure, but only as THE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK I NEEDED TO CHANGE COURSE IN MY DIRECTION.

I never see failure as failure, but only as THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP MY SENSE OF HUMOR.

I never see failure as failure, but only as THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE MY TECHNIQUES AND PERFECT MY PERFORMANCE!

I never see failure as failure, but only as THE GAME I MUST PLAY TO WIN!

Woohitike (Bravery):

Woohitike (wo-oh-hee-tee-keh), or bravery, is one of the central virtues or values of the Lakota Sioux. They believe that we all have it in us to be brave, that each of us can defend the camp when necessary. Life will give us the opportunity, issuing the invitation to contest, and as time goes on, we will be shaped and strengthened by our challenges. Whether we can win each time or not, we will be tempered by adversity.

The ancient Lakota hunter warriors handcrafted their own bows from seasoned ash wood. There were two ways to acquire the proper wood. The conventional way was to find a young ash tree, harvest it, and let it dry for at least five years. But the hunter warriors were always on the lookout for a mature ash tree that had been struck by lightning. Such a tree had been dried and cured in an instant by the awesome power of lightning, and any bows made from it would be much stronger. Such trees were rare, but they were preferred because they had suffered the ultimate adversity, and ultimate adversity produces ultimate strength.

Pressure:

How do you act when the pressure's on
When the chance for victory is almost gone,
When Fortune's star has refuse to shine,
When the ball is on your five-yard line?

How do you act when the going's rough,
Does your spirit lag when breaks are tough?
Or, is there in you a flame that glows
Brighter as fiercer the battle grows?

How hard, how long will you fight the foe?
That's what the world would like to know!

Cowards can fight when they're out ahead.
The uphill grind shows a thoroughbred!
You wish for success? Then tell me, son,

How do you act when the pressure's on?

A Parent Talks to a Child Before the First Game:

This is your first game, my child, I hope you win.
I hope you win for your sake, not mine.
Because winning's nice.
It's a good feeling.
Like the whole world is yours.
But, it passes, this feeling.
And what lasts is what you've learned.

And what you learn about is life.
That's what sports is all about. Life.
The whole thing is played out in an afternoon.
The happiness of life.
The miseries.
The joys.
The heartbreaks.

There's no telling what'll turn up.
There's no telling whether they'll toss you out in the first five minutes or whether you'll stay for the long haul.

There's no telling how you'll do.
You might be a hero or you might be absolutely nothing.
There's just no telling.
Too much depends on chance.
On how the ball bounces.

I'm not talking about the game, my child.
I'm talking about life.
But, it's life that the game is all about.
Just as I said.

Because every game is life.
And life is a game.
Dead serious.

But, that's what you do with serious things.
You do your best.
You take what comes.
You take what comes
And you run with it.

Winning is fun.
Sure.
But winning is not the point.

Wanting to win is the point.
Not giving up is the point.
Never being satisfied with what you've done is the point.
Never letting up is the point.
Never letting anyone down is the point.

Play to win.
Sure.
But lose like a champion.
Because it's not winning that counts.
What counts is trying.

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 11: Love

“Darkness cannot defeat darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot defeat hate, only love can do that.” **Martin Luther King Jr.**

“Loyalty: It means keeping your self-respect knowing who and what you have allegiance to.” **John Wooden**

“Be kind to one another, because most of us are fighting a hard battle.”
Ian Maclaren

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: what are you doing for others?” **Martin Luther King Jr.**

“Concern for man and his fate must form the chief interest of all technical endeavors... Never forget that in the midst of your diagrams and equations.” **Albert Einstein**

“Love cures all people – both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.” **Dr. Karl Menninger**

“When we come face to face with God, we are going to be judged on how much we loved,” **Mother Teresa**

“Commitment is the key to every relationship,” **Jim Tressel**

“The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good,” **Ann Landers**

“True love will find an outlet in service,” **Billy Graham**

“There is no joy the world can give like that which comes from joining good men in common purpose.” **Doc Spurgeon**

“When you help someone up a hill, you get that much closer to the top yourself.”

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.” **Amy Carmichael**

The Love Chapter: 1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Love:

By: Mike Krzyzewski

In 1974, when I was twenty-seven, my wife, Mickie, and I took a big chance and gave up a steady income and benefits of my being an Army captain with five years of experience to pursue a career as a basketball coaching family.

The situation was a difficult one for a young family. With our four-year-old daughter, Debbie, we moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where I became a graduate assistant at Indiana University. In addition to attending classes and studying, a graduate assistant's duties were the same as a full-time assistant, including going on the road to recruit. As a result, I was away from home literally every weekend. Mickie had a job at a local bank in order to supplement our income and was also working hard raising Debbie. It was difficult for us to find time to spend as a family, and many times we felt very distant from one another.

One evening when I returned home after a recruiting trip, my wife and I began a discussion about us. "What is going on? What is this about?" she asked, in reference to our current situation. "We are always apart. You don't spend time with us. Why are we even married? Why are we doing this?" she said. Her questions really bothered me, and, distraught, I put my head in my hands.

"I don't know," I responded, "It must be love."

After a slight pause, Mickie burst out with laughter and I burst out with relief. I had given the right answer, the only answer. Then the two of us laughed together. "I think you're right," she said.

For me, that story is a reminder that love does not always make sense, nor is it always convenient. Even when circumstances were seemingly against us, Mickie and I always told ourselves and each other that we had to work hard to keep love strong and to nurture it. We believe that love and marriage is, above all else, about making each other better.

The two of us have spend thirty-seven years together, and as our family increased to include three daughters, we learned that love grows as our family does. As our girls have grown older, each of them has fallen in love and married. In their choice of spouses, my wife and I have asked them only one question. Do you make each other better? In all three cases, they responded with an enthusiastic "Yes!"

Play Better Than You Are:

By: Doc Spurgeon

All I ask is that you play better than you are. As an individual and as a team, play better than you are. You may not win. But that's all I'm asking. And for you to play better than you are means you're not playing just for yourself. You're playing for that man on each side of you, on the other side of the ball, your coaches, the people cheering you on. You will forget being tired. You will not be tired. You will play better than you are. But you cannot do that unless you have love.

Love:

By: John Wooden

The greatest word in the whole dictionary is love. Remember that love is the most powerful medicine in the world. Love means many things. It means giving. It means sharing. It means forgiving. It means understanding. It means being patient. It means learning. And you must always consider the other side, the other person. You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

And all those things you must not take for granted, but continue to work at.

I agree with Abraham Lincoln. He once said that the best thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother.

Giving When it Counts:

By Jim Tressel

I worked as a volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liza who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her five-year-old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to Liza's little brother and asked him if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before he took a deep breath and said, "Yes, I'll do it if it will save Liza."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in his bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?" Being young, the boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood.

Paid in Full

by Mac Anderson

One day, a poor boy who was selling goods from door-to-door to pay his way through school, found he had only one thin dime left, and he was hungry. He decided he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal, he asked for a drink of water. She thought he looked hungry and so she brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it slowly, and then asked, "How much do I owe you?"

"You don't owe me anything," she replied. "Mother has taught us never to accept pay for a kindness." He said, "Then I thank you from my heart." As Howard Kelly left that house, he not only felt stronger physically, but his faith in God and man was strengthened also. He had been ready to give up and quit.

Years later, that young woman became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They finally sent her to the big city, where they called in specialists to study her rare disease.

Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for the consultation. When he heard the name of the town she came from, he went down the hall of the hospital to her room. Dressed in his doctor's gown, he went in to see her. He recognized her at once. He went back to the consultation room determined to do his best to save her life. From that day, he gave special attention to the case.

After a long struggle, the battle was won. Dr. Kelly requested from the business office to pass the final billing to him for approval. He looked at it, then wrote something on the edge, and the bill was sent to her room. She feared to open it, for she was sure it would take the rest of her life to pay for it all. Finally, she looked, and something caught her attention on the side of the bill. She read these words:

"Paid in full with one glass of milk..." Dr. Howard Kelly

(Dr. Howard Kelly was a distinguished physician who, in 1895, founded the Johns Hopkins Division of Gynecologic Oncology at Johns Hopkins University. According to Dr. Kelly's biographer, Audrey Davis, the doctor was on a walking trip through Northern Pennsylvania one spring day when he stopped by a farm house for a drink of water.)

The Power of Kindness

By Mac Anderson

It was a Saturday, the last weekend before Christmas. A beautiful light snow with giant flakes was falling. I had promised my wife that I'd be home to do some last minute shopping together, and I was running late.

As I approached the stop sign near our home in the country, I didn't realize that there was a layer of ice under the snow. You can probably guess the rest of the story. The car slid through the intersection into a small ditch on the other side of the road.

I wasn't hurt, but I was angry with myself. A day that was supposed to be "Christmas fun" would be spent waiting for a tow truck to pull me out of the ditch.

