

maFastbreaks

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Enjoy Your Coffee

A group of alumni, highly established in their careers, got together to visit their old university professor. Conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in work and life. Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups - porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all of the students had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said, "If you noticed, all the nice looking expensive cups were taken, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee,

Continued on page 4

Display a Gold Medal Attitude

The United States Olympic Committee has chosen Sportsmanship to be the 2007 theme for their education program. According to the USOC, "An athlete who is a good sport is someone whose conduct and attitude demonstrate gracious behavior before, during, and after competition." This should apply not only to Olympic athletes, but all athletes including children, adults, professionals and amateurs.



When you hear the names Michael Jordan, Michelle Kwan and Matt Hughes, other than being world-class athletes, their reputations for displaying good sportsmanship usually come to mind. How did these players reach the top being formidable, tough opponents, yet illustrating good sportsmanship and fairness? More importantly, how can we instill these traits in ourselves and children? Start with writing a Code of Ethics. Begin with your goals as an athlete and/or spectator. You might include some of the following.

My goal is to have fun, develop motor skills, a positive self-image and physical fitness. Winning, getting a college scholarship or being recruited for the pros are not goals.

Continued on page 2

Quotes to Ponder

Some people drink at the fountain of knowledge; others just gargle. — *Unknown*

Be nice to people on your way up because you'll meet them on your way down. — *Wilson Mizner*

Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. — *William James*

Most people live and die with their music still unplayed. They never dare to try. — *Mary Kay Ash*

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult. — *Seneca*

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. — *Anne Frank*

One act of beneficence, one act of real usefulness, is worth all the abstract sentiment in the world. — *Ann Radcliffe*



Display a Gold Medal Attitude

Continued from page 1

As a spectator, I shall set an example in the stands. I will be a role model to the players and spectators on both sides. I will not criticize any player's abilities including my own. If I am a parent, I will ground my children from playing if they are unable to use self-control. I will teach my children alternate ways to deal with anger and how to channel that anger in positive ways.

As an athlete, I will play fairly and honestly. I will ignore taunting, and not participate in fighting. I will have good and bad days, but they will not determine my self-worth. I will respect the game officials and coaches. I will enjoy victory, but I won't gloat. I will not be a poor sport

if I lose. I will respect my opponent. Win or lose, I will sincerely thank the other team for a good game, because without them, I could not have played. I will not use inappropriate language. I will show good sportsmanship even when others don't.

Remember that sports should be a fun, physical activity. Bad attitudes take a lot of the fun out of playing, so remember winning isn't the number one priority especially with a win-at-all-cost attitude. Every game will have a winner and a loser, but your attitude and sportsmanship will make the losing times easier.

Raising a Quitter

If a child skirts a responsibility early in life, it becomes a natural reaction to obstacles in the future. Each time an excuse replaces responsibility, a brick is placed in the wall between the child and success. If parents allow their children to undermine their authority and only do what they feel like doing, they are going to fall short in the real world. Bosses are not as easily persuaded as mom or dad.

You know what is good for your kids better than they do. You need to make sure your children know that with anything in life, quitting is not an option. Quitting sets the child up for a lifetime of letting emotions get in the way of achievement. If they quit any time something gets too difficult, they will never reach their full potential. Insist that your child work hard, even on the most difficult of tasks. They can surprise themselves and exceed their own expectations if they stick to it. Though it may not seem like it when they whine and complain, letting them quit will not help them. It only teaches them that it is okay not to follow through on their commitments.

Kids don't always understand the advantages of persevering in something they do not want to do, because there is no instant gratification. They cannot see

how discipline and persistence will pay off in the long run because they are only concerned with the here and now. It is your job, as a parent, to keep their future in mind and make them do what is best for them, even if they do not want to.



For example, no one will remember 20 years from now if your child failed a test in the fifth grade. It has no immediate effect on his or her character, and may not seem like a big deal, even at present. But by letting your child scrape by without putting their best effort into everything they do is a big deal and will have an effect on them 20 years from now. Teaching the value of hard work now will only pay off later in life.

Remember the things you have learned through experience and pass them on to your children. They may not always listen to you, but it is your job to make sure that the lesson is learned, even if it is learned the hard way.

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Enjoy Your Coffee

Continued from page 1

not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups...

And then you began eyeing each other's cups.

“Now consider this: Life is the coffee; the jobs, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life, and the type of cup we have does not define, nor change the quality of life we live. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee that has been provided us.”

The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Enjoy your coffee!

