

April 13, 2020

Positive Thoughts

A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events and outcomes. It is a catalyst and it sparks extraordinary results.

Wade Boggs

You can't always have a good day. But you can always face a bad day with a good attitude.



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 Monday, April 13, 2020.

- ✚ Write out 5 swimming workouts that you feel are appropriate for the group you swim with.
- ✚ Provide a copy of your workouts to your coach once we return to the water.

Healthy Eating/ 10 Ways to improve nutrition!

By Dr. Chris Rosenbloom

What you eat is the cornerstone of good performance and good health. Yet many swimmers don't know how to translate knowledge into behavior. So here are 10 suggestions for eating nutrient-rich foods that every swimmer can do.

1. Eat more beans, peas and lentils. They are rich in protein, quality carbohydrates, dietary fiber, and many vitamins and minerals needed by athletes.
2. Don't fear dairy. Unless you have a milk allergy or are lactose intolerant, include 2-3 servings of dairy for calcium and vitamin D for your bones, potassium for muscle and nerve function, and whey and casein for muscle-building.
3. Eat more tuna fish. Tuna is high in healthy omega-3 fats and protein.
4. Add veggies to every meal; don't forget breakfast and snacks.
5. Learn to love (and identify) whole grains. It is recommended that half the grains we eat should be whole grains, but just because a bread says it has 5 grains, how do you know if they are whole grains?
6. Break out of the chicken only routine. Lean beef contains quality protein and is a better source of iron, zinc and other needed minerals than chicken breasts.
7. Pack peanut butter. PB is the ultimate athlete-friendly food as it needs no refrigeration.
8. Don't let sugar fears keep you from drinking 100% fruit juice (without added sugar).
9. Learn how to hard boil eggs.
10. Get in the kitchen! Learning to cook is the best way to boost your nutrition.

Mental Focus

Mental Resetting

By Nathan Adrian

Perhaps you've heard me say before that "races are won AND lost before the start and/or before the finish!" This directly refers to where your focus of concentration is before the meet, before each of your races and during your swims. When you focus on the right things, on the feel of what you are doing, then you will stay loose, go fast and give yourself the very best chance of swimming to your potential! However, when you focus on the wrong things, on your thoughts about times, other swimmers, the "what ifs?" or how badly you're feeling, then you will make yourself nervous, tighten up physically and slow down. Focusing on the feel of what you're doing while you swim is the secret to going fast!

Equally important, races are also won and lost based on where your concentration is while you train. Are you paying attention to what you are doing in practice, on the feel of your stroke and turns, or are you somewhat "out to lunch," lost in your thinking and just going through the motions? Swimmers who are more aware of their focus in practice will always get much more out of their training than those who allow themselves to get hijacked by their thoughts.

To raise the quality of your training consistently, you need to first become more aware of your during-training focus and then second, learn how to control it. This means that you must be able to distinguish between when you are focusing on your thoughts in training and when your concentration is on the feel of doing.

For example, if while I am training, I'm coaching myself with thoughts like, "you have to lift your elbow higher" or "you need to feel yourself pulling more water," then I am focusing on thinking. If I am noticing that my arms "feel" like lead right now and my hips are sinking, then I am also focusing on my thoughts. Any time we evaluate how we're swimming, we are thinking. Instead, I want to focus on the feel of my elbows lifting up just that right amount, or the feel of how much water I am pulling with my hands and forearms on each stroke. Similarly, instead of thinking about the heaviness in my arms or my sinking hips, I want to focus on keeping this stroke long and smooth and feeling myself speed up my kick. This "feel focus" tends to vary depending upon which stroke you're doing and what works best for you individually as a swimmer.

When your coach gives you specific technique instructions to improve your turns, you might have to start off thinking about those instructions and coaching your way through them with each turn. However, with sufficient practice, your goal is ultimately to develop a feel focus for the corrections. The same holds true for technique corrections in your stroke. Paying close attention to these details throughout practice is one of the things that will eventually make you a stronger, more competitive swimmer. Remember, this feel focus is your "gas pedal" when you race. When you train, practice becoming more aware of exactly where your focus is (thoughts or feel) during dry-land, during the warm up set and the main set.

Becoming aware of when you're in your head thinking during practice is the very first step in learning to control your concentration. The second step is developing the mental muscle of "resetting!" That is, every time that you catch yourself drifting to thoughts, (i.e. "she's passing me! I'm going too slow!" etc.) you want to quickly and gently (no judgement, frustration or evaluation) return your focus back to the feel of what you are doing and how your body is moving through the water. Please understand that the purpose of this skill is NOT to aim for stopping your thoughts for good! This is an impossibility and totally unnecessary! Over-thinking won't hurt you when you train and race. What will hurt you is allowing yourself to continue to focus on the thoughts instead of resetting to the feel of what you're doing!