Since I was not far from my home, I started walking down our country road to share the "no shopping today" news with my wife. I noticed two men who were building my neighbor's barn and I thought that maybe...just maybe, I could pay them to take a break and try to push me out.

As I approached, I introduced myself and pointed to the car in the distance. Without hesitating, they looked at each other and said, "We can solve that problem!" One of them said, "I'll get the chain and George, you can drive the backhoe down the road and we'll have it out in no time!" In the next 30 minutes while I watched helplessly from the sidelines, they had my car out of the ditch and on the road again. To say that I was grateful was an understatement. My Saturday had been saved thanks to two men I'd never met before.

I thanked them, reached into my wallet and handed them a \$100. I said, "Please take this. It would have cost me more to call a tow truck and I would have spent my afternoon waiting for it to show." They both looked at me, and at the same time said, "No way! We wouldn't consider taking a cent." Then the one man said, "This was our good deed for the day and we know that you'll help someone else because we helped you. That's all we ask."

I drove away with a wonderful feeling inside, knowing there are people like this in the world. But here's the amazing thing about kindness. From the look on their faces, it made theirs too! Emerson was right when he said, "One of the most beautiful compensations in life is that no man can help another without helping himself."

A Teacher's Love:

Jean Thompson stood in front of her fifth-grade class on the very first day of school in the fall and told the children a lie. Like most teachers, she looked at her pupils and said that she loved them all the same, that she would treat them all alike. And that was impossible because there in front of her, slumped in his seat on the third row, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.

Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed he didn't play well with the other children, that his clothes were unkept and that he constantly needed a bath. And Teddy was unpleasant.

It got to the point during the first few months that she would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X's and then marking the F at the top of the paper biggest of all. Because Teddy was a sullen little boy, no one else seemed to enjoy him, either.

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child's records and put Teddy's off until last. When she opened his file, she was in for a surprise. His first-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright, inquisitive child with a ready laugh." "He does his work neatly and has good manners...he is a joy to be around."

His second-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student well-liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle."

His third-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy continues to work hard but his mother's death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best but his father doesn't show much interest and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren't taken."

Teddy's fourth-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends and sometimes sleeps in class. He is tardy and could become a problem."

By now Mrs. Thompson realized the problem, but Christmas was coming fast. It was all she could do, with the school play and all, until the day before the holidays began and she was suddenly forced to focus on Teddy Stoddard.

Her children brought her presents, all in beautiful ribbon and bright paper, except for Teddy's, which was clumsily wrapped in the heavy, brown paper of a scissored grocery bag. Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents.

Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that was one-quarter full of cologne. She stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and

dabbing some of the perfume behind the other wrist. Teddy Stoddard stayed behind just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my mom used to."

After the children left she cried for at least an hour. On that very day, she quit teaching reading, writing, and speaking. Instead, she began to teach children. Jean Thompson paid particular attention to the one they all called "Teddy."

As she worked with him, his mind seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. On days where there would be an important test, Mrs. Thompson would remember that cologne. By the end of the year he had become one of the smartest children in the class and...well, he had also become the "pet" of the teacher who had once vowed to love all of her children exactly the same.

A year later she found a note under her door, from Teddy, telling her that of all the teachers he'd had in elementary school, she was his favorite. Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy.

He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still his favorite teacher of all time.

Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it, and would graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson she was still his favorite teacher.

Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still his favorite teacher, but that now his name was a little longer. The letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, M.D.

The story doesn't end there. You see, there was yet another letter that Spring. Teddy said he'd met this girl and was to be married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago and he was wondering...well, if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit in the pew usually reserved for the mother of the groom. And guess what, she wore that bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. And I bet on that special day, Jean Thompson smelled just like...well, just like the way Teddy remembered his mother smelling on their last Christmas together.

A Simple Act of Kindness:

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd." I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friend the following afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes.

My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him, and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, I saw a tear in his eye.

I handed him his glasses and said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives."

He looked at me and said, "Hey, thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude. I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. It turned out he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before coming to this school.

I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home, and I carried his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play football on Saturday with me and my friends. He said yes. We hung all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him. And my friends thought the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Damn boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books. Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends.

When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship. Kyle was valedictorian of our class.

I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak.

Graduation day arrived - I saw Kyle and he looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than me and all the girls loved him!

Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!"

He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said. As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began.

"Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach... but mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I stared at my friend in disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

"Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly."

Blind Love:

This story is an example of great unselfishness on the part of one person, and great selfishness on the part of another.

There was a blind girl who hated herself because she was blind. She hated everyone, except her loving boyfriend. He was always there for her. She told her boyfriend, "If I could only see the world, I would marry you."

One day, someone donated a pair of eyes to her. When the bandages came off, she was able to see everything, including her boyfriend. He asked her, "Now that you can see the world, will you marry me?"

The girl looked at her boyfriend and saw that he was blind. The sight of his closed eyelids shocked her. She hadn't expected that. The thought of looking at them the rest of her life led her to refuse to marry him.

Her boyfriend left her in tears and days later wrote a note to her saying, "Take good care of your eyes, my dear, for before they were yours, they were mine."

Something for Stevie:

I try not to be biased, but I had my doubts about hiring Stevie. His placement counselor assured me that he would be a good, reliable busboy. But I had never had a mentally handicapped employee and wasn't sure I wanted one. I wasn't sure how my customers would react to Stevie.

He was short, a little dumpy with the smooth facial features and thick-tongued speech of Down syndrome. I wasn't worried about most of my trucker customers because truckers don't generally care who buses tables as long as the meatloaf platter is good and the pies are homemade.

The four-wheeler drivers were the ones who concerned me; the mouthy college kids traveling to school; the yuppie snobs who secretly polish their silverware with their napkins for fear of catching some dreaded "truckstop germ;" the pairs of white shirted business men on expense accounts who think every truckstop waitress wants to be flirted with.

I knew those people would be uncomfortable around Stevie so I closely watched him for the first few weeks. I shouldn't have worried. After the first week, Stevie had my staff wrapped around his stubby little finger, and within a month my truck regulars had adopted him as their official truckstop mascot. After that, I really didn't care what the rest of the customers thought of him. He was like a 21-year-old in blue jeans and Nikes, eager to laugh and eager to please, but fierce in his attention to his duties. Every salt and pepper shaker was exactly in its place, not a bread crumb or coffee spill was visible when Stevie got done with the table. Our only problem was convincing him to wait to clean a table until after the customers were finished. He would hover in the background, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, scanning the dining room until a table was empty. Then he would scurry to the empty table and carefully bus the dishes and glasses onto cart and meticulously wipe the table up with a practiced flourish of his rag. If he thought a customer was watching, his brow would pucker with added concentration. He took pride in doing his job exactly right, and you had to love how hard he tried to please each and every person he met.

Over time, we learned that he lived with his mother, a widow who was disabled after repeated surgeries for cancer. They lived on their Social Security benefits in public housing two miles from the truckstop. Their social worker, which stopped to check on him every so often, admitted they had fallen between the cracks. Money was tight, and what I paid him was the probably the difference between them being able to live together and Stevie being sent to a group home.

That's why the restaurant was a gloomy place that morning last August, the first morning in three years that Stevie missed work. He was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester getting a new valve or something put in his heart. His social worker said that people with Down syndrome often had heart problems at a early age so this wasn't unexpected, and there

was a good chance he would come through the surgery in good shape and be back at work in a few months.

A ripple of excitement ran through the staff later that morning when word came that he was out of surgery, in recovery and doing fine. Frannie, my head waitress, let out a war hoop and did a little dance in the aisle when she heard the good news. Belle Ringer, one of our regular trucker customers, stared at the sight of the 50-year-old grandmother of four doing a victory shimmy beside his table. Frannie blushed, smoothed her apron and shot Belle Ringer a withering look.

He grinned. "OK, Frannie, what was that all about?" he asked. "We just got word that Stevie is out of surgery and going to be okay." "I was wondering where he was. I had a new joke to tell him. What was the surgery about?" Frannie quickly told Belle Ringer and the other two drivers sitting at his booth about Stevie's surgery, then sighed. "Yeah, I'm glad he is going to be OK," she said, "but I don't know how he and his mom are going to handle all the bills. From what I hear, they're barely getting by as it is." Belle Ringer nodded thoughtfully, and Frannie hurried off to wait on the rest of her tables.

Since I hadn't had time to round up a busboy to replace Stevie and really didn't want to replace him, the girls were busing their own tables that day until we decided what to do. After the morning rush, Frannie walked into my office. She had a couple of paper napkins in her hand a funny look on her face.

"What's up?" I asked. "I didn't get that table where Belle Ringer and his friends were sitting cleared off after they left, and Pony Pete and Tony Tipper were sitting there when I got back to clean it off," she said, "This was folded and tucked under a coffee cup."

