

In The Dawg House



17 New Years Resolutions For Swimmers

By Olivier Poirier-Leroy, SwimSwam.com, December 31, 2014

We have never met, but I am willing to bet that we share something in common. Two things, in fact. The first is that we have both spent some time over the course of late December plotting out a resolution for the New Year. The second is that we have both spectacularly failed at keeping most, if not all of them.

Make this the year that you keep your resolution. The one where you don't just talk about the rad stuff you want to accomplish in the pool, but actually stick to your word and follow through with it.

With that in mind, listed below are a few ideas for helping you craft resolutions that you keep this year:

1. No pulling on the lane rope. I could not be more guilty of this one. I have cut my fingers numerous times on lane ropes that were chipped and jagged, and yet, I go back for more. I'll learn, maybe, someday. But probably not.

2. Be less of a grouch during practice. Each swimmer has their own facial expression and demeanor when they are neck deep in a difficult set. Some get angry, some get hysterically giddy, while others resort to cursing under their breath at the end of each repeat. "Think positive" isn't just an overused cliché—the way we phrase our thoughts has a real effect on how you actually feel.

3. Make this the year you go injury-free. Injuries stink, and the smelliest of them all are the chronic ones. The ones you know are coming, that are always just peering around the corner, waiting for you to get lax on your pre-hab and stretching. Vow to be more consistent with your pre-hab, and go a step further by learning as much as you can about your injuries so that you can get a better understanding of why they happen and become more inclined to act to ward off futures flare-ups.

4. Get in the habit of being more grateful. It's easy to grow to despise the lifestyle of a competitive swimmer, especially over the winter months. Two-a-days, missed social opportunities, and never ending hypoxic sets (oooh I rue thee so)

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can all cloud out the things we are super grateful for. Each night pull out your log book/journal/book of secrets, and write out a couple things you are grateful for.

5. Sleep more! Now this is a resolution that I am sure a lot of you can get behind. Sleep plays a huge factor in helping you recover from your workouts, and, well, it's easy! Just lay there, and close your eyes and stuff. The hard part is finding time to do it, and requires you making a commitment to going to bed a little earlier and ignoring the bedroom eyes your cell phone, tablet and Netflix are giving you.

6. Straighten out your stroke imbalance. Many swimmers suffer from stroke imbalances that come naturally from being right or left hand/arm dominant. Things like bilateral breathing, swimming with a snorkel, or doing kick on your off side with one arm out to improve body position (while getting you used to swimming on that side) can help edge you towards having a more balanced stroke.

7. Stop peeing in the pool. I've had coaches in the past who were unwilling to let us out of the pool unless our faces were blanched and registered the expression—"Look, I gotta go, man!"—there was no way we were getting out to "just" pee. So I understand that for many swimmers out there this resolution will be hard to keep.

8. Start and/or end every workout with a perfect dive. If you are like me, my practice-opening dive is either—a) run halfway down the pool deck and launch myself into the water, or typically—b) quasi-bellyflop into the pool. As a result our dives don't get the TLC they need until dives are explicitly worked in during workout, or in the days leading up to competition. Sure, one or two dives a day might not sound like a lot, but the consistency will add up over time, and because you are doing so few of them it should encourage you to focus on making them as excellent as possible.

9. Start journaling your workouts. Recording your workouts is a good time. You pick up valuable intel over the course of your training, it provides a few therapeutic moments of reflection after your workouts, and also gives you a record of progression that should pump your tires and keep you motivated to return to the pool each day.

10. Make all of your morning practices. Although I hated the whole getting up super early part, I always enjoyed morning swims. Rarely did AM sessions elicit a 100% attendance rate, so as a result there was more pool space to go around. Besides, it's kinda nice at that time of day. The rest of the world is sound asleep (including the competition, hopefully!) while you are crushing main sets like they owe you money.

11. Each day encourage a youngster on the team. Believe it or not, the younger kids look up to you. Seriously. You're older, cooler, and get to swim in the faster group. You don't need to be a world record holder to influence the swimming and the lives of younger swimmers on your team. Each day spend a few minutes working with a younger athlete on the team. Not only will it remind you why you fell in love with the sport to begin with, it will make their day.

12. Finish the warm-down. Beyond the active recovery aspect of warming down, I've always found that once you start cutting corners in areas of your workout that seem trivial it becomes easier to cut corners on the main sets as well. You should be committed to being an absolutist in this regard. Do the set as prescribed, and remember that the way you do anything is the way you do everything.

