

Persistence!

By Lee Wise

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I couldn't believe it -- I placed!
My first swim meet. I felt GREAT!!

In fact, I felt so great that I decided to
join South Bend's local AAU swim team.

Me, an AAU swimmer! The more I swam the more
I was enjoying myself. I could see myself
"winning."

One problem: I also made the freshman football
team. Normally, that would not be a difficulty
except for one thing ...

I knew I couldn't be excellent in both sports.

A DECISION TO FOCUS

I said, "I'm going to swim and that's it. No
more football."

And that's exactly what I did. For the next
four years I swam. I swam in swim season and
I swam in the summer.

I was relentlessly persistent!

LET'S STOP AND THINK!

Persistence is a combination of these forces
working together.

*Our desires.

*Our commitment.

*And a series of decisions to act!

Persistence is the "fuel" that propels us toward achieving what we value most in life.

I KNEW WHAT I WANTED

Back to my story. I had a *strong* desire. I wanted to win. I wanted to be on that starting block, hear the gun fire, enter the water ...

And win!

I MADE A COMMITMENT

But I knew it would take one thing: commitment. I made the commitment to work like crazy because I wanted to *excel* at my sport.

And that's exactly what I did.

I FOLLOWED UP MY COMMITMENT WITH ACTIONS

Day in and day out I swam. I took a job in the summer with my coach at a local country club so I could work out under his guidance *before* my actual work day began.

I decided to swim when I felt good.
I decided to swim when my gut hurt.
I decided to swim -- period.

AND I LOST!

Yep, I lost. I didn't get first in state. I lost to the same guy by a tenth of a second two years running.

I didn't like the second place medal at the time. I have to be honest about that. But I also realized something: I *was* in the top three!

Why?

Because of persistence. There is great value in being persistent.

LET'S REVIEW

Remember the three "forces" of persistence.

1. A strong desire.
2. A firm commitment.
3. A series of decisions to act.

GIVE IT A TRY!

Persist.

Don't kill yourself trying.
I call that nuts!!

But do try!

Persist.

- *Focus on what you value. What you want.
- *Make a commitment.
- *Decide to act.

Then ...

Take one or more simple steps of action
toward that goal which is SO important
to you!

Today!

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