She handed the napkin to me, and three \$20 fell onto my desk when I opened it. On the outside, in big, bold letters, was printed "Something For Stevie". "Pony Pete asked me what that was all about," she said, "so I told him about Stevie and his mom and everything, and Pete looked at Tony and Tony looked at Pete, and they ended up giving me this." She handed me another paper napkin that had "Something For Stevie" scrawled on its outside. Two \$50 bills were tucked within its folds. Frannie looked at me with wet, shiny eyes, shook her head and said simply "truckers."

That was three months ago. Today is Thanksgiving, the first day Stevie is supposed to be back to work. His placement worker said he's been counting the days until the doctor said he could work, and it didn't matter at all that it was a holiday. He called 10 times in the past week, making sure we knew he was coming, fearful that we had forgotten him or that his job was in jeopardy. I arranged to have his mother bring him to work, met them in the parking lot and invited them both to celebrate his day back.

Stevie was thinner and paler, but couldn't stop grinning as he pushed through the doors and headed for the back room where his apron and busing cart were waiting.

"Hold up there, Stevie, not so fast," I said. I took him and his mother by their arms.
"Work can wait for a minute. To celebrate you coming back, breakfast for you and your mother is on me."

I led them toward a large corner booth at the rear of the room. I could feel and hear the rest of the staff following behind as we marched through the dining room. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw booth after booth of grinning truckers empty and join the procession.

We stopped in front of the big table. Its surface was covered with coffee cups, saucers and dinner plates, all sitting slightly crooked on dozens of folded paper napkins.

"First thing you have to do, Stevie, is clean up this mess," I said. I tried to sound stern.

Stevie looked at me, and then at his mother, then pulled out one of the napkins. It had "Something for Stevie" printed on the outside. As he picked it up, two \$10 bills fell onto the table. Stevie stared at the money, then at all the napkins peeking from beneath the tableware, each with his name printed or scrawled on it.

I turned to his mother. "There's more than \$10,000 in cash and checks on that table, all from truckers and trucking companies that heard about your problems. Happy Thanksgiving."

Well, it got real noisy about that time, with everybody hollering and shouting, and there were a few tears, as well. But you know what's funny? While everybody else was busy shaking hands and hugging each other, Stevie, with a big, big smile on his face, was busy clearing all the cups and dishes from the table. Best worker I ever hired.

WHAT MATTERS IN LIFE

(Author Unknown)

Some people understand life better.

And they call some of these people "retarded"...

At the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash.

At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win.

All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry.

They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back every one of them. One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better."

Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, the cheering went on for several minutes.

People who were there are still telling the story... Why? Because deep down we know this one thing: What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves.

What matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.

Helping Others:

One night, at 11:30 PM, an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car.

A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab. She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him.

Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read: "Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others. Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole. "

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 12: Responsibility

“If you hoot with the owls at night, you can’t soar with the eagles at dawn!”

“Discipline yourself and others won’t need to!”

“When in doubt, tell the truth,” **Mark Twain**

“Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure, and whether it is right,” **Proverbs 20:11**

“Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation: for ‘tis better to be alone than in bad company.”

George Washington

“The reputation of a thousand years may be determined by the conduct of one hour,” **Japanese Proverb**

“There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience,” **French Proverb**

“Honor is better than honors,” **Abraham Lincoln**

“Hold yourself to a higher standard than anyone expects of you. Never excuse yourself,” **Henry Ward Beecher**

“There is a choice to be made in all that you do, and the choice that you make, makes you,” **John Wooden**

“It takes less time to do the right thing than to explain why you did it wrong,” **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

“Manners are like the zero in arithmetic; they may not be much in themselves, but they are capable of adding a great deal to the value of everything else,” **Dame Freya Madeline Stark**

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth,”
Muhammad Ali

“If you are given a chance to be a role model, I think you should always take it because you can influence a person's life in a positive light, and that's what I want to do. That's what it's all about,” **Tiger Woods**

Using Your Power to Improve Your School Community:

By: Jim Thompson

Athletes Have Power: Many high school athletes have status because of what they do on the field. Unfortunately, in many schools a “jock culture” exists in which athletes use their status and influence solely for their own benefit. Whether you realize it or not, you have an incredible opportunity to wield your power on campus in productive ways to make your life and the lives of others around you better.

Mentor Younger Athletes: If you reach out to less skilled or younger teammates, or to JV athletes if you are on varsity, you will have a huge impact on how they feel about themselves and on their confidence on the playing field. They may also remember and appreciate your kindness for a lifetime. This might entail simply saying hello to them, showing interest in them on campus or before practice, or “taking them under your wing” to mentor them throughout the season.

Include the Excluded: High School is a difficult time for many students who feel alienated from the school community. Students, including athletes, often break into cliques that leave many teens feeling isolated and left out. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Joe Ehrmann, a former NFL Pro Bowl lineman who is now a high school football coach has a rule: Nobody eats alone.

If a member of Coach Ehrmann's team sees a student eating by himself in the cafeteria, he is required to go and sit with the student or invite him to join the player at his table.

Think about it: when a friend is kind to you, it's nice. When a high-status person you don't know well is kind to you, it can change your entire feeling about school.

Help Create an Anti-Bullying Culture: Half of all students report being bullied at some point by the time they leave high school. Many say bullying – exerting power through violence, threat of violence, name-calling, gossip, putdowns, trying to damage a person's relationships, or cyberbullying – is the biggest problem in their lives.

The negative impact of bullying – for the bullied, for bullies, and for bystanders – can be long lasting and sometimes tragic. Here are some ideas to help create a bully-free school culture.

Set an example. Sometimes athletes bully teammates or other kids. So look at your own behavior, and if you are bullying someone, stop. If you have friends who bully, let them know you think bullying is an act of weakness, and that true strength is demonstrated by treating every student in the school with respect.

Respond. If you see someone bullying another student, here are some things you can do that won't escalate the problem.

1. Don't use or threaten the use of force. This often makes things worse.
2. Assess the situation to see if you can say something without putting yourself or others in danger. You might simply ask a question such as "What's going on?" A question can be disarming and more effective than aggressively confronting a bully.
3. Talk with a trusted school official about the best way to solve this situation.
4. Offer your support to the bullied student and let him know you don't approve of the way he is being treated. This literally can be life saving, as bullied individuals often feel very alone and despairing.

Lost Generation:

By: Jonathan Reed

I am part of a lost generation
and I refuse to believe that
I can change the world
I realize this may be a shock but
“Happiness comes from within”
Is a lie, and
“Money will make me happy”
So in 30 years I will tell my children
They are not the most important thing in my life
My employer will know that
I have my priorities straight because
Work
Is more important than
Family
I tell you this
Once upon a time
Families stayed together
But this will not be true in my era
This is a quick fix society
Experts tell me
30 years from now I will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of my divorce
I do not concede that
I will live in a country of my own making
In the future
Environmental destruction will be the norm
No longer can it be said that
My peers and I care about this earth
It will be evident that
My generation is apathetic and lethargic
It is foolish to presume that
There is hope.

And all of this will come true unless we choose to reverse it.

Guarding Your Tongue:

“Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble,” **Proverbs 21:23**

“Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish,”
Proverbs 18:13

“It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt,” **Abraham Lincoln**

“Everyone is always talking trash, so why not just keep quiet?”
Dennis Rodman

“Those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted,” **Luke 18:14**

“There are two types of players in baseball, those who are humble and those who are about to be humbled,” **Clint Hurdle**

“I have a rule on my team: when we talk to one another, we look each other right in the eye, because I think it's tough to lie to somebody. You give respect to somebody.” **Mike Krzyzewski**

“Accept responsibility for your life. No that it is you who will get you where you want to go--no one else.” **Les Brown**

Be True to Yourself:

By: John Wooden

Youngsters today often blame others for their own conduct. I tell youngsters at basketball clinics, “If you’re blaming these things on others, doing it simply because they are, that shows weakness on your part. You’re making excuses. Giving yourself an alibi, trying to condone what you’re doing. You’re blaming somebody else, and that’s weakness.

“You know what’s right and wrong. I know you do.”

It’s the poorest excuse in the world to say, “Well, somebody else did it, so I have to do it.” That’s no different from saying, “I’ve got to rob a bank because the other fellow did.”

You know what’s right. Don’t let someone else decide for you.

Be Careful Who You Follow:

A man was walking past a cemetery when he noticed a tombstone with the following inscription:

As you are now, so once was I.

As I am now, you are sure to be.

So may I say, as now I lie,

Prepare yourself, to follow me.

The man took out a piece of chalk and wrote underneath the inscription:

To follow you I’m not content,

Until I know which way you went.

Choose your role models and leaders with care.