To lift the level of your training, work on your mental "resetting muscle" every day during practice. If you get in the habit of noticing when you're thinking and immediately reset your concentration to feel, then you will automatically find yourself doing this in races when it counts! This simple mental skill will help you take another step closer toward your swimming dreams.

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 Freestyle. Kelsey Savage Hays shares tips for your Freestyle.

Most swimmers will take more freestyle strokes than any other in their career in the sport, making it all the more important to learn the proper mechanics. Here's the breakdown of the front crawl, movement by movement. Take a look, keeping in mind that the perfect stroke for you is always the goal. Work with your coach to develop the best mechanics to maximize your strengths.

Head Position

With the right head position, the rest of the body will fall naturally into line. Look neither forward or directly down, but rather keep your neck directly in line with your spine, in a neutral position. Adjust your head so that the water hits the crown, not your forehead. From here, your hips will naturally rise into the correct angle.

Breathing

Many swimmers breathe too late in freestyle, disrupting their underwater pull and the timing of their stroke. To prevent this, Russell Mark, USA Swimming's Performance Support Consultant, advises that you start turning your head to the right before your left hand hits the water (and vice versa). To maintain the proper head position, strive to keep one goggle in the water. Alternate breathing makes for a more even stroke.

Kick

As with the other strokes, the legs are an important part of freestyle's forward motion. "Think about the way you'd strike a soccer ball," says Mark. "Start with a bent knee and end with a straight leg." Most swimmers, according to Mark, don't go far enough downward with their kicks. Go as deep as you can to extend fully, snapping through your feet, and then just let the bottoms of your feet break the surface on the way up. After all, you don't need to kick air to move forward.

Sprinters vs Distance Freestylers

At a glance, sprinters and distance freestylers might appear to be doing two completely different strokes, but all the basics are the same, with a few minor adjustments...Distance swimmers have a more defined catch, some stretching their stroke out to look almost like catch-up drill. Sprinters generally have a shorter reach and a narrower pull, which helps them keep a higher turnover rate.

Another "physical" challenge for today is *visualizing physically* going through your Backstroke. Caitlin M. Foyt shares tips for your Backstroke.

USA Swimming's Performance Support Consultant Russell Mark, biomechanics coordinator for USA Swimming highlights the key components that make up a powerful backstroke. Take a look, keeping in mind that the perfect stroke for you is always the goal. Work with your coach to develop the best mechanics to maximize your strengths.

Recovery

Lift your arm from the water, thumbs first, and lock your elbow so that your arm is straight. As you move your arm over your body, keep your fingers pointed outward. When your arm is positioned directly above the shoulder, make sure you start rotating to the other side and start turning your hand, so the pinky finger enters the water first.

Kick

In backstroke, your head must be above your hips, a body position that's maintained by a good, strong flutter kick. "The kick really helps but everything together," Mark said. Your legs should bend and then snap straight through the finish of each kick, so that you can maximize speed. The kick depth should be more than a foot below the surface but will vary by individual.

Finish

As you finish each arm stroke, just a little lower than your hips, your palm will be positioned slightly downward. This is the ideal position to be in, because your hip can naturally rotate up during that slightly downward finish.

Rotation

Body rotation is important to grasp because it affects your overall rhythm and the way your body cuts through the water. Your hips and shoulders should pivot together from side to side as a unit. Mark said body rotation is important, but it shouldn't be too dramatic. (It is called the BACKstroke, after all.) "Even the elite swimmers who rotate the most, rotate less than 45 degrees from the surface," he said.

Fun and Games!

Here's more of the Swimming Timeline:

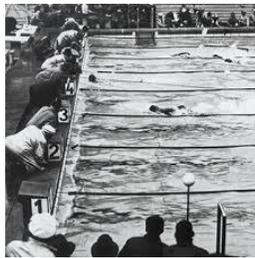
Check out your knowledge! Did you know? Swimming has a long history of innovation in style and technique. Here's a look at historic moments in swimming that, when seen through a proper lens, sheds light on the sport we know today.

1900: The second modern Olympic Games feature an obstacle course event, and a separate underwater event. More than a century later, swim fans demand to add these events to the Olympic schedule again, hoping to see a Phelps vs. Lochte vs. Thorpe 2012 Olympic gladiator-style throw-down.

1922: Johnny Weissmuller breaks minute barrier in the 100 freestyle in a swimsuit that resembles something an embarrassed-kid-in-middle-school wears to pool parties. No one complains that Weissmuller's "full-body suit" enhanced his time.



1935: Chaos at the Melbourne Olympics: the flip turn is introduced, and breaststrokers swim completely underwater. It's not every day Olympic officials are befuddled by new and unseen stroke innovations. FINA intervenes.



FUN! Yes there will be more!

Motivational Moments---Enjoy!

Iconic Olympic ads through the years!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4vaPdQjv_0