

Taos Swim Club Inc. Newsletter

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December Newsletter

Welcome to the Taos Swim Club Inc. Happy Holidays! I can't believe we're already this far into the season. Hopefully everyone had a relaxing Thanksgiving holiday with friends and

family. We have a lot of exciting events going on this month. Remember to dress warm before and after practice to stay healthy.

"The price of excellence is discipline. The cost of mediocrity is disappointment"

Discipline gets a bit of a bad rep. When you hear the word your first thoughts tend to flutter to the stereotypical 1960's conservative dad, sporting black horn-rimmed glasses with the short sleeve white dress shirt, cracking his belt in his hand. Not pretty.

But in reality, discipline can be your best friend, because once you harness it, discipline becomes easier and easier to use. Disciplines form habits, and habits are what makes champions. Don't shy away from being a self-disciplined athlete, embrace it.

Our Commitment

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The Taos Swim Club Inc. is committed to providing an enjoyable swimming experience for swimmers of all ages and abilities, while also providing a challenging and positive teaching and training environment in which swimmers can develop a sense of self-esteem and pride through individual and team achievement.

The reality is that a self-disciplined swimmer is the one that will triumph talent and good genetics every time. They will show up when no one else will, not complain when challenging sets get scrawled up on the board, and will be the first at the pool to destroy the competition at meets.

The reason this happens is because discipline takes away a lot of the struggle associated with the heavy mental demands of training. When you stop having to gimmick yourself into going to the pool and giving a hundred percent, you are able to remove a metric ton of reasons people fail –

self-doubt, low motivation, fear. The thought of “not feeling like it” never even crosses your mind because it is not an option. It makes the process of achievement something based in reason and routine, as compared to motivation, which is largely based in how you feel at that particular moment.

Here are just a few of the things that self-discipline promotes

1. Self-discipline is the ultimate productivity tool. Powerful discipline means that when you sit down and list out a set of goals for yourself, they might as well already be accomplished. They are a done deal. Having a powerful sense of self-discipline means that you can set and plan goals with the certainty of knowing that you will follow through on them.

2. Motivation gets you started, discipline keeps you going. The starting period of anything is almost always the easiest. At this point you are generally flushed

with energy, focus and motivation. We lay in bed at night and think about that greasy goal, and how wonderful it is going to feel when we achieve it. At this point we are prepared to make all the changes necessary to make our goals happen, and we are willing to do it with vigor. But eventually that initial rush of excitement wears off, and with the fading enthusiasm so goes the motivation and desire to do what is necessary to achieve our goal. This is where discipline keeps you going. It picks up

where that big surge of excitement retreats.

3. Allows you to make guilt-free decisions on saying “yes” or “no.” A disciplined swimmer doesn’t have a hard time saying no to that extra slice of pizza or bowl of over-salted fries. They don’t find it difficult to decline an offer to hit the town when they have a big practice in the AM. They don’t even feel the need to make an excuse, because for them, they don’t feel guilty about saying no. There is a clear line that is drawn between the things that will propel a swimmer

towards their goal, and those that will not, and a self-disciplined swimmer doesn't feel guilty about declining to cross that line.

4. Eliminates the back-and-forth banter in your head. It's 4:30am. The wind is howling outside, snow is blowing sideways, and your bed is so comfy it's not even fair. Even though the alarm went off two minutes ago, already you have conjured up a list of excuses you can deploy on your parents, your teammates and coach. *Car wouldn't start. Caught that super rare six hour flu that's going around. Cell phone died in the middle of the night so no alarm.* These

excuses don't have a chance when you instill self-discipline. Sure, you might not love getting out of that bed, but you do it anyway.

5. When you're self-disciplined, it gets easier. Believe it or not, once you have discipline set up, and it is governing the important decisions regarding your swimming, things get easier. A lot easier. You don't need to struggle with the incessant and self-sabotaging self-talk. The excuses stop to flow. Doing the right thing doesn't just become easier, it also becomes natural, routine. As an added bonus, you'll feel energized as you're spared the exhaustion of having to find new and creative ways to motivate yourself on

days where you don't feel motivated.

6. Self-discipline gives you something else that is very powerful; a strong inner compass. Whenever those nagging doubts pop up, those notions that perhaps you aren't good enough, that you aren't up to another bout of training, your powerful skills of self-discipline are there to tell them to sit down and lock it up. Having that authoritative voice within you will do more to hurtle you toward success than any pep talk or motivational playlist.

Next time, in part 2 of 2 of this little guide on self-discipline for swimmers, we're going to discuss some techniques for developing and honing your self-discipline skills.

December Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Practice	2 Practice	3 Practice	4 Practice	5 Practice	6 HS Swim Meet
7	8 Practice	9 Practice	10 Practice	11 Practice	12 Practice	13 HS Swim Meet
14	15 Practice	16 Practice	17 Practice	18 Practice	19 Practice	20 Christmas Party
21	22 Practice	23 Practice	24 Off Day	25 Merry Christmas	26 Off Day	27 Practice
28	29 Practice	30 Practice	31 Off Day	1 Happy New Year	2 Off Day	3 Icebreakers Postal Swim

Dec 6th HS Swim Meet in Santa Fe, NM

Dec 13th HS Swim Meet in Carlsbad, NM

Dec 20th Swim Team Christmas Party From 10 am to 1 pm

There won't be any Swim Team Practice on Dec 24th, 25th, and 26th **Merry Christmas!**

There won't be any Swim Team Practice on Dec 31st, Jan 1st and Jan 2nd **Happy New Year!**

Swim Club Newsletter

What Swimming can teach us about health at any age.