Make Fate Your Friend:

By: John Wooden, *the architect of perhaps the greatest championship record in all of sports. He coached ten NCAA national championships in twelve years, including seven in a row.*

Fate plays a part in each of our lives. I was teaching and coaching at Indiana State Teachers College when I was offered coaching positions at both the University of Minnesota and UCLA. I was inclined to go with Minnesota because it was in the Midwest, but there was a little hitch in the offer. They wanted me to keep Dave McMillan, the fellow I would be replacing, as an assistant.

I didn't think that would be for the best, so they offered to consider giving Mr. McMillan another position at the university, one acceptable to him. However, this would take a few days for the board to determine.

They promised they would call me Saturday at 6:00 pm with their decision. I told them if they could make the change and it was acceptable to Mr. McMillan, I would come to Minnesota and coach their basketball team.

Meanwhile, UCLA was waiting for a decision. I told them to call me on Saturday night at 7:00 pm. By then I would know what Minnesota had decided. I informed UCLA that if Minnesota made the offer, I would be staying in the Midwest. But fate stepped in and changed things.

On the day the University of Minnesota was supposed to call me, a blizzard hit the Twin Cities and knocked out all phone service in and around Minneapolis. Unaware of the situation, I waited patiently for the call. None came, not 6:00, not at 6:30. My phone didn't ring at 6:45.

However, right on the button at 7:00 pm, UCLA called. I assumed Minnesota had decided against offering me the coaching position, so I accepted the coaching position, so I accepted UCLA's offer.

Almost immediately after I finished talking with UCLA, the call came through from Minneapolis. I was told about the storm. I was also told that the adjustment had been approved and they were offering me the position of head basketball coach at the University of Minnesota, the job that I really wanted.

Had I been able to terminate my agreement with UCLA in an honorable fashion, I would have done so immediately. But I had given my word just a few minutes before.

If fate had not intervened, I would never have gone to UCLA.

I believe that things are directed in some sort of way. I'm not exactly sure how. I also believe that things turn out best for those who make the best of the way things turn out.

Do it with Class:

Class is respect for others. It is a deep and genuine respect for every human being, regardless of his status in life.

Class is having manners. It is always saying “thank you” and “please.” It is complementing people for any and every task done well.

Class is treating every other person as you would want them to treat you in a similar situation.

Class never makes excuses for one’s own accomplishments, and it never tears down or diminishes the achievements of another person.

Class does not depend on money, status, success, or ancestry. The wealthy aristocrat may not even know the meaning of the word, yet the poorest man in town may radiate class in everything he does.

If you have class, everyone will know it, and you will have self-respect. If you are without class – good luck, because no matter what you accomplish, it will never have meaning.

The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Cups of Coffee:

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar, and proceeded to fill it with golf balls.

He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls.

He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else.

He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table, and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided,

"I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.

The golf balls are the important things: God, family, children, health, friends, and favorite passions. The important things are the things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house, and car.

The sand is everything else, the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

A Boy, Man, and Donkey:

An old man, a boy & a donkey were going to town.

The boy rode on the donkey and the old man walked.

As they went along they passed some people who remarked it was a shame the old man was walking and the boy was riding.

The man and boy thought maybe the critics were right so they changed positions.

Then, later, they passed some people who remarked, "What a shame, he makes that little boy walk."

So they then decided they'd both walk!

Soon they passed some more people who thought they were stupid to walk when they had a decent donkey to ride.

So, they both rode the donkey.

Now they passed some people who shamed them by saying how awful to put such a load on a poor donkey.

The boy and man figured they were probably right, so they decide to carry the donkey.

As they crossed the bridge, they lost their grip on the animal and he fell into the river and drowned.

The moral of the story?

If you try to please everyone, you might as well kiss your _ _ _ (donkey) goodbye!

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 13: Team (Together Everyone Achieves More)

“A person does not become whole until he or she becomes a part of something bigger than himself or herself,” **Jim Valvano**

“Everyone outside our locker room thinks that I’m the premier guy, but inside here we’re all one equal group and that’s how we approach it. That makes it easier for all of us... Whoever’s on that floor together, we’re playing for each other, so it’s not just me or Russell or Jeff, it’s Kevin Ollie and Etan Thomas, Serge Ibaka – it’s everyone on this team and that’s how we look at it,” **Kevin Durant, Oklahoma City Thunder**

“Team spirit means not just being willing, but eager to sacrifice personal interest or glory for the welfare of the team,” **John Wooden**

“Try to forget yourself in the service of others. For when we think too much of ourselves and our own interests, we easily become despondent. But when we work for others, our efforts return to bless us,” **Sidney Powell**

“Unity is the great need of the hour, and if we are united we can get many of the things that we not only desire but which we justly deserve,”
Martin Luther King Jr.

“Don’t be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.”
1 Corinthians 10:24

“You don’t get the breaks unless you work with the team instead of against it,” **Lou Gehrig**

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is a process; working together is success,” **Henry Ford**

“Either we are pulling together or we are pulling apart, there really is no in between,” **Kobi Yamada**

“When your organization operates like a strong family, you can’t be knocked out by one punch,” **Mike Krzyzewski**

“Teamwork is a constant balancing act between self-interest and group interest,” **Susan M. Campbell**

The King's Chariot Driver

Submitted by: Hagen Turner, Class of 2010

There once was a king that built his kingdom up on a mountain. The king wanted to be able to go down the mountain anytime he wanted to see his people. He decided he needed a chariot driver, one that could get him up and down the mountain.

The king interviewed three chariot drivers to take him down the mountain.

The king got into the chariot with the first driver and CRACK went the reigns and they were off. If you know anything about mountain roads they are narrow and very dangerous. The first driver was flying down the mountain with skill and precision getting within two feet of the edge. They made it down the mountain in a flash.

The king got in with the second driver, HAAAAA he said, and in a blink of an eye they were off. This driver was even more skillful than the last weaving and turning getting within inches from the edge and not faltering. He got the king down faster than the last.

The king got in with the last driver and a slow flick of the reigns was the only sound that came from the driver. They pattered all the way down that mountain, getting as close to the mountain and far away from the edge as possible.

Do you know which driver the king picked?

The king picked the third driver. He said he wasn't looking for the most skillful or fastest driver. More than anything, the king wanted someone that he could TRUST.

I Knew You'd Come

By: Douglas F. Parsons

Submitted By: Jonathan England, Class of 2012

During World War I a soldier discovered that his friend, wounded, had fallen between the trenches out in "no man's land." Turning to his commanding officer he asked, "Sir, may I go and get him?" The officer replied curtly, "No one can live out there! I would just lose you, too!"

But ignoring the officer's command, he dashed from the safety of the trench to try to save his friend. With his friend on his shoulder, but now himself mortally wounded, he staggered and fell back into the trenches. The friend, they discovered, was now dead.

The officer, in lofty tones, rebuked him, "You fool! I told you not to go. Now I have lost both of you. It wasn't worth it!"

With his dying breath, the brave soldier replied, "But sir, it was worth it!" The officer was unimpressed. "Worth it?" He retorted. "Rubbish! Your friend is dead and you soon will be!"

Then the soldier's final words. He said, "It was worth it, sir, because when I got to him, he said, '**Jim, I knew you'd come!**'"

The Meaning of Team

By: Don Mattingly

Don Mattingly was a team captain for the New York Yankees. He was an All-Star First Baseman as well. He is the current manager for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Team sports are really difficult things. Sometimes your team wins because of you, sometimes in spite of you, and sometimes it's like you are not even there. That's the reality of the team game.

At one point in my career something wonderful happened; I don't know why or how, but I came to understand what "team" meant. It meant that although I didn't get a hit or make a great defensive play, I could still impact the team in an incredible and consistent way.

I learned I could impact my team by caring first and foremost about the team's success and not my own. I don't mean by rooting for us like a typical fan – fans are fickle. I mean care, really care about the team – about "us."

I became less selfish, less lazy, and less sensitive to negative comments. When I gave up me I became more. I became a captain, a leader, a better person and I came to understand that life is a team game.

I've found most people aren't team players. They don't realize that life is the only game in town. Someone should tell them. It has made all the difference in the world to me.

Togetherness:

By: Brian Shaw, Nuggets Head Coach

If a team is a bunch of frayed wires, there is a good chance those wires will spark a fire that cannot be controlled. The Nuggets have had a nasty early reoccurring habit of sniping and bickering at one another on the court, which:

A) gets under Shaw's skin, and

B) leads him to pledge to nip it now — or know he'll pay the consequences later with a fractured group of players.

"I'm going to demand it," Shaw said. "And those who buy into it will be rewarded. And those who continue to fight it will kind of have to take a back seat to those who buy in. But it's very important. We talk about togetherness every day — everything we do as a team we do together, win or lose. And part of doing things together is, it doesn't look together when you're arguing out there on the floor about who should take this shot or who should be handling the ball."

THE POWER OF "WE"

As a leader, do you honor and appreciate the power of WE? Do you stop to thank and recognize the members of your team? Do you consistently show an attitude of gratitude?

