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## Dear Coaches,

### Quote of the week:

**"A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner."**  
~English proverb

## Working On Your Concentration Skills in Practice

By Dr. Alan Goldberg, [Competitivedge.com](http://Competitivedge.com)

There's no question that races are won and lost before the start. If the quality of your training is poor, that is, if you skip practices, accumulate a lot of "garbage yardage" where you just go through the motions, back down when it gets tough and fail to pay attention to the important details when you swim, then your race results will always reflect this.

[Read more:](#)

## Improving Technique: Get In and Play

By Katie Arnold, USA Swimming National Team High Performance Consultant

Many of our recent articles discuss properly diagnosing technique flaws. While I believe that this is one of the most important (and difficult) aspects of our jobs as a High Performance Consultants, I think the biggest challenge lies with the athlete who has to make the necessary changes.

One of the questions I am asked most frequently during club visits is, "How do I make this change?" The answer I always give is, "That's up to you to figure out."

[Read more:](#)

## Zone Age Group Top Times Rankings

By Lyle Campbell, Times and Recognition Committee

We have a new feature for times and Age Group Top Times. A Zone Age Group Times Sub-committee is running the top 20 lists by gender and course each week and these are being posted on the Zone websites. If you notice any erroneous data, Please contact the zone times chairs who should be listed on the zone websites.

[Eastern:](#)

[Central:](#)

[Southern:](#)

[Western:](#)



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## 2015 ASCA Age Group Clinic In San Diego, August 21-23

Come join us for the 2015 ASCA Age Group Clinic, August 21-23, in beautiful San Diego. This clinic is designed by age group coaches for age group coaches and presented by age group coaches.

Speakers include the 2014 ASCA Age Group Coach of the Year, Beth Winkowski from Dynamo Swim Club in Atlanta; Coach Dale Porter, age group coach at Bolles Swim Club; the always entertaining and always filled with great ideas for swimmers of all ages, Bob Steele; Coach Don Heidary of the USA Silver Medal team Orinda Aquatics, one of the top smaller clubs in the US; Jackson Leonard formerly with the Gold Medal Gator Swim Club and current age group coach of Gulliver Prep in Miami, and John Leonard, Director of ASCA and an active age group coach every day. The speakers represent a nice balance of youthful enthusiasm with some good old fashioned wisdom from the "old guys."

The ASCA Level 2 School will also be offered by John Leonard.

For complete schedule and registration information [click here](#):

## Are Your Child's Life Accounts in Balance? By David Benzel, June 2015, Growing Champions for Life

I remember our son telling me at age 10, "All I want to do is play baseball so why do I have to go to school when I already know what I want to do when I grow up?" We can't really expect our children, regardless of their age, to have a realistic or healthy perspective on the complexity of a life well-lived. It's also unrealistic for us to assume they could possibly know how many different life skills are required and in need of their attention.

My son looked a bit dismayed when I sat him down to have our "Life Accounts" talk. I wanted him to think of life like a collection of bank accounts into which he could make deposits that would be valuable to him both short-term and long-term. I also wanted him to understand that ignoring any of these accounts would cost him something later on. (I didn't expect him to understand that part yet.) Here's the list of life's departments needing both attention and some kind of investment by him:

Physical Health Mental/Emotional Well-Being Spiritual Life  
Intellectual Growth Social Skills Financial Management  
Recreation Community Service Entertainment  
Family Involvement Career/Vocation Hobby Interests

I had to explain that some of these would play a more major role later in life than they do at age 10 — like Career/Vocation — and that Family would come to mean something different when he had his own. But the main point of this narrative was to point out that all of these areas needed some attention in order for him experience life fully. In fact, even if baseball could possibly become his career, his chances of being drafted would be enhanced if he was a total package. By that I mean intellectually equipped to solve problems, socially adept so he can communicate effectively, emotionally mature, and spiritually grounded so as not to think or act like he's the center of the universe.

There's a reason we have so many athletes in our country who win at sports, but lose at life... simultaneously! We have physical specimens who are intellectually unprepared, emotionally immature, and financially irresponsible; and they're starting families woefully inexperienced at anything other than their sport.