13. Work on the thing you keep telling yourself you suck at. We all have those holes in our swimming,

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17 New Years Resolutions For Swimmers (cont.)

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those weaknesses we avoid at all costs. We tell ourselves that we don't have time for it, and don't want to work on it because we simply don't like it. The funny thing is that we tend to have a strong distaste for the things we aren't good at, right up until the point that we become good at it. And then we love it, and wonder how we ever went so long without it in our lives. Whether it is your bilateral breathing, your breaststroke kick, or your backstroke starts, work on 'em until they get traded to the strength column.

14. Do ten minutes of extra vertical kicking after workout. Want to set your underwater dolphin kick apart from the competition? Spend a few extra minutes after workout doing some vertical kicking. Strap on some fins for added resistance to mix it up. With consistent application it won't take long to see the results of this minor investment in time.

15. Lead the lane more often. Don't be afraid to rise to the occasion. Cruising in the middle of the group, or even towards the end of the lane might be comfortable and safe, but it's not going to help you swim any faster. Stepping up and taking responsibility for leading the lane means you have to pay attention to the set (a good thing) lest you lose count of laps or repeats, and the little bit of pressure of knowing the rest of the lane is trying to chase you down will push you to give a good effort.

16. Align your lifestyle with your goals. You work exceptionally hard in the pool, fine tuning your Ferrari of a swimmer's body with an endless number of meters and deliberate focus on form, so why do you make it harder on yourself by treating your body like a bumperless 1994 Dodge Shadow? By fueling yourself properly, staying hydrated, and managing the *erryday* stresses of life, you will allow yourself to more consistently perform at the peak of your abilities.

17. Reward yourself. Marking the small victories that litter our respective journeys makes the long haul of the season exceptionally more enjoyable. You don't need to wait until you drop ten seconds in your 200 IM to recognize that what you are doing is awesome. Make every practice that week? High five! Did 5 dolphin kicks off every wall for a full workout? Booyeah! Didn't use 6 arm pulls into each wall during the main kick set? I can respect it! Celebrate the victories and treat yourself, and you will find that you will become ever more eager to seek out continued improvement.

The Immutable Rules of Improvement (For Swimming & Life)

By John Leonard, President of the American Swim Coaches Association

HONOR YOUR TEAMMATES

What would it be like to go to a class where no one else wanted to learn and just screwed around? What would it be like to go to a practice where no one wanted to work and everyone wanted to sit around and complain? What would it be like to go to a job where everyone watches the clock, doesn't do real work and "fakes work"? Being a teammate means committing to the welfare and well-being of everyone in the group. The military does this best. Take care of the man/woman beside you. And expect the same...and if that gets violated, take personal responsibility for straightening the person out.

The Immutable Rules of Improvement *(cont)*

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There are no short cuts to improvement. Bob Dylan says, “The lessons of a lifetime can’t be learned in a day.” He’s right.

DO THINGS CORRECTLY

There is a “correct” way to do everything in school. There is a “correct” way to do everything in swimming. Doing things incorrectly makes a mess. A long team mess. Incorrect NOW makes incorrect habits later. If you don’t have time to do things correctly now, how will you have time to fix them later? Knowing the “correct way is not enough. Living it is required. If you don’t do things correctly, you will be a “screw up” your entire life.

SHOW UP

Show up in class. Sit in the front. Pay attention. Show up at practice. Show up on your job or you won’t have it. Be there. Always. It’s about consistency and constancy. If you want a good marriage, SHOW UP. Body, Mind, Heart. (It gets dead silent when you do this one with young people...they’ve all seen bad marriages and they KNOW this one by heart.) If you don’t “show up”, you can’t improve. Period.

The longer you live, the more you will realize the validity of three immutable rules of improvement.

From The Deck



Just a quick note for the parents at this point in our season....

Please remember to let the coaches do the coaching. I have heard several parents trying to “help” their swimmers with swimming advice or make comments because they didn’t drop time. And maybe out of frustration that they didn’t drop time in an event for a while, I can understand wanting to “help”. But what you may be telling them isn’t what we are reinforcing or what we want them to hear.

Remember, there is a **long process** for success. Every time they swim, they will NOT get a best time. If I would hazard a guess it might be that 90-95% of their swims over their swimming career, will NOT be best times. That’s just simple logic....if they got faster every time they swam then eventually their time would be wait for it ZE-

RO! How many world records do you know that are that fast? I can’t think of any!