The story of Charles Plumb is inspiring and emphasizes the value of each individual of a team. Captain Charles Plumb, a graduate of the Naval Academy, whose plane, after 74 successful combat missions over North Vietnam, was shot down. He parachuted to safety, but was captured, tortured and spent 2,103 days in a small box-like cell.

After surviving the ordeal, Captain Plumb received the Silver Star, Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit and two Purple Hearts, and returned to America and spoke to many groups about his experience and how it compared to the challenges of everyday life.

Shortly after coming home, Charlie and his wife were sitting in a restaurant. A man rose from a nearby table, walked over and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk . You were shot down!"

Surprised that he was recognized, Charlie responded, "How in the world did you know that?" The man replied, "I packed your parachute." Charlie looked up with surprise. The man pumped his hand, gave a thumbs-up, and said, "I guess it worked!"

Charlie stood to shake the man's hand, and assured him, "It most certainly did work. If it had not worked, I would not be here today."

Charlie could not sleep that night, thinking about the man. He wondered if he might have seen him and not even said, "Good morning, how are you?" He thought of the many hours the sailor had spent bending over a long wooden table in the bottom of the ship, carefully folding the silks and weaving the shrouds of each chute, each time holding in his hands the fate of someone he didn't know.

How many times a day, a week, a month, do we pass up the opportunity to thank those people in our organization who are "packing our parachutes?"

A Team of Geese:

When geese fly in formation, they travel about 70 percent faster than when they fly alone.

Geese share leadership. When the lead goose tires, he or she rotates back into the “V” and another goose flies forward to become the leader.

Geese keep company with the fallen. When a sick or weak goose drops out of the flight formation, at least one other goose will leave the formation to help and protect the weaker goose.

By being part of a team, we, too, can accomplish much more, much faster. Words of encouragement and support (honking from behind) inspire and energize those on the front line and help them to keep pace in spite of day-to-day pressures and fatigue.

Finally, show compassion and active caring for your fellow man – a member of the ultimate team: humankind!

The next time you see a formation of geese, remember that it is a reward, a challenge, and a privilege to be a contributing member of a team.

The Wolf Pack:

By: Rudyard Kipling

Now this is the law of the jungle –
As old and as true as the sky;
And the wolf that keep it may prosper,
But the wolf that shall break it must die.
As the creeper that girdles the tree trunk,
The law runneth forward and back –
And the strength of the pack is the wolf
And the strength of the wolf is the pack.

Old Warwick:

A man became lost while driving through the country. As he tried to read a map, he accidentally drove off the road into a ditch. Though he wasn't injured, his car was stuck deep in the mud. Seeing a farmhouse just down the road, the man walked over to ask for help.

"Warwick can get you out of the ditch," the farmer said, pointing to an old mule standing in a field. The man looked at the haggard mule, and then looked back at the farmer, who just stood there nodding. "Yep, old Warwick can do the job."

The man figured he had nothing to lose, so the two men and Warwick made their way back to the ditch.

After the farmer hitched the old mule to the car, he snapped the reins and shouted, "Pull, Fred! Pull, Jack! Pull, Ted! Pull, Warwick!" With very little effort, the lone mule pulled the car from the ditch.

The man was amazed. He thanked the farmer, patted the mule, and asked, "Why did you call out all those other names before you called Warwick?"

The farmer grinned and said, "Old Warwick is just about blind. As long as he believes he's part of a team, he doesn't mind pulling."

One of the Two:

By: Bill Stewart

You are in a race called Life,

Filled with challenges and strife.

Sometimes the path is smooth and clear,

But sometimes filled with pain and fear.

Others stride with ease it seems,

Making headway toward their dreams.

Sometimes for you it's not such fun,

You want to quit before you're done.

Your race is not won at the finish line,

And it's not a loss when you're behind.

The race is won down deep in your heart,

By refusing to quit from the very start.

Maybe you've fallen, you've taken a hit,

You're wondering, "Should I just give up and quit?"

You may not beat others, yes, that is true,

But you surely can beat the quitter in you.

The decision is yours, just yours to make,

Accept what life offers or get what you take.

So sit there or run, it's all up to you,

Winner or quitter, you'll be one of the two!

THE NOTEBOOK OF CHAMPIONS:

Section 14: Fatherhood

Fatherhood: The toughest job, you'll ever love!

*"Nothing I've ever done has given me more joys and rewards than being a father to my children." **Bill Cosby***

"The greatest gift a father can give to his children is to love their mother."
Abraham Lincoln

*"If kids never see their parents mess up – if parents never fail – how will children learn to deal with failure in their own lives? And how could anyone ever live without messing up? **Ron Rose***

*"The best things you can give your children, next to good habits are good memories." **Sydney Harris***

*"By profession I am a soldier and take pride in that fact. But I am prouder – infinitely prouder – to be a father. A soldier destroys in order to build; the father only builds, never destroys. It is my hope that my son, when I am gone, will remember me not from the battle but in the home." **General Douglas MacArthur***

*"There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other wings." **Hodding Carter***

*"Responsibility is the thing people dread most of all. Yet it is the one thing in the world that develops us, gives us manhood... fibre." **Frank Crane***

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
Deuteronomy 6: 6-7

*"Fatherhood is not being the boss of the house because you've seen the boss's job and you don't want it." **Bill Cosby***

Why a Child Needs a Father:

By: Mr. Doner

Children need a father to succeed in life. Check this out:

71% of high school drop outs were raised in a home without a father.

71% of pregnant teens were raised in a home without a father.

85% of children with behavioral disorders were raised in a home without a father.

90% of homeless or runaway children were raised in a home without a father.

63% of youth suicidal victims were raised in a home without a father.

85% of youth in prison were raised in a home without a father.

The evidence is clear. Children need a father to be successful in life. Without one, their future often is bleak.

Raising Children:

By: John Burns

All children learn about themselves through the eyes of their parents. When we're continually in awe of the miracles we are privileged to call our sons or daughters – when we recognize all the miracles that are hidden like treasures inside them – they can grow up seeing their own lives as miracles full of miracles.

I have often said to each of my daughters, 'You're my hero. When I grow up, I want to be just like you!' I'm in awe of the miracle each one of them represents. I want them to know what I see in them, because the way children see themselves and think of themselves is the greatest determinant in who they will become and what they will accomplish in life.

Since most of a child's self-image is developed through the eyes of Mom and Dad, we need to open our eyes and see the awesome potential God has placed in our children. Every child has awe-inspiring qualities – although it may take a purposeful effort at times to look past the not-so-perfect behavior and find the hidden treasure. Remember, what you see is what you get! As dads we need to choose to see the miracles.

Respect and Honor:

By: John Burns

One of the best ways to show that we honor and respect our children is by valuing their thoughts and opinions. We need to listen to our kids and try to understand what they are saying. We need to thank them for sharing their hearts. When children know that their fathers treasure their thoughts and opinions, a tremendous sense of self-worth is built into their lives.

The opposite is true when fathers don't value their children – when they degrade them by laughing at, disregarding, or constantly correcting their opinions and ideas. Children expect Mom and Dad to have the time and the desire to understand them, appreciate them, and treasure what they treasure. When those expectations go unmet, self-esteem plummets, and the seeds of rebellion are sown. Children who don't learn to respect and honor their parents in their early years (because their parents never respected or honored them) often become rebellious when they reach age.

We can show our children that we honor and respect them by prioritizing time for them – by setting aside time in our busy schedules to read to them, play with them, and pray with them.

Why a Son Needs a Dad:

By Gregory E. Lang

A son needs a dad to show him how to shave.

A son needs a dad who can be playful and silly.

A son needs a dad to teach him to be a gracious winner as well as a gracious loser.

A son needs a dad...
to take him camping.
to wrestle with in the grass.
to teach him how things work.
to teach him how to fix things himself.

A son needs a dad to show him how to be productive with his hands.

A son needs a dad to take him fishing.

A son needs a dad...
to teach him how to talk with girls.
to teach him to apologize for reckless words.
to pull him back when he is headed in the wrong direction.
to listen when others have grown tired of listening.

A son needs a dad to tell him that he is proud of him.

A son needs a dad to teach him to always give a good day's work.

A son needs a dad...
to encourage him when he meets with disappointment.
to teach him that it is wise to seek advice.
to help him learn from his mistakes.
to talk with about the tough decisions he will face.

A son needs a dad to go with him on imaginary adventures.

A son needs a dad to make the family whole.

A son needs a dad to help him face his challenges with confidence.

A son needs a dad to be a doting grandfather to his children.

A son needs a dad...

- to show him how to control his temper.
- to tell him that there is no disgrace in losing.
- to show him how to compromise.
- to tell him that all is not hopeless, even when it may seem that it is.

A son needs a dad to take him to baseball games.

A son needs a dad to nurture his independence.

A son needs a dad to teach him that respect must be earned.

