



In this Newsletter

Volume 39 - 09/26/2014

1. Tips for the Start of a New Swim Season
2. Best Ways to Handle Sugar for Young Swimmers
3. If
4. Rock Solid Leadership
5. Six Critical Components of M-O-R-A-L-E
6. Are Great Coaches Becoming an Endangered Species?
7. The Two Greatest Motivators For Students
8. How Successful People Deal With Stress
9. Expert Panel on Bullying
10. Sea Turtles... and Distractions that Lead Us in the Wrong Direction



Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

“Some people say that dreaming gets you nowhere in life. But I say you can’t get anywhere in life without dreaming.”

~Rose Zadra

Tips for the Start of a New Swim Season

The first few weeks back in the pool sets the tone for the entire season. Coaches, consider these thoughts from members of the National Team community:

Technique

- The start of the season is the best time to visualize and reflect on how you can improve technically. Begin by making technique adjustments in warm-up. (Keenan Robinson, NBAC)
- Identify areas to focus on by watching race film from the end of last season and discuss with your coach what you can improve on. (Russell Mark, USA Swimming)
- Commit to working on underwaters early on. Make a new season “resolution” to get better at your kicks and doing a certain number off of every wall. It will pay off in the end. (Russell Mark, USA Swimming)

[Read more:](#)

Best Ways to Handle Sugar for Young Swimmers

By Jill Castle, MS, RDN

Sugar, the sweet stuff added to foods in baking and other food processing techniques, is something young swimmers should have a handle on. After all, sugar (or sucrose) is a carb, but it doesn’t have a lot of nutritional power, nor does it offer the long-lasting energy found in complex carbs, like bread, beans, and fruits and veggies.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American youth are eating too much added sugar. In a 2012 study looking at the consumption of added sugar in youth from 2005 to 2008, researchers found the following:

- Overall, intake of added sugar was down, slightly, from previous years
- Boys ate more added sugar than girls
- Much of the added sugar was from food sources, rather than beverage items
- Most of the high-sugar foods were consumed in the home

When it comes to the calorie dent from added sugars, [here's the low down:](#)



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If
By Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you.
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat these two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

Rock Solid Leadership
By Simple Truths

Looking for a short inspirational mini-movie to ignite and inspire your team's leadership?

[Watch video here:](#)

Six Critical Components of M-O-R-A-L-E
By John G. Miller, QBQ, September 2014

This is a working blog. It's not funny or cute. It's just content that we all need to think about, talk about, and act upon.

So let's get to work!

What level of morale exists in your organization today?

Choose an adjective:

Outstanding
Good
Mediocre
Poor

Which word did you select?

Simply put, morale is the vital sign that tells us how healthy our organization is—or not.

Healthy organizational morale allows us to find joy in our work, collaborate with colleagues, be more creative and productive, accomplish increasingly greater goals, and have fun. Yes, fun ... at work.

But what impacts morale? What shapes it?

[Read more:](#)

Are Great Coaches Becoming an Endangered Species? **Posted In Coaching, Leadership, Problems in Youth Sports, September 2014**

When you are in the coaching profession, one of the things you learn early on is not to take things too personally. Your biggest fans when you win may become your biggest critics when you lose. Your players may love you one moment, and grumble the next, and it is important to maintain perspective and see the big picture even when they cannot. If you are doing your job, your players and fans will not always appreciate the moment, but they will appreciate your great coaching years from now.

Recently I have read numerous articles about longtime coaches resigning due to parent complaints over things like playing time, selection for varsity or JV, and the like. I have read about states passing legislation to protect coaches from parent complaints. Then I read this article about a former high school basketball player who was suing his former coach and athletic director because he didn't get enough playing time. This is insane. This I took personally.

[Read more:](#)

The Two Greatest Motivators For Students **By Tim Elmore, Growing Leaders, September 2014**

I recently had lunch with my friend Lara Juras, who serves as Vice President of Human Resources for the Atlanta Braves. In our conversation, Lara reminded me of a great truth she keeps in mind as she practices the art of motivating people.

She's learned to keep in mind the two greatest motivators for behavior whenever she has to inspire improvement among team members:

[Read more:](#)

How Successful People Deal With Stress **By Bernard Marr, Influencer, Best-Selling Author, Keynote Speaker and Consultant in Strategy, Performance Management, Analytics, KPIs and Big Data, September 2014**

A survey by TalentSmart showed that 90 percent of top performers know how to manage their emotions in times of stress so that they remain cool, calm, and able to do what needs to be done.

That's an important lesson in and of itself for all of us - because all of us experience stress in our lives. Research has shown that some stress is good for us: it helps us

perform at optimal levels. Too much stress, however, can have serious psychological and physiological repercussions.

Since we can't necessarily avoid most stress - especially in our work environments - it's to our benefit to learn how to deal with it, and learn from the examples of those who are already successful.

According to surveys and other research, successful people have some strategies in common when it comes to managing stress.

[Read more:](#)

Expert Panel on Bullying

By Jim Thompson, September 2014

"Bullying and a Culture of Performance" - a panel discussion led by PCA Founder Jim Thompson at the Santa Clara University Institute for Sports Law and Ethics Symposium earlier this month - provides insight and advice that is critical to all youth and high school sports coaches, parents, athletes, administrators and the leaders of any business or other organization.

Panelists were PCA National Advisory Board Member Brandi Chastain; Dr. Gary Namie, who founded the Workplace Bullying Institute and served as an expert witness for the Jonathan Martin and Richie Incognito case; and William Pollack, PCA National Advisory Board Member and author of *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*.

[Watch here:](#)

Sea Turtles... and Distractions that Lead Us in the Wrong Direction

By Jon Gordon, Author, September 2014

As I ran on the beach the other day I noticed that certain areas were closed off by fences and signs that said "Sea Turtle Eggs."

I remembered reading that female sea turtles swim to shore between May and August to dig nests in the sand and lay their eggs. Months later, the eggs hatch and the baby turtles follow the pure light of the moon back to the surf.

In a perfect world, the pure light of the moon guides every turtle back safely to the ocean.

However, as we know, we don't live in a perfect world.

Sea Turtle hatchlings instinctively crawl toward the brightest light. On an undeveloped beach, the brightest light is the moon. On a developed beach, the brightest light can be an artificial light source emanating from restaurants, homes and condominiums along the coast.

Unfortunately, these powerful artificial sources of light often attract the hatchlings and cause them to move in the wrong direction when they are born.

Rather than follow the pure light of the moon to the ocean the sea turtles follow the wrong light to a disastrous outcome.

It occurred to me that we humans face a similar challenge.

Rather than follow the path we were meant to follow, unfortunately we too often are distracted by things that move us in the wrong direction. Technology, online games, too much time on social media, bad habits, addictions, stress, busyness and meaningless distractions lead us astray.

Instead of following the pure light of perfection we allow bright and shiny artificial things to sabotage our journey.

So, what about you?

Are you following your priorities and pure light to the right destination or are you allowing artificial distractions to lead you in the wrong direction?

Are you following the path you were meant to follow or are you letting meaningless things keep you from being your best?

The great news is that unlike sea turtles we have the ability to think, adapt and change direction when we realize we are following the wrong path. We can tune out the distractions and focus on our priorities and let the pure light lead us to an ocean of possibilities and a great future.

What are your biggest distractions?

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