

Pre-Senior
Senior
Senior Foundation

Coach Don and Coach Dalton

April 8, 2020

Positive Thoughts

Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan “press on” has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

Calvin Coolidge

Task Focus

Each day I will give you things you CAN do while training and racing are on hold. Below are activities and tasks for Wednesday, April 8, 2020.

READ! What? Yes, here are some more book titles to consider!

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Founding Fathers on Leadership | Donald T. Phillips |
| 2. Leading Without Leading | Wayne Goldsmith |
| 3. Eddie Reese | Chuck Warner |
| 4. The Champion’s Mind | James Afremow |
| 5. Toughness | Jay Bilas |

🚩 If you haven’t checked out the dryland video, please do so and give it a try.

🚩 Make a list of 10 songs that motivate you and listen to them during your dryland workout.

Mental Focus

Focus: Being in the Right Place at the Right Time

By Dr. Lenny Wiersma, Department of Kinesiology, California State University, Fullerton

One of the greatest mental skills an athlete needs to learn is to focus. The ability to focus—to be in the right place at the right time, mentally—is such a critical aspect of swimming success. Whether it be to focus on your goals, on a specific part of your stroke, on certain parts of your body during warm-up, focusing is a skill that is probably as important to your success as any other mental skill. To illustrate this, I want you to take a few moments to imagine yourself doing the activities below.

First, imagine that you are standing about 10 feet away from a group of your friends. Each friend is holding a ball of a different size, color, or shape. You ask each of your friends to hold up a ball, and you choose which one is your favorite. Choose only one. Now, on the count of 3, all of your friends—at the exact same time—throw their balls in your direction so that you may catch it. To catch your ball, you have to be in the right place at the right time, mentally. In this case, you need to focus on the one ball you want to catch, while ignoring all the others. Most of the time, you are able to do so because your focus allowed you to catch the ball as if it was the only one being thrown to you.

Now, imagine if I asked you to identify two balls you wanted to catch, both at the same time. Your friends all throw the balls at the same time, and you attempt to catch two. More often than not, not only would you not catch two, you wouldn't even catch one. Why? Because trying to focus on more than one thing at the same time limits your ability to focus on anything.

Now, imagine that you are at a swim meet. At the meet are a variety of things that may catch your attention, some of which would be helpful for a proper mindset and some of which would not help your performance. Teammates. Competitors. Parents. The weather. The pool. The crowd. Your sore arm. The song that is going through your head. Your doubts. Your goals. Your swim bag. The snack bar. Qualifying times. Your coaches. Your race plan. Expectations. The amount of information—and potential distractions—at swim meets can be overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be if you have a plan.

Now, imagine that each of those things mentioned above—expectations, goal times, your parents, etc.—are represented as a different color ball that was held by your friends. Imagine, as you did in the first exercise, that you were to choose something very specific to focus on at a meet—during warm-up, behind the blocks, or during a race. It would be as easy to direct your mental energy at that as it would be to catch just one ball out of many coming at you. It would be easy because you have chosen very carefully ahead of time what you wanted to focus on, and in the process that would allow you to ignore, or block out, all of the other potential sources of stress or distractions around you.

The key here is that you want to create a mindset so that YOU are in control of your focus, no matter what is going on around you. You certainly don't want your environment, or what happens in it, to control your mindset.

Before your next meet, write out one very specific thing you want to focus on in the car on the way to the meet, during warm-up, when you are standing behind the blocks and during your race. Just one specific thing for each of the four settings. Talk to your coach if you need help with this. Then, practice this most important mental skill—being in the right place, at the right time.

Keys to Success

By Alex Meyer 2010 Open Water Champion

1. **Have a clear set of goals.** The emphasis here is on having a set of goals, not just one goal. You have to set up an ascending kind of ladder for yourself so you can celebrate smaller goals along the way. But always have something bigger in mind.