A son needs a dad to...

- so that he will have at least one hero he can depend on.
- to share with him the wisdom he has not yet acquired.
- to help him try again after he has stumbled.
- to show him how to love others, even when it is hard.

A son needs a dad to prepare him for being responsible for his own family.

A son needs a dad to...

- to teach him to treat women with kindness.
- to teach him that men and women are equals.
- to stand with him the day he marries.
- to show him how to be a good husband.

A son needs a dad who knows how to have fun.

A son needs a dad who will be there for him when he needs help.

A son needs a dad to provide the guidance that will steer him from trouble.

A son needs a dad who will help him to discover his place in life.

A son needs a dad to help him understand it isn't necessary to be like everyone else.

A son needs a dad to teach him when to lead and when to follow.

A son needs a dad...

- who will show him that love is unselfish.
- who will not expect the unreasonable from him.
- who will discipline him firmly and fairly, while loving him relentlessly.
- who will teach him to avoid selfish temptations.

A son needs a dad to show him unconditional love.

A son needs a dad to show him the difference between being firm and being stubborn.

A son needs a dad to let him be his equal now and then.

A son needs a dad...

- to teach him not to use others for his own benefit.
- to provide moral guidance as he becomes a man.
- to urge him to pursue worthy goals.
- to tell him often that he is loved.

A son needs a dad to help him find his way.

A son needs a dad to show him how to tie a necktie.

A son needs a dad to teach him that family is more important than work.

A son needs a dad to show him patience.

A son needs a dad to build a loving house on a foundation of wisdom and understanding.

A son needs a dad...

- who will expect him to play fair.
- to teach him to stand up for himself.
- to teach him to be accountable for his wrongdoings.
- to tell him that ignorance is not an excuse.

A son needs a dad to help ease the burdens that weigh heavily on him.

A son needs a dad to give him the gentle pushes that help him grow.

A son needs a dad...

- to teach him that he does not always need to be in control.
- to tell him it is okay to admit his mistakes.
- to teach him that strength is best expressed with restraint.
- to teach him how to maintain dignity in difficult times.

A son needs a dad who will protect him when he is not strong enough to protect himself.

A son needs a dad to lead him toward faith.

A son needs a dad to encourage him when he is in doubt of himself.

A son needs a dad to encourage patriotism and civic responsibility.

A son needs a dad...
who will help his mother.
to teach him to be respectful of women.
to teach him how to be a gentleman.
to help him plan for his future.

A son needs a dad who will give the comfort of protection and affection.

A son needs a dad who welcomes self-expression.

A son needs a dad...
to teach him to recognize the truth and reward it.
to teach him to recognize sincerity and encourage it.
to teach him to give more than he takes.
to be the standard by which he will later measure himself.

A son needs a dad who will show him affection without hesitation.

A son needs a dad who allows him to question.

A son needs a dad to teach him to accept the differences in others.

A son needs a dad who is willing to make sacrifices for his family.

A son needs a dad to be the role model for the father he will become.

A son needs a dad...
to teach him to think about consequences before he acts.
to teach him to take pride in providing for the family.
to teach him to honor the woman who loves him.
to teach him that forgiving is always the right thing to do.

A son needs a dad to teach him not to let pride get in the way of listening.

A son needs a dad...
to help him build a tree house.
to comfort him when he cries.
to teach him to be honest at all times.
to show him the meaning of the word reliable.

A son needs a dad because without him he will have less in his life than he deserves.

Play It as It Lays:

By Bill Cosby

It is no profound revelation to say that fathering has changed greatly from the days when my own father used me for batting practice. However, the baffling behavior of children is exactly the same today as it was when Joseph's brothers peddled him to the Egyptians. And in the face of such constantly baffling behavior, many men have wondered: Just what is a father's role today? As a taskmaster, he's inept. As a referee, he's hopeless. And as a short-order cook, he may have the wrong menu.

The answer, of course, is that no matter how hopeless or copeless a father may be, his role is to be there, sharing all the chores with his wife. Let her have the babies; but after that, try to share every job around. Any man today who returns from work, sinks into a chair, and calls for his pipe is a man with an appetite for danger. Actually, changing a diaper takes much less time than waxing a car. A car doesn't spit on your pants, of course, but a baby's book value is considerably higher.

If the new American father feels bewildered and even defeated, let him take comfort from the fact that whatever he does in any fathering situation has a fifty percent chance of being right. Having five children has taught me a truth as cosmic as any that you can find on a mountain in Tibet: There are no absolutes in raising children. In any stressful situation, fathering is always a roll of the dice. The game may be messy, but I have never found one with more rewards and joys.

You know the only people who are always sure about the proper way to raise children? Those who've never had any.

The First Parent Had Trouble Too:

By Bill Cosby

Whenever your kids are out of control, you can take comfort from the thought that even God's omnipotence did not extend to His kids. After creating the heaven, the earth, the oceans, and the entire animal kingdom, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing He said, "Don't"-he hurled no negatives at the elephant-but to the brightest of His creatures, the ones who get into Yale, He said, "Don't."

"Don't what?" Adam replied.

"Don't eat the forbidden fruit."

"Forbidden fruit? Really? Where is it?"

Is the beginning to sound familiar? You never realized that the pattern of your life had been laid down in the Garden of Eden.

"It's over there," said God, wondering why He hadn't stopped after making the elephants.

A few minutes later, God saw the kids having an apple break and He was angry.

"Didn't I tell you not to eat that fruit?" the First Parent said.

"Uh-huh," Adam replied.

"Then why did you?"

"I don't know," Adam said.

At least he didn't say, "No problem."

"All right then, get out of here! Go forth, become fruitful, and multiply!"

This was not a blessing but a curse: God's punishment was that Adam and Eve should have children of their own. And so, they moved to the east of Eden, which was still the good part of town, and they had your typical suburban family: a couple of dim-witted boys. One of these boys couldn't stand the other; but instead of just leaving Eden and going to Chicago, he had to kill him.

Thus the pattern was set and it never has changed. But there is reassurance in this story for those of you whose children are not doing well. If you have lovingly and persistently tried to give them wisdom and they haven't taken it, don't be hard on yourself. If God had trouble handling children, what makes you think it would be a piece of cake for you?

They Need Ventriloquists:

By Bill Cosby

The problem is that your daughter has given her heart to a fifteen-year –old boy, and a fifteen-year-old boy does not yet qualify as a human being. If this boy happens to be yours, he has you in a constant state of embarrassment, especially when you make the mistake of introducing him to people.

“This is my son,” you say proudly to some man you know. “Son, this is Mr. Clark.”

And there is silence. Perhaps the boy was momentarily distracted by working on a calculus problem in his head; so again you say, “Son, this is Mr. Clark.”

“Hello, Mr. Clark,” the boy finally manages to produce.

“Hello,” says Mr. Clark. “What a fine-looking boy. You’re really tall. How tall are you?”

And another silence descends. This is the kind of question you hope will not be on the SAT, or else your son will have to skip college and go right to work at a car wash.

“I said, how tall are you?” says Mr. Clark again, wondering if English is the boy’s first language.

But the boy just cannot handle this stumper about his height. He certainly looks ready to speak; in fact, his mouth is always half open; but no signals from the brain ever arrive. It’s too bad that you can’t run a string from his mouth out through the back of his head.

Nevertheless, even though your kids may not be paying attention, you have to pay attention to them all the way. And if you really pay attention to them from the very beginning, then you’ll know the moment they start to swallow or sniff thing that rearrange their brain cells. When Willie Loman in *Death of a Salesman* said, “Attention must be paid,” he was speaking the four most important words a parent can know, even more important than, “Dad, she’s not pregnant.”

And with the attention, of course, must be all the love you can give, especially in the first twelve or thirteen years. Then, when the kids start doing strange things under the guise of independence, they will always know that they are loved and that the lines are always open for them to send a message back to earth.

You see, you can’t wash your hands of them. You have to keep those hands dirty with the kids you love.

People sometimes ask me how I like to spend my spare time. The answer is, I like to go home from the studio and stare at my wife and kids.

Your Own Grades:

By Bill Cosby

When your child is struggling in school, you have such a strong desire to help that you often find it easier just to do the work yourself than to use a middleman. A few weeks ago my daughter came to me and said, “Dad, I’m in a bind. I’ve got to do this paper right away.”

“All right,” I said, “what’s your plan of work?”

“You type it for me.”

Once again, I typed her paper; but when I had finished and looked at the work, I said, “I’m afraid there’s just one problem.”

“What’s that?” she said.

“This is awful. As your secretary, I can’t let you turn this in.”

Needless to say, I rewrote it for her and I picked up a B minus. I would have had a B plus if I hadn’t misspelled all those words. And so, I’ve now done high school at least twice, probably closer to three times; and I’ve gone through college a couple of times, too. Sending your daughter to college is one thing, but going to college with her is a wonderful way for the two of you to grow closer together.