Please have patience with your swimmers and know they are trying (hopefully) to the best of their abilities that they have displayed at practices. It ALL comes down to showing up at practices as much as possible and

5 Tips For Swim Parents To Handle Conflicts With Coaches

Courtesy of Elizabeth Wickham, SwimSwim

Have you ever questioned your kids' coach or had a conflict? I'm talking about a variety of issues — maybe you're concerned there isn't enough stroke technique, your kid isn't getting enough attention, or isn't making the progress another swimmer is. How we handle situations may determine if our child benefits or is harmed from our involvement. The following tips have come from my own experience as a parent and board member — from each end of the relationship. These tips can be used in the classroom, too.

If it's not a safety issue and your child isn't in danger, there are several courses of action you can take if you have a conflict with the coach:

Number One:

Don't tell your bff swim parent, your second-best swim parent friend, or a random parent standing on deck all about it. I've found that talk does not make problems go away. The opposite usually happens. You get lots of conflicting advice, you're pressured to take action, and you've made other parents disgruntled with their team or coach, who were previously happy as pie.

Number Two:

Ask for a meeting. Don't sit around gossiping—or post it on FB. Go directly to the horse's mouth and schedule an appointment. Not during practice. It's best to schedule a meeting when your child isn't present. There's nothing positive about your swimmer's group staring and listening as you and a coach are deep in discussion.

Number Three:

If you don't want to talk to the coach, call a board member. The board members are there to listen and to help. Often, it's best to talk to a board member before you approach the coach. They can determine if it's an issue that needs to be escalated. They may offer an explanation or produce a resolution.

Number Four:

Don't discuss your dissatisfaction in front of your child—if you want your swimmer to continue to trust their coach. Your swimmer's first loyalty is with you. If you're criticizing the coach, your child may not be able to distinguish that their coach has many great traits. Younger kids tend to view the world as black and white, and they won't necessarily understand subtleties.

Number Five:

Think before you act. Take a deep breath. Weigh the situation in your mind. "If I let this incident alone, will I care a week from now? A month from now? In the big scheme of things — my child loving swimming and having fun — am I helping or hurting?"

Sometimes holding your tongue and doing nothing is the best course of action — unless your child is in some sort of danger. Taking a week to get distance and a fresh outlook can help before you send off that email or schedule a meeting.

From The Deck (cont)

working hard at those practices....there are no other short cuts to success...and it takes a LONG time to be good at this. Think about your own jobs that you have had.....I'm just going to take a wild guess that if you are very ambitious and looking to move up to manager or president or whatever from your very first job, that the process didn't take you just 6 years to accomplish. If a swimmer started at the age of 8 and they are 14 now, that is the same 6 year time frame.

It is all about patience and understanding.

If you ever have a concern or question about your swimmers development, please contact your swimmers coach and ask them or just speak with them about it. They will be more than willing to talk or listen.

We will again be placing the feedback cards in each swimmers mailbox by Friday, January 16th. What I am hoping to do with this installation of the newsletter is to get the feedback from the parents that they received this newsletter and have read this so that I know you are getting the information. So once you have read this can you email me back and let me know you have received it. Thank you so much!

Swimcerely, Coach John

Quote of the Month

"Breathe in, breathe out, move on."

- Jimmy Buffet

TOP DOGS for the Meets



This section is in recognition of those swimmers who have had exceptional time achievements at meets.....

NASA Winter Classic Invitational - **Carter Haynes** - 8.657 second average time drop. 57.17% team best times

DUNE Rumble In the Region Invitational - **Kristian Kirilov** - 17.114 second average time drop. 40.63% team best times

CPSC vs DUNE vs UTSC Tri - Meet - **Jonathan Letcher** - 8.13 second average time drop. 37.75% team best times

AWESOME JOB DAWGS!!!!!!



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Commitment, Pride, Sportsmanship, Character

www.crownpointswimclub.org

Mission Statement

The Crown Point Swim Club is an aquatics program established to provide opportunities for our community through the sport of swimming. We are a USA Swimming and Indiana Swimming member committed to building excellence in athletes through the sport of swimming at the highest levels of competition. We are dedicated to the members of our not-for-profit organization to help provide our services at very little cost to all.

Vision Statement

Building the future of the community through safety in the water, healthy lifestyles, and physical development while achieving excellence in swimming, academics, and life.

Philosophy

Commitment, Pride, Sportsmanship, Character

We stress being committed to excellence both athletically and academically. We take pride in our organization, our athletes, and their families. We teach sportsmanship both in and out of the pool at all times. We build character through life lessons that will take our swimmers past their athletic ca-

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