

10 Ways Swimmers Sabotage Their Support System (written with tongue firmly in cheek)

From John Leonard, American Swimming Coaches Association, for About.com

- Want something for which you won't make any sacrifices. "Those who want to go to heaven, have to be prepared to die."
 - Reality: pay the price for the privilege you want.
- Tell yourself "if I don't do IT by such and such a time, I'll give up". People who dream properly, don't set time limits, they set goals. Timeless goals.
 - Reality: Just say, "I will accomplish it" No time limits. Then set out to do it.
- Don't live like an athlete away from the pool. Let your lifestyle choices as a young adult ruin your in water hard work. Burn the candle at both ends. See how long it can last.
 - Reality: Proper rest and taking care of your body is almost as important as proper training in improving performance.
- Bribe your parents.... or your coach...by negotiation..."I'll do that if I can just do THIS, for the next five repeats". Compromise yourself to mediocrity.
 - Reality: Achievement means doing something better today than you have ever done before. Something little or something big. But do Something Better.
- Stay up till all hours before a meet, for the social fun that can be had in that setting. "I DESERVE to have a good time, I work so hard at this". Yes, you work hard.
 - Reality: The reward is good performance, not outside entertainments.
- Don't listen and learn good technique from coaches trying to help you. It's a technique-limited sport.
 - The Reality: Without great coaching, none of us go anywhere in any area of life. Learn to be "coachable."
- Don't be honest with yourself about when you are working and when you are cruising.
 - Reality: Swim Meets and the timing clock always expose our real work habits.
- Don't thank your teammates for all they bring to your enjoyment of the sport and your improvement. Think that you did it all by yourself.
 - Reality: We all get where you do because good people surrounded us and support us and lead us onward. Say thanks. Often.
- Don't thank your coach for their support in your sport.
 - Reality: The best reward a coach can get is when an athlete says thank you.
- Don't thank your parents for their support in your sport.
 - Reality: Be mature enough to recognize and say thanks to your biggest fans.