



Taking Action to Achieve Your Dreams

What is the bridge between our dreams and the manifestation of our goals @ What is the line that connects the ideas and hopes we have with our swimming with the result we desire”

That bridge, that connection is action.

Dreaming about success with your swimming isn't enough. Having goals and a blue print are useless if you don't have the prerequisite action to go along with them. Embracing the habit of action has many benefits, but here are 4 of the most glaring ones:

- **Gets you out of your head:** We are easily our own worst enemy. Whether we are conjuring up excuses or reason we cannot do something, providing ourselves with the matching self-talk sometimes we need action to remind ourselves that we are a lot more capable than we give ourselves credit for day in and day out.
- **It Stifles Fear:** Think of the last time you were asked to give a presentation in front of your class. If you are like me, the agony of waiting was far worse than the presentation itself. Once you get up there, and things start to happen, your confidence starts to come back and results start to happen. You can wield action against fear each time it rears its ugly, unshaven face.
- **Action breeds confidence:** The surest way to feel good about progressing towards your swimming goals is to take a step no matter how big or small.
- **It Generates Results:** The fastest way between what you dream about and making it reality is acting on it. Period. Dreaming and planning is good to an extent, but at some point you need to take the leap.

Alright then. Now that we are familiar with why the concept of action is a super-dee-duper one, here are 6 tips to help you embrace action with your swimming -

1 **Expect Resistance. Lots of It :**

Think about your big goal for the season. Let it wallow in your brain for a few moments. Now think about what you are going to have to do active that goal. The work, the countless hours, the long session in the pool.

Do you feel that tug coming from the other direction? the one that is telling you “ You won't have enough time. it's okay if you don't achieve your goal. You don't really want it anyways.” That, my friend, is resistance. Once you understand what it is - and how its is the inverse of action - you will be better equipped to deal with it.

2 Struggling? Take baby steps.

Instead of diving headfirst into whatever it is you need to work on, start off by dipping your toes in. There will be those days where you are dragging your butt to the poo, and getting in the lane pounding out 6k is the last place you want to be. Understand that these dips and ebbs are natural and will happen from time-to-time. Starting small gives you confidence and the momentum necessary to carry you forward and get you out of that rut.

3 Focus on “how” not “what if.”

Burning mental energy on poor outcomes distract you from putting the effort in on acting. Instead of going over the worst case scenarios in your head, ask yourself one (or both) of the following questions-

- What is something I can do right now to help me get closer to my goals?
- How do I turn this negative circumstance around so that it works for me?

Out of the simple questions you should be able to form a good idea of what it is going take for you to move forward.

4 Focus on “how” not “what if.”

Over-thinking things is a stalling technique. Make the first few steps simple and foolproof and give yourself the opportunity to stay out of your own way.

5 Dismiss the notion of perfect action.

The only perfect time to act was yesterday. The next best time is right now. the next best (also tied for worst) is tomorrow.

6 Zero in on what you are doing and nothing else.

Give whatever it is you are doing (or want to be doing!) your complete and undivided attention. Turn off the cell phone, remove distractions and pour all of your focus into task at hand.

Get the blinder on and dial in on the task at hand, whether it is a dry-land workout, the main set or a simple post-workout ab session.

7 Be willing to show up everyday.

Here is the bad news- resistance rises every day with the sun. Each day it'll show up to whisper in your ear that you don't need to work all that hard, that you can can chase your

goals later, or that it isn't the end of the world if you slack tonight's workout. Once you pick up the action habit, you need to maintain it on a daily basis.

I've found that swimmers that consistently perform at a high level understand that not every practice is going to be flawless. There will be those days where no matter how well rested, how well warmed up, the stroke just doesn't show up.

But does that mean the process is flawed? Or that no good can be drawn from those less-than-awesome workouts? Of course not. The consistent swimmer understands that this part of deal.

All too often swimmers fall into the mental trap of believing that if they set a goal to do something in the pool, and they fall even a little bit, then they have failed. That if a practice goes poorly, this means that their season-end goal is done with. Those bad workouts and bad sets launch them into a demoralized spiral of a less than optimal practices that lasts far longer than the original bad outing.

Those who show up understand that it is about doing it better, on average, over the long haul. There will be the occasional dud, but just as they don't let a great practice get them carried away, they don't allow the infrequent stinker derail the overall upward trending of their swimming skills.

In Closing

Showing up isn't the silver bullet solution most swimmers are looking for when they ask what it will take to level up their swimming. Most-as is typical of our culture these days - are searching for a shortcut, an easier way to get to where they want to go.

Ultimately, no matter what it is you want to do with your swimming, it will all come back to one question.

Will you be the swimmer that shows up today.