Although we try hard to inspire our kids to do good work on their own, the motivation for such work always has to come from inside them; and if the kids really don’t want to study, don’t want to achieve, then we must not feel guilty; we are not at fault. You can make your boy come home from school at three-thirty, but you can’t go up to his room and stand there to make sure that he immerses himself in the three R’s instead of rock and roll.

The problem is one that every parent knows well: no matter what you tell your child to do, he will always do the opposite. This is Cosby’s First Law of Intergenerational Perversity. Maybe the way to get a child to do his schoolwork is to say, “I want you to forget about school and spend the next two weeks at the mall.”

No, Cosby’s Law would be suspended for that. He would go to the mall and he would take your Visa card, too. And here’s the whole challenge of being a parent. Even though your kids will consistently do the exact opposite of what you tell them to do, you have to keep loving them just as much. To any question about your response to a child’s strange behavior, there is really just one answer: give them love. I make a lot of money and I’ve given a lot of it to charities, but I’ve given all of myself to my wife and the kids, and that’s the best donation I’ll ever make.

Batter Up:

By Bill Cosby

Nothing is harder for a parent than getting your kids to do the right thing. There is such a rich variety of ways for you to fail: by using threats, by using bribery, by using reason, by using example, by using blackmail, or by pleading for mercy. Walk into any bus terminal in America and you will see men on benches poignantly staring into space with the looks of generals who have just surrendered. They are fathers who have run out of ways to get their children to do the right thing, for such a feat is even harder than getting my daughter to remember her own telephone number.

I succeeded once. It happened after my son, who was twelve at the time, had sent me on a trip to the end of my rope. He had taken up a new hobby: lying; and he was doing it so well that he was raising it to an art. Disturbing letters were coming from school—disturbing to me, not to him, for he was full of the feeling that he could get away with anything; and he was right.

“No longer are we going to ask you to do something,” I told him one day, “we’re going to tell you that you’d better do it. This is the law of our house: you do what we tell you to do. Thomas Jefferson will pardon me, but you’re the one American who isn’t ready for freedom. You don’t function well with it. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Dad,” he said.

A few days later, I called from Las Vegas and learned from my wife that this law of the house had been broken. I was hardly taken by surprise to learn that the outlaw was my son. “Why didn’t you do what you were told?” I said to him on the phone. “This is the second time I’ve had to tell you, and your mother’s very upset. The school also says you’re not coming in with the work.”

“Well, I just don’t feel like doing it,” he said.

“Very well. How does this idea strike you? When I come home on Thursday, I’m going to kick your butt.”

Now I know that many distinguished psychologists feel that kicking butt is a reversion to the Stone Age. But kids may have paid more attention in the Stone Age. When a father said, “No shrinking heads this week,” his boy may have listened.

On Thursday, I came home, but I couldn’t find the boy. He didn’t make an appearance at dinner, and when I awoke the next morning, he still wasn’t there. So I assembled my staff and solemnly said, “Ladies, where is my son?”

“He’s around here somewhere,” one of my daughters said. They were the French underground hiding one of their heroes from the Nazis.

At last, just before dinner, he entered the house, tired of wandering in the wilderness.

“Young man,” I said, “I told you that when I came home, I would kick your behind.”

“Yes, Dad,” he replied.

“And you know why, don’t you?”

“Yes, Dad.”

“Then let’s go over to the barn.”

He may have been slow in his studies, but by now he must have suspected that I wasn’t planning a lesson in animal husbandry. When we reached the barn, I said, “Son, we are now going to have a little talk about breaking the law and lying.”

As the boy watched me roll up my sleeves, his usual cool gave way to fear, even though I was a father with absolutely no batting average: I had never before hit him or any of the other children. Was I making a mistake now? If so, it would just be mistake number nine thousand, seven hundred, and sixty-three.

“Dad, I know I was wrong,” he said, “and I’m really sorry for what I did. I’ll never do it again.”

“I appreciate your saying that,” I said, “and I love you; but I made a promise to you and you wouldn’t respect me if I broke it.”

“Oh, Dad, I’d respect you-I’d respect you like crazy!”

“Son, it’s too late.”

“It’s never too late!”

He was reaching heights of legal eloquence, which didn’t help him because I’ve often wanted to hit lawyers, too.

“Just turn around,” I said. “I want you to know that this is a form of punishment I truly do not believe in.”

“I hate to see you go against your principles, Dad.”

“I can make an exception. I also won’t say that this will hurt me more than it will hurt you. That would be true only if I turned around and let you hit me. This is simply a barbaric form of punishment, but it happens to match your barbaric behavior.”

And then I hit him. He rose up on his toes in the point position and the tears began.

“Now do you understand my point about never lying again?” I said.

“Oh yes, Dad!” he said. “I’ve never understood it better.”

“Fine. Now you can go.”

He turned around to leave and I hit him again. When he turned back to me with a look of having been betrayed, I said, “I’m sorry; I lied. Do you ever want me to lie to you again?”

“No, Dad,” he said.

And to this day, he has not lied again to me or my wife. Moreover, we received a letter from his school taking credit for having done a wonderful job on our son. I’m glad I had been able to supplement this work by the school with my own parent-student conference in the barn.

Could I have done anything else to put him on the road to righteousness? My wife and I spent long hours pondering this question. The problem was that the reservoir was empty: we had tried all the civilized ways to redirect him, but he kept feeling he could wait us out and get away with anything. And we loved him too much to let him go on thinking that.

The week after our trip to the barn, a friend of mine, Dr. Eddie Newman, said something that clicked with the boy.

“My boy is having problems being a serious student,” I told Eddie.

“Well, your studying is very important,” Eddie said, while the boy sat smiling a smile that said: an old person is about to hand out some Wisdom. Could this please be over fast? “You know, a jet plane burns its greatest energy taking off; but once it reaches its cruising altitude, it burns less fuel. Just like studying. If you’re constantly taking off and landing, you’re going to burn more fuel as opposed to taking off and staying up there and maintaining that altitude,”

A few days later, I ran into my son in the house. (He was around a lot more now that he knew the designated hitter had retired.)

“How’s school?” I said.

Without a word, he raised his arm and laid his pal down and flat like a plane that had leveled off. He suddenly knew it was the only way to fly.

There are many good moments in fathering, but few better than that.

In Spite of Mutiny:

By Bill Cosby

Just as your children are not afraid to let you know that they are not perfect (they let you know it night and day), you must not be afraid to let them know that you're not perfect too. The most important thing to let them know is simply that you're there, that you're the one they can trust the most, that you're the best person on the face of the earth to whom they can come and say, "I have a problem."

If only more kids would say, "I have a problem" instead of "No problem."

Your children have to know it's their responsibility to come to you when they are in trouble, even if it means their earning the title of idiot.

Let's say that you do buy a car for your daughter. It's an act of love and she is very happy to have it, both the love and the car. And you say, "Now I don't want anybody driving this car when they're drinking. In fact, I don't want this car to move with any hands on the steering wheel but yours. This car is not to be loaned like a sweater of a Duran Duran album, not even to go around the block. You could get hurt. And I could get sued for the trade deficit of the United States."

Now the rules have been set and the responsibility has been placed. But there is other pressure on the child too: the pressure of wanting to be liked. And so, it happens, and the moment has come for you to let the child know that there will be forgiveness, even when you hear the police say that liquor was involved.

"Look kids do this," the police say.

"Yes, other kids," you say; "but we've talked about it."

Then you say to your daughter, "Didn't I tell you?"

And she replies, "Yes, but I didn't think..."

I didn't think. If any words can describe the teenage years, these are the ones. A famous actor with two daughters once told me, "When a girl hits thirteen, you can just watch her lose her mind. Luckily, she gets it back; but during all the time that it's misplaced, you can lose your own."

In these trying years, as I have said, and can't say too often, a father just has to keep hanging around and loving and knowing that his baby needs guidance because her own rudder hasn't started working yet. To extend the nautical image, a father during these years has to do everything in his power to keep a tight ship, even though he knows the crew would like to send him away in a dinghy.

Making History:

By John Williams Smith

There is something in a man that makes him want to be a history-maker-a hero. Most men grow up with grand ideas of accomplishing great things. They hold visions of rescuing lives threatened by fire, winning major battles in a war, influencing the laws of the land through public office, defending the underdog in a court case, or finding a cure for cancer. They have a hungry ambition to be a hero who shapes the future.

Well, Dad, that's just what you are. Your heroics may not be recorded in a best-selling novel, a classic movie, or on the cover of a magazine, but your actions are recorded frequently in the hearts and minds of your children. They record your simple, but heroic, deeds every day.