We cannot, for our children's sake, afford to let them ignore the lessons of any life account because they were too busy practicing all day, or playing video games all day, or hanging with their friends all day — or even reading books all day, or spending all day with the family! I'm not suggesting the time spent in each of these areas should be equal. However, time and energy invested in each life account develops a whole person, and without a diverse investment a child will awaken one day to feel inadequate to cope with life's realities. What kind of preparation for life have we given our children if they know:

- How to hit a curveball, but can't manage their money responsibly
- How to serve an ace, but can't handle their emotions after a loss
- How to stick their dismount, but can't carry on a discussion with an adult
- How to land a triple jump, but can't recognize a neighbor in need of help
- How to win an individual medley swim race, but can't imagine a business career for themselves
- How to score on a penalty kick; but can't maintain a loving relationship

Sooner or later athletes who dedicate large amounts of time to their training become aware of certain gaps in their preparation for dealing with life. It seems to be inevitable. Our job is to minimize the number of gaps by guiding our children toward exposure to, and skill development in, a variety of life accounts. Parents are the ones who can help a child apply the self-discipline he learned in sports to the classroom for getting a big report done on time. Parents can inspire kids to see that the teamwork needed to score a goal is similar to the teamwork needed in family life. Ultimately, we are the ones who can help our children see their sport in the context of a full life well-lived; as a wonderful chapter of life; fun, and full of life lessons. Nothing more - nothing less.

#### **FREE Webinar**

"Give Your Child Emotional Intelligence for Sports and Life"

Date: Thursday, June 18th, 2015,

Time: 9:00 PM Eastern Time,

45-minute live webinar plus Q & A

[Click Here to register](#)

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## **I am a Teacher of Athletes**

**By John Kessel, USA Volleyball, June 1, 2015**

John Kessel's Grow the Game Together blog. To read more of the GTGT blog, [visit this page](#).

This month some kid I know really well has his senior year athlete banquet. I was looking at the Princeton website, and at the top of the athletic department's home page was a quote I had never heard that impacted me – "I am the teacher of athletes, He that by me spreads a wider breadth than my own proves the width of my own, He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher." --Walt Whitman

This same month, I was honored to speak to about 75 of USA Hockey's core coaches, in their first ever High Performance Summit in town at the Olympic Training Center. I spoke of "never being a child's last coach," and some other things which I have learned the hard way. There were several NHL players now giving back to the sport and one, Mike Sullivan, who now scouts for the Chicago Blackhawks, spoke about things he had learned. This is taken from my seat in the back, where the power outlets hide out.

[Read the rest of the story and see some great video:](#)

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## **For Outstanding Organizations, The Customer Is Never a Burden**

**Posted by: John G. Miller, June 2015**

The King Soopers grocery store recruiting manager asked, "So, Jazzy, what does good customer service look like to you?"

With 17 years of life under her belt, Jazzy responded:

"Good customer service is being outgoing, friendly, and approachable; making customers feel like they're your #1 priority and never a burden."

"Um, okay, well, so ... when can you start?"

When Miller Child #6—Jazzy Joy—shared this exchange with Karen and me, we

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beamed. "Good for you, Jazz!" we said in stereo.  
And at that moment, my mind went back 24 hours ...  
We decided to go pick up Kentucky Fried Chicken (I do the grilled chicken with coleslaw so those missing 43 pounds are never found again). Flipping my laptop open, I discovered that KFC does not have online ordering.  
Bummer.  
How retro, I thought. I have to ... call???  
[And now the rest of the story....](#)

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## Asking a Problem Player or Parent to Leave the Team

By Evan & Warren Tabachnick, Teamsnap.com, Mar 26, 2015

It might not be something you want to consider, but sometimes a player or his/her parents are so problematic for the team that the only option is to ask them to leave. When it comes to asking a player to leave the team, it's best to consistently maintain a polite, professional manner in communicating the team's intentions. While it's good to be firm in your message, at the same time, you should try to soften the blow of getting "kicked off" the team, which can be very tough to handle for the player, the parents and the team alike.

### Identifying the Problem Player/Parent

The situation where a teammate can be a 'problem player' can arise due to any number or combination of factors. To name a few:

- He or she constantly exhibits a bad attitude and poor sportsmanship.
- He or she does not show up to games and practices.
- He or she pick fights or is abusive to teammates or other players.
- His or her parents like to fight or harass other parents or referees.

Whatever the case may be, it should be the consensus of the coaches and league administrators that this player's presence on the roster is detrimental to the team.

[Read more:](#)

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## Historic Olympic Moment

54 Weeks until Trials (as of Sunday)

Great history lesson. Starring Mike Barrowman, Roque Santos, Sergio Lopez.

[Watch here:](#)

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## USOC Coaching Education Newsletter

By Chris Snyder and the USOC Coaching Education Team, June 2015

We're pleased to provide you with the June newsletter that includes information from the Olympic and Paralympic family and the world of Coaching Education.  
As always, if you have any cool things happening in the coaching education world, please do not hesitate to let us know.

[In this month's issue:](#)

The Athlete Learning Gateway  
Olympic Champions to Classroom Champions  
Coaching Book  
Nutrition Tip  
When Failure is Not an Option  
2015 EMWICL Conference Recap  
Upcoming Conferences

