

## Coach Koehr's Swimming Awards Banquet Talk – March 3, 2013

### Bloom Where You Are Planted

1. Bloom Where You Are Planted **Story about my Father**
  - a. Navy Admiral who credits his rise from life as a poor child to this philosophy
  - b. Started forecasting weather in God-forsaken places that the Navy sent him, but was the best so the Navy eventually put him in charge of it worldwide.
2. What are we talking about?
  - a. Start with what we are **NOT** talking about
    - i. **Ever heard**
      1. I'll try when it matters more?
      2. I'll going to swim really hard when it counts?
      3. When they pay me more, I'll work harder?
    - b. Or ever heard
      - i. **He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much?**
    - c. We're talking about
      - i. **Giving your personal best effort in all you do**
        1. Even when you think **no one is watching**
        2. Even when you think **it is not important**
    - d. What makes you think
      - i. No one is watching?
      - ii. It is not important?
  3. I'll tell you **two things** I've learned in my life about excellence
    - a. **First, mediocrity always catches up to you – and you may not even realize it**
      - i. If you don't do **push-ups** during the year, will you be able to do them at the end of the year?
        1. You think I don't notice that it is the end of the season and you still can't do 3 push-ups?
        2. Only one way that happens
      - ii. You **don't do your Algebra I homework** and squeak by anyway?
        1. What happens in Algebra II or Pre-Calc?
      - iii. But here's the real way it catches up to you
        1. **Excellence generates opportunity** for you
        2. You want a **choice** of where you go to **college**, do well in high school?
        3. You want a **choice** is what you do for a living, you do well in your current **job**
        4. Excellence is what decides whether you are ultimately doing **what you want to do** or **what you have to do**
      - iv. The worst part of it is that **when opportunity passes you by**, you usually **don't know it**

1. No one tells you that they never thought about you for that great job
    - a. Because they never thought about you!
  - b. Second, knowing what is important to be good at is like saying you know God's plan for you.**
    - i. How do you know what you are preparing for?
      1. When I was swimming in high school or doing triathlons, do you think I knew I was going to be a swimming coach?
      2. When I studied engineering, do you think I knew I was going to be a **high math teacher**?
      3. When I was in high school plays, do you think I knew that I would have to **speak in public** so often?
      4. When I was a computer programmer, do you think I knew that I would one day **invest in technology companies**?
    - ii. This is a **unique time in your life**
      1. Your **only job** is to make yourself better
      2. You have almost **no responsibility to be productive**
        - a. Even if you call your family chore chart "productive"
      3. You have to **take advantage of it** – it won't happen again!
4. So **think about all of the places you are planted?**
- a. Kids
    - i. Swim Team
    - ii. Class
    - iii. Family
    - iv. Summer Jobs
  - b. Parents
    - i. Family
      1. Husband or wife
      2. Father or mother
    - ii. Job
    - iii. Seton community
  - c. Then, in all of those places, **try to be better**
    - i. **Excellence is NOT about being great**
    - ii. **Excellence is about being better** – in everything you do and everywhere you do it
5. Many of you have heard me say
- a. **Excellence is not merely compatible with Catholicism, excellence is required by Catholicism**
  - b. **Even when you think no one is watching, trust me when I tell you, someone definitely is**
6. There are so many great examples of this on the swim team this year, but I'd like to recognize a couple of those examples with this year's coach's awards:
- a. **Peter Quinan**
    - i. Not the most naturally talented swimmer on the team

- ii. But a perfect example of what I'm talking about
  - iii. I know he's doing his best when I'm not looking because I can see it in the pool
  - iv. Ask Joe Kosten after the 200 FR at DAC Champs
  - v. Now he's All-Conference?
  - vi. And his improvement was across the board
  - vii. He really put his all into this season
- b. **Dani Flook**
- i. Can you imagine being an 8<sup>th</sup> grader and Coach Lowell tells you to swim with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade girls?
  - ii. That has to be intimidating
    1. She's probably thinking, "but they are so good!"
  - iii. Dani punched above her weight on not only hung with them, Coach Lowell tells me that there were times she was pushing some of them.
  - iv. She can swim all 4 strokes
  - v. Dani also scored many points for us in the most difficult events, including the 200 IM

### **Conclusion**

- Seton Swimming has become something special
- We're all lucky to be a part of something that is bigger than any of us individually
- I'm already looking forward to next season
- In the meantime, work to get better in everything you do and **Bloom Where You Are Planted**