They have pictures in their minds of you smiling in a way that communicated how proud you were of them. They remember the times you wiped tears from their red and swollen faces and offered words of comfort. They recall how attentively you listened to them share their pain over failed romances or disappointing failures. They review pictures of scrimmages in the driveway, dates for dinner, visits to school, unexpected gifts, and loving hugs. They remember your praying posture beside their bed and the life-changing instructions that came from your lips.

You are a history-maker and a future-shaper of the most important kind. You live on the front page of the hearts of those you love the most.

Jump:

By John Williams Smith

One day I was playing in our backyard with a paint can lid. It was before the days of Frisbees – perhaps the inventor of the Frisbee got his idea from watching the creative genius of a child who, like me, had discovered the amazing flying propensities of a paint can lid. I was sailing it into the wind, and as its momentum slowed, the wind would take it higher and higher and then it would begin its downward and backward glide, and I would try to catch it. Eventually it landed and lodged on the roof of the chicken coop. I fretted and worried most of the afternoon trying to dislodge it. We had no ladder, and finally gave up.

When my father came home, I met him in the driveway. Before he was out of the car, I began pleading with him to help me retrieve my toy. He put his lunch pail down on the front porch, and we walked around the house together. He assured me that it was no problem and that we could get it back.

He hoisted me up on his shoulder – then grabbed my feet and boosted me up onto the roof of the chicken coop. He told me to walk very carefully because the coop was old and decaying. I retrieved my toy and returned to the edge of the coop. I felt very powerful looking down at my father. He smiled up at me and then held out his arms and said, “Jump.” I close my eyes and I can see him now, forty-five years later, as plainly as I can see the lake and the trees from where I sit just now. He was so tall, so strong, so confident with his big, handsome, grinning face, that it is easier for me to imagine that day than the day he died. I jumped – with no hesitation. I jumped, and he caught me easily and hugged me and then swung me to the ground.

He sent me to get his lunch pail, and in a moment we were in the house and the incident was forgotten – no, it wasn’t forgotten, was it? He would be amazed that I remember it – I’m sure that within a very short time, he forgot it. He wasn’t trying consciously to be a good father. He didn’t come home that day with a plan to create a lasting memory for his son. It wasn’t planned at all.

My point to you parents is that most parenting cannot be planned – except in your own personal walk with God and in prayer. Many great opportunities for lasting impressions are either lost or become negatives because you can’t fake what you are when the unexpected comes.

If my father had generally been selfishly unconcerned with his children’s cares, there would have been no time or cause for him to turn this unexpected moment into a great triumph – he would have acted according to his nature, told me he was much too tired to fool with me, reprimanded me for my carelessness, and gone into the house leaving me to my own devices – and the moment would have been lost.

The opportunities come – unexpectedly, unplanned for – and most of the time we react according to our nature. We serve our children best by seeking to constantly become more closely molded into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not become good parents by trying to practice a parenting philosophy that is contrary to our natures. We become good parents – good neighbors, good husbands, and good friends – by becoming good, by turning our lives toward God.

Being There:

By John Williams Smith

Being there for the big moments is really quite accidental. It happens because you've been there for the everyday, mundane moments. Big moments take us by surprise. Rarely are they planned for; rarely can we predict them. They just happen.

And so in order to be there for the momentous moments, you have to be there for the inconsequential ones. If you want to be there for the basketball game where your daughter scores twenty points, you have to be there when she sits on the bench. In order to be there when your son is ready to talk about a serious struggle with temptation, you have to be there when he wants to gripe about how hard his English teacher is. In order to be there for your daughter's first romantic rejection, you must be there when she chatters about what everybody's wearing.

Being there doesn't mean knowing exactly what to say. It doesn't mean having all the answers or promising a perfect future. It doesn't mean being the smartest or the richest or the funniest or the strongest. It means simply being with the ones who depend on you. It means investing time in the ordinary events of your children's lives, so that when the big moments come – the moments that impact their future – you'll be right there in position – right where you are needed.

Which Kind Are You:

By John Williams Smith

Judi went into the Winn-Dixie to buy a few items we needed. It was totally dark, and it was raining. I parked where I could see both store exits, so that when she came out, I could pick her up. For this time of night there were a lot of shoppers. I opened my window about three inches to keep it from fogging.

There was a Chevy station wagon parked pretty close to me, and as I waited, the family who owned it came out. They had their sacks of groceries in a shopping cart. There were five of them. The husband and wife were about thirty-five – he was pudgy and balding, she was sort of plain vanilla – except for her hair. The rain and the gentle glow of the vapor lights in the parking lot caused it to shine nice and soft, and it curled all over her head and neck and down into her face. I wanted to tell her how pretty it was, but I didn't. They had a boy – about ten, I guess. He was pushing the cart. He looked like most ten-year-old boys – jeans, T-shirt and Reeboks. There were also two nondescript children – about four and six, maybe, but their gender will forever remain a mystery.

The father opened the tailgate of the station wagon, and he and the boy unloaded the cart. When they finished, the father said, "Run the cart over there to the collecting area, Danny."

It was raining – but not hard – it wasn't offensive, just a sort of warm, pleasant drizzle that makes you want a good book, someone you love, and the leisure to be drowsy.

The boy didn't want to. They were about forty yards from me. I could hear them plainly, and I'm sure they never noticed me.

"Aw, Dad; it's raining," he complained.

"It will only take a second, and it won't hurt you." But there was no conviction in his voice; the father was reasoning with the boy – treating him as an equal.

The boy took full advantage. "Those people over there didn't put theirs back," he argued, pointing to several carts carelessly left in various places.

"We're not responsible for them, just for us," the father rejoined.

"But who cares?" the boy replied. They got people hired to come out here and collect these carts."

The mother, tired of waiting, now joined in on the boy's side. "For heaven's sake, Carl, come on! One more cart in the parking lot won't change the history of the world."

The boy sensed victory and opened the door to get in. The father shrugged his shoulders in defeat and put his hand on the door handle. Then he stopped. At first I couldn't figure out why, but I followed his eyes across the misty parking lot and I saw what he saw – an elderly couple, her arm in his, pushing their cart slowly toward the collection area. It caused a whole transformation in him. His posture straightened, his chin lifted, and his shoulders squared a little. I suspect he looked much like the man he had been when he got married. And when he spoke, there was firmness and authority in his voice.

“Danny”, he said, “come here.”

Danny came.

“Do you see those carts that are in the cart collecting area? Danny, there are two kinds of people – those who put their carts away and those who don't. In this family, Danny, we put our carts away – because that's the kind of people we are. Don't ever forget that. Now put that cart where it belongs.”

As the boy directed the cart to its appropriate place, it occurred to me how right the father was. There are two kinds of people in every area of life – two kinds of people – two kinds of fathers. Which are you?

Taming the Foolish Child Rebel:

By: Rudy Ruettiger

Notre Dame is a legendary place. A spot on the team means a chance at great fame. Rudy Ruettiger is a legend himself. He made the Notre Dame class. He then went on to become the heart of the Fighting Irish. His dad, Daniel Ruettiger, was a war hero and legendary dad. 14 kids. Married a world-class mom. Worked three jobs. Yet he always found time to attend his kids' games.

“Bullied, badgered and mad, I became a rebel in school. Sophomore year it came to ahead. I befriended a rough kid who well could have spelled my end. A big fight was planned for that Friday night. My friend said, ‘Rudy, we’re tough. Let’s go.’

I foolishly agreed. I had a big head. It was a chance to show off. I’d smear those kids who had made me so mad.

I waited until the family was fast asleep. Quietly, I slid out of bed, pulled on my clothes, and tiptoed to the back door. I was careful not to make a sound.

Dad knew something was up. He cut me off at the door. With his hand on my shoulder, he insisted we talk.

I admitted where I was headed. The kids we would fight had belittled us. It was our turn to teach em’ some stuff.

That’s when Dad rescued my future, and maybe my life. He replied, ‘You are no man when a meaningless fight is your way. You become a man by knowing when to walk away. Learn it now and remember.’

I’m blessed that Dad stayed up to catch me that night. Bad news came the next day. Several were badly hurt in the fray. With a blow to the head, my friend was now dead.

It could have been me, or I might have been cuffed and taken away. Either way, that would have spelled the end of my dream – no Notre Dame.

Dad, you were the best: You taught me to stop the big talk; to get in life’s game, then go out and fight to make the big plays. You taught me to know when to walk away.”

The Top 5 Regrets of the Dying:

By: Joe Martino

A palliative nurse recorded the most common regrets of the dying and put her findings into a book called "The Top Five Regrets of the Dying." It's not surprising to see what made the list as they are all things that touch each of our lives as we struggle to pay attention to and make time for things that we truly love. Below is the list of each regret along with an excerpt from the book.

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me. "This was the most common regret of all. When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made. Health brings a freedom very few realize, until they no longer have it."

2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard. "This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret, but as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence."

3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings. "Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result."

4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends. "Often they would not truly realize the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying."

5. I wish that I had let myself be happier. "This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content, when deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again."