2. **Keep loving the sport.** You can't do it because you want to make money or if your parents are making you. You have to want to have fun with it. You have to love this sport, and if you do that, you will have a lot of fun. Besides, you can't be good at something you do not enjoy doing. And if you don't like it, you won't be prepared to do well in your races.
3. **Work hard, but be comfortable.** You need a program that pushes you hard and works for you, and you want one that has good teammates. You also have to be in a place where you are comfortable, from simply the geographical aspect to having good communication with your coach. You don't want to be in a place where you are always complaining. You want to know the objectives and be comfortable with them.
4. **Personalize your own program.** We are all naturally competitive, but you can't directly compare what you do to what other people are doing—especially your competitors. It's easy to look at what a person on another team is doing, or see that Michael Phelps and Natalie Coughlin are doing something and think that might work for you, but that is not always the case. Everyone's body and mind work differently. As I have gotten older, I realize how I have a very particular way of doing things. You need to experiment and understand what works best for you. Don't be discouraged if something that works for you doesn't work for other people. You are unique. The science of training is about how there is not one way---no one right way—to train somebody.

Physical Challenge

Alright, so we have a bit of a challenge physically not being able to get in that water. So, today's "physical" challenge is *visualizing physically* going through your Backstroke. Regan Smith answers 3 questions about her swimming experience.

How do you prepare for swimming multiple races at a meet? "I definitely make sure that I have my (racing) suit as well as my backup suit, and I make sure I have a snack with me just in case I need some extra energy. I like to have my water bottle to sip water. I know it sounds weird, but my water bottle is like a safety blanket for me. I have to know that I've trained enough, and I can't be scared. And, you have to have fun with the process."

What advice would you give a younger swimmer about to swim the 200 back for the first time? "Keep your head back the whole time. Don't go off the pace and move those arms as fast as you can. Make sure you can always feel your toes breaking the surface of the water. Talk yourself through the race as much as possible. It's cliché, but I tell myself, keep going, because you have trained for this. I count my stroke cycles, and that helps the time pass by better, and it also helps me keep my pace."

What helps you get through a long and tough set in swim practice? "My friends help me because everyone can be negative, but they're negative in a funny way. We know that it will be fine in the end. After a hard practice, I'm proud that I accomplished it. I think swimming alone would be hard for me because it's the conversation between sets that helps get you through it. We have a good support system (at Riptide). When things are hard, we try our best. We all have good senses of humor, and it helps distract from the hard training. I'm the only one going to World Championships on my team, but we don't look at it that way. We're all training for the same goal."

Fun and Games!

Name the country and city of each of the following Summer Olympics hosts and send your answers to me! Be one of the first 10 to send me the correct answers and earn a bonus Duck! Use my home e-mail: maitenuit@aol.com

1. Host of 2004 Olympics ---- Country and City
2. Host of 1988 Olympics ---- Country and City
3. Host of 1992 Olympics ----- Country and City
4. Host of 1996 Olympics ---- Country and City

Check out your knowledge! Did you know? Swimming has a long history of innovation in style and technique. Here's a look at historic moments in swimming that, when see through a proper lens, sheds light on the sport we know today.

Swimming Timeline:

7000BC: An early Egyptian picks his arm up while swimming the Nile. His motion is described as the "front crawl," a term still oddly used by your grandparents when instructing how to swim properly. The term continues to create confusion, as one doesn't face "front," nor does one ever "crawl" when swimming.

1100: A knight during the Middle Ages swims in full-armor as a test of strength and endurance. The iron suit weighs 45 pounds. Coaches everywhere read this column and ominously get an idea!

1539: The first book about swimming is written. Breaststroke is described, along with the proper methodology for using a cow bladder as a floatation device. Weirdly, this book is not longer distributed in swimming circles.

1603: Japan declares that all school children should swim. Just 408 years later, a number of American institutions of higher learning—such as Clemson and University of New Orleans—eliminate their swim teams, proving these institutions actually exist in another time vortex, sometime before the 16th century.

FUN! More to come tomorrow!

Motivational Moments---Enjoy!

World's Best Basketball Freestyle Dunks Lords of Gravity in 4K

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3a7McecdSC8>

Slam Dunk Supertramp Style Faceteam Basketball

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KULSBE3QvBY>

Greatest Olympic Moments Ever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuSM36CNb3Q>