



## **TOPIC: MOTIVATION**

### **TITLE: ACHIEVING YOUR PERSONAL BEST**

May 8, 2001

#### Achieving Your Personal Best

My newsletter this week focuses on the concept of "achieving your personal best". This idea comes from a recent experience I had speaking with an Olympic medal champion. Bonnie Blair, who has won five gold medals, was speaking about an important race in her career. In this particular race, she came in fourth, missing a bronze medal by just a split second. Although she had missed the medal, this was a race where she had broken her own personal record, achieving her personal best time ever. It reminded me of how often we focus on the end result - winning instead of how we are playing the game.

This concept applies to so many areas of our life. How many times have you found yourself focused on winning (an argument, a business decision, etc.)? So often, we are focused on the end result - what was the final score, did we achieve exactly what we wanted, that we forget to look at the effort we put forth. What would our lives be like if we focused on achieving our personal best, and at the same time, remained unattached to the specific end result? Having a goal, and playing to win is certainly important. And at the same time, giving it our best shot, every time, is what it's really all about.

Achieving your personal best is about just that: giving it your best shot. It's about how you show up, how you play, and how you measure yourself. And, it's about you, not everyone else. This is where we look in the mirror and are our own judge of our effort, both good and bad.

As Bonnie talked about the concept of achieving your personal best, there were three things that she attributed to her success. I'd like to share those with you, and help you take a look at how they affect your life.

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1) Do something you're passionate about.

So often, we find ourselves just doing something, or going through the motions, and it seems to have lost its energy, appeal or just doesn't seem fun. Granted, not everything is fun, everyday. However, the people that seem to "enjoy" success seem to share a common trait: they are doing something they believe in and are passionate about. The passion is the energy that pulls them out of bed and draws them to do whatever it is. It might be a sport they enjoy, what they feel they do for their customers, or employees, or it might be the value they believe they bring to clients, the community, and the world. In any case, they believe in something and are doing what they believe in. And, that's the foundation of who they are and what they do - it's what's important. When you think of how much time we spend "doing", shouldn't we enjoy it?

2) Maintain balance.

We can also find ourselves fully diving into one thing and giving that all our energy. This is a recipe for disaster. There are several areas of our life that all need attention at the same time: our career, our family, our friendships, our spiritual life, health and wellness and finance. We need to keep our eyes on all these balls at the same time. If we put too much energy into one of them, the others suffer, and that hurts us in the long run. Finding and maintaining balance is critical for our physical and mental health.

3) Take Risks.

A friend of mine recently shared a great quote with me: "only those who risk going too far will ever know how far they can go" (Anonymous). If you don't try, and aren't willing to risk, you will limit yourself in life. We are all capable of so much more than we give ourselves credit for. And if you believe in what you are doing, you have to be willing to take risks to get the result. What's at risk? That depends; the real question is what is the cost to you of not taking the risk? We all live in a comfort zone, and until we risk getting out of it, we can't play at a new level.

My challenge for you this week is to take a look at your life, and redesign it to achieve your personal best.

Where are you living your passion?

Where is your life out of balance?

Where is the one area of your life you need to take a big risk?

Remember, you must be willing to risk being uncomfortable to step out of your comfort zone. And once you do, you will be surprised at what's out there for you.