

HOW TO DEVELOP A WINNING MINDSET

[PHOTO BY MATT RUBEL
OF RUBEL PHOTOGRAPHY]



Winning can be a wonderfully positive part of swimming—something that fires and inspires the heart and mind of every athlete—IF the athlete knows they're giving his or her best...in everything...in every way...every day.

If you're a competitive swimmer—giving all you've got to everything you do, training day after day, striving to realize your potential and see your dreams come true—chances are you dream about, talk about and think about...*winning*!

Winning is good, winning is wonderful...and there's nothing wrong with wanting to win.

However, there are some people who feel that thinking about, talking about and focusing on winning is a *negative* thing—that it's in some way putting too much pressure on swimmers and causing them too much stress. They say that the concept of “winning” is placing too high an expectation on young swimmers...and that anything less than winning will cause swimmers to experience excessive emotional distress.

Well, it all depends on how you look at winning.

WINNING IS PREPARATION: PREPARING TO WIN IS EVERYTHING

Winning is not about luck...or hope...or wishing. Luck, hope and wishing do not have anything to do with winning—they are very poor strategies for success.

Winning is a result of preparing to win. It is more than merely showing up for training, swimming the laps and doing the stretches. *A lot more.*

Winning is the cumulative effect of preparing every day to the best of your ability to consistently give all you have to all you do.

Winning comes about when you, as an athlete, take ownership and responsibility for every aspect of your preparation...when you make an uncompromising commitment to out-prepare your com-

petitors in every aspect and in every detail—in and out of the water.

Winning becomes a reality when you seek not to make training easier...but when you deliberately and purposefully aim to make your training more challenging and more demanding than any swimming competition could ever be.

Winning is possible when training and preparation is completed with the same level of intensity, focus and concentration as you apply to racing.

Yes, the concept of winning can be negative...but only when the expectation of success *exceeds* the level of commitment to prepare to be successful. To put it another way:

Winning can be a wonderfully positive part of swimming—something that fires and inspires the heart and mind of every athlete—IF the athlete knows they're giving his or her best...in everything...in every way...every day.

However, to the swimmer who dreams about medals and who talks about victory, but then does nothing about it...disappointment and frustration lie in wait.

NEXT-LEVEL THINKING

Swimmers who win will set their training standards well above the level they need to achieve at their next meet.

For example, if you're striving to win at state level, set your training standards to win at the national level.

Want to win your local school meet? Prepare to a standard that would see you swim successfully at regional or state level. This is called “Next-Level Thinking”...and it works!

By setting your training standards to a level higher than those of your target meet, you are always prepared to do your best when it really matters.

NOTHING IS CERTAIN, BUT...

There's nothing—*nothing*—you can do that will guarantee success. You can't do anything...eat anything...drink anything...or buy anything that will give you a 100 percent chance of winning.

But, you can—by the way you train...by the way you eat...by the way you manage your rest and recovery...by the way you attack your gym work...by your dedication, your commitment and your relentless pursuit of excellence—**increase the LIKELIHOOD of success.**

There are three things that underpin the likelihood of success:

- Learning
- Continuous Improvement
- Commitment

WINNING IS LEARNING

Winning is learning, but it's more than just learning to win.

Every day...every training set...every race...everything you do has two aspects: 1) doing it NOW and learning from it...2) so that you can do it better the NEXT TIME.

Too many swimmers just “DO”—they train, they race, but they don't learn from the experience.

So as a result, their capacity to improve is limited.

Learning faster means improving faster—the more you learn, the

more you can improve and the sooner you can achieve the winning results you desire.

After each race—and at the end of every training session—ask yourself one simple question: “*What did I learn today that will make me a better swimmer tomorrow?*”

This one question establishes a “learning mindset”—a state of mind that many great achievers adopt to ensure they learn faster and grow their experience and knowledge base sooner to gain an edge over their competitors.

WINNING IS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

One of the biggest obstacles to winning...is winning itself.

When people win, they will often stop learning. They believe that if they've won, then they've stumbled on the “secret to success.” As a result, they think that all they need to do to win again is to do the same thing over and over and over.

However, in swimming—as it is in all sports and in all walks of life—success is a moving target.

