

A Swimmer's Guide

By Dick Hannula

What are the ten most powerful two-letter words?

Answer...

IF IT IS TO BE ... IT IS UP TO ME

This simple statement sums up a lot of truth that can be applied to all aspects of our lives. In my coaching experiences, only those swimmers who took charge of themselves, and trained accordingly, became good and even great swimmers.

It is up to me to attend regularly, listen to my coaches and apply their instructions, to race to the best of my ability and to make the best choices to be a contributing team member.

THE WILL TO PREPARE TO WIN IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE WILL TO WIN

Talent is only one part of the success equation. The willingness to **PREPARE** to win is the dominant factor. Practice, repeated practice, is the only path to the top of the competition.

Who is afraid to fail?

Those who aren't willing to attempt something challenging are often victims of the **AFRAID TO FAIL** mentality.

SUCCESS IS 99% FAILURE

Every successful swimmer has had to endure some failure. Failure provides an opportunity to become tougher and more determined. Getting up and trying again takes courage. Courage is a special trait. You can't buy it, but you can attain it through persistence. When you are disappointed ... work harder ... never, never quit. Do more ... do it better than before ... and, above all, be persistent in striving for your

success. This is an opportunity for our character-building that only failure can provide.

A PUNKER ALWAYS HAD A GOOD EXCUSE

Making excuses can become a habit. Make a habit of accepting responsibility for your choices and your actions. There is no room for PUNKERS on our swim team.

SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY – NOT A DESTINATION

We can't **own** success. It isn't a destination to attain and forever hold. The success is in the journey ... the steps that we take every day in order to attain some goal or success in the future. The process in getting there is the success. This is what we learn and will give us the most joy when we some day look back on our journeys.

TURKEYS FLOCK TOGETHER – WHILE EAGLES SOAR ALONE

Eagles are willing to fly alone, soaring high above other birds. We can all aim high and try to fly **on Eagles' Wings**. We can all become eagles in our training, but sometimes it is necessary to **break away** from the turkeys first, in order to soar as eagles.

In summary...

IF IT IS TO BE ... IT IS UP TO ME