

The 9 Promises

The great teacher-coach John Wooden said, "We seek happiness in the wrong places and in the wrong form. The primary cause of unhappiness is simply wanting too much, overemphasizing the material things. Happiness begins where selfishness ends."

His strategy to find happiness is to follow the Creed of Optimist International, a service organization dedicated to bringing out the best in children:

- 1. Promise to talk about health, happiness, and prosperity as often as possible.*
- 2. Promise to make all your friends know there is something in them that is special and that you value.*
- 3. Promise to think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best in yourself and others.*
- 4. Promise to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.*
- 5. Promise to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.*
- 6. Promise to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to greater achievements in the future.*
- 7. Promise to wear a cheerful appearance at all times and give every person you meet a smile.*
- 8. Promise to give so much time improving yourself that you have no time to criticize others.*
- 9. Promise to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit trouble to press on you.*

Summary:

1. Rank each promise using the following scale.

- L= Learning. I know I need to get better at this.
- E = Epiphany! New idea for me. Plan to do this.
- A= Already doing it. Living this promise in my daily life.
- D= Difficult for me to do because...

2. For each of the four rankings (LEAD), explain why you ranked one promise.

For more information about John Wooden visit his official Web site: www.coachjohnwooden.com

Quotes by John Wooden

- A coach is someone who can give correction without causing resentment.
- Ability is a poor man's wealth.
- Adversity is the state in which man mostly easily becomes acquainted with himself, being especially free of admirers then.
Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.
- Be prepared and be honest.
- Consider the rights of others before your own feelings, and the feelings of others before your own rights.
- Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.
- Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability.
- Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be.
- If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?
- If you're not making mistakes, then you're not doing anything. I'm positive that a doer makes mistakes.
- It isn't what you do, but how you do it.
- It's not so important who starts the game but who finishes it.
- It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen.
- It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.
- Never mistake activity for achievement.
- Success is never final, failure is never fatal. It's courage that counts.
- Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming.
- Talent is God given. Be humble. Fame is man-given. Be grateful. Conceit is self-given. Be careful.
- The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team.
- Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.
- What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player.
- Winning takes talent, to repeat takes character.
You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one.
- You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.

Summary:

1. Circle your three favorite John Wooden quotes. Explain why you like them?
2. What quote illustrates something you are working to improve in your life?
3. What quote illustrates something you are proud of in your life?