Times and standards are always improving, and the moment that you—as a swimmer (or your coach, for that matter)—cease striving to

learn, improve and get better through intelligent changes to training and preparation strategies...it's over!

“Winning is good, winning is wonderful...and there's nothing wrong with wanting to win.”

— continued on 40



viviLED Display Company



Join the Expanding viviLED Family of Satisfied Customers

viviLED designs and manufactures an outstanding line of LED video displays and numeric scoreboards

All of our products are 100% compatible with

- Colorado Time Systems 5, 6, & GEN7
- Daktronics Omnisport 2000 & 2000E
- Omega/Swiss Timing ARES & Quantum

viviLED is perfect for new installations or to replace your existing scoreboard!

viviLED customers include:

- MIT
- University of Alabama,
- Orlando YMCA
- and more

Our viviLED products are known for ease of use and very affordable pricing!

MENTION THIS AD FOR SPECIAL PRICING!

viviLED DISPLAY COMPANY

23182 ALCALDE DRIVE SUITE H
LAGUNA HILLS, CA 92653

TOLL FREE - 1.800.984.8453 • 1.888.9VIVILED
SALES@VIVILED.COM • WWW.VIVILED.COM

There's an old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." This means that if what you're doing is working, don't change what you're doing.

However, there's a much better old saying that applies more appropriately to competitive swimming: "If it ain't broke, tear it down and smash it."

No matter how successful you are, you can always get better.

WINNING IS COMMITMENT

One of the most important phrases that someone who wants to win can learn—and live by—is, "It takes what it takes."

Once you've made the commitment to be successful, then it takes what it takes.

If winning takes getting out of bed at 4 a.m. six mornings a week, then it takes what it takes.

If winning takes doing 30 minutes of extra dryland training by yourself in your own garage with old rusty weight training equipment five days a week instead of watching TV, then it takes what it takes.

If winning takes drinking fresh water and freshly squeezed juices instead of gulping down massive sodas, then it takes what it takes.

If winning takes going to bed an hour earlier each night so you can get an extra night's sleep every week—and turning off all "screens" at 8 p.m. to ensure the quality of your sleep is enhanced—then it takes what it takes.

Commitment is the key to it all. ❖

Wayne Goldsmith is one of the world's leading experts in elite-level swimming and high-performance sport. Be sure to check out Goldsmith's websites at www.wgaquatics.com and www.wgcoaching.com.

SUMMARY

1. Winning is great. Winning is wonderful. It is normal and natural to think about, talk about and dream about winning.

2. However, just thinking and talking and dreaming about winning will not make it happen. There is no magic pill for winning...no "fairy dust"...no Harry Potter wand that you can wave and miraculously turn your hopes and dreams and wishes into medals.

3. The key to winning in swimming is commitment. Do whatever it takes in your preparation every day to increase the LIKELIHOOD of success.

4. Winning your next race starts by winning the workout. Attack your training sessions—in the pool...in the gym... wherever you sweat for success—with the same intensity and ferocity that you give to your meets. When your preparation is as competitive as your racing, your racing becomes easier, and winning becomes more likely.

5. Most importantly, for the swimmer genuinely committed to winning, there is no difference between winning and losing. If you win, get up the next day, and do all you can to get better. If you lose, get up the next day, and do all you can to get better. Winning is not an end in itself; it's a lifelong journey of learning, continuous improvement and striving to be all you can be.



TOTAL ACCESS MEMBERS CLICK HERE

to download a real-life story on winning.

SWIMMING WORLD VAULT IS NOW OPEN!

Download Every Issue Back To 1960!

A 3-year print subscription includes digital access to SW Biweekly and digital access to current Swimming Technique Magazines and unlimited digital access to all Swimming World Magazine issues back to 1960 in the **Swimming World Vault**.

ABOUT SWIMMING WORLD MAGAZINE

The magazine presents complete national and international coverage of all competitive aquatic sports.

ABOUT SWIMMING WORLD BIWEEKLY

Biweekly comes out every two weeks and aggregates all the top stories that you might have missed in the fleeting world of the internet.

ABOUT SWIMMING TECHNIQUE MAGAZINE

This magazine comes out every three months and includes great information on training and technique.



Learn more at: SwimmingWorld.com/NISCA-Vault

*Normal Cover Price \$178.20 - Your Price \$74.95 with FREE SW Racing Cap