Go ahead, take the plunge and swim your way to health and overall well-being. Olympians, M.D.s, fitness trainers and avid swimmers confirm that swimming is not only good for your body, but can also improve emotional and spiritual well-being as you stroke through the water.

Swimming provides me with a restorative and liberating feeling. Ever since childhood, I have been drawn to the water like a moth to a flame. I enjoy the discipline of overcoming limitations, both physical and mental, while swimming laps or even doing an open water swim. Author Lynn Sherr elevates swimming to a spiritual experience when she says, "[swimming's] also an inward journey, a time of quiet contemplation...I find myself at peace, able –

and eager -- to flex my mind, imagine new possibilities, to work things out." 1

The idea that swimming is good for you mentally as well as physically is really old news. Author David Thomas, in his book *Swimming: Steps to Success* quotes William Wilson who in 1883 wrote, "The experienced swimmer, when in the water, may be classed among the happiest of mortals in the happiest of moods, and in the most complete enjoyment of the happiest of exercises." It would be fair to ask whether it is actually the physical act of swimming or the mental atmosphere that it creates - that quiet cocoon under the water which allows time for deep thinking or prayer - - that produces this kind

of happiness and sense of well being.

Our ability to think is a prized human capability. Consequently, we should not simply "zone out" during a workout; rather, we can think, meditate, or pray with the expectation of positive outcomes. Twice a week, I'm in the pool at the crack of dawn for an hour with fellow masters swimmers which provides necessary quiet time to prepare for my day. While swimming lap after lap, I like to focus my thinking on what really matters in my life. At the top of the list includes health and well-being for me and my family. As I continue on my waterbourne, mile long workout, I also think about solutions for national and world problems like caring for U.S. war veterans or the conflict in Syria.

Sometimes I feel at my "wits end" about a particular problem or issue. Being at your "wits end" is not a 21st century phenomenon. It's mentioned in Psalm 107 when ancient mariners were on a tempest tossed sea. The storm abated only after the crew earnestly sought providential assistance. I'm sure there was a collective sigh of relief when a few verses later the Psalmist states that "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still...he bringeth them unto their desired haven"²

Mark Gangloff, two time Olympian swimmer and Assistant Swim coach at the University of Missouri told me recently that it is important to have a goal for what you want to achieve in your workout. For Mark, the razor sharp focus to compete in the Olympics began at age twelve after an Olympic swimmer came to speak at his Ohio youth swim club. He broke a national record in breaststroke at age sixteen. He then went on to compete with Michael Phelps in the Athens and Beijing Olympics.

For me, my swimming workout will not have the physical intensity that Gangloff exerted in his quest for the Olympics. Unseen to others in the privacy of my swim lane is the goal to focus my quiet time in the pool on becoming more spiritually minded. In her book "Healing: A Spiritual Answer" Jamae van Eck describes this lofty sounding goal, "Spiritually-mindedness implies being in the world but not of it. Those who are spiritually-minded have an instant rapport with one another. They empathize and communicate regardless of language, religion, culture, race, or class. In fact, spirituality is the underlying commonality of all people."³

You didn't have to be a swimmer to be impressed with Diana Nyad, who at 64, became the first person to swim 110 miles from Cuba to Florida without a shark protected cage. Kathy Smith, a friend and author of Moving Through Menopause, spoke about the important lifestyle choices Diana made during the years leading up to this remarkable accomplishment. You

don't just roll out of bed one day and announce to the world that you want to tackle a world record. Smith said, "It's like a bank account you keep investing in with lifestyle choices, mental habits" that later in life make such a feat possible.

I've always been inspired by what Mary Baker Eddy said about age, "Except for the error of measuring and limiting all that is good and beautiful, man would enjoy more than threescore years and ten and still maintain his vigor, freshness, and promise." These words are from a woman who spent the first half of her very long life (twice the average lifespan of a woman at that time) seeking health and the second half sharing the health benefits of Bible-based prayer with the world through her writings and teachings.⁴

We can all learn something about the achievements and ageless possibilities of the superstars in swimming. I will continue to swim with the goal for a rigorous workout balanced with the quiet time to cultivate the spiritual

qualities as espoused by Lynn Sherr. Swimming and other individual sports can increase your physical and mental well-being. If swimming

isn't your thing, find another recreational activity that allows for contemplative time or just time during the day that gives you moments

to stretch your mental endurance, to meditate or pray. That's really the key to improving your overall health and longevity.

The Taos Swim Club Inc. would like to thank all of its sponsors for their support. If you would like to be a sponsor, or know of someone that would, please have them contact us at taostigersharks@hotmail.com or 985-709-6456. As always your donation is tax deductible!

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Thank you for all your help and support.

GO TIGER SHARKS!