

DISCIPLINE YOURSELF AND OTHERS WON'T NEED TO

Wooden Wednesday on Friday
[The Wooden Way]
Wooden's Wisdom – Volume 3, Issue 105

This famous quote of Coach Wooden's is often used by coaches, teachers and supervisors with the people they coach, teach and supervise. It is a very challenging instruction when we give it to ourselves.

The challenge of self discipline for a person in a position of authority can be difficult because sometimes when a leader lacks self-discipline there is no one watching. Rather than a reprimand from someone else; a lack of self-discipline by a leader results in something less than the best possible result. Often, only the leader is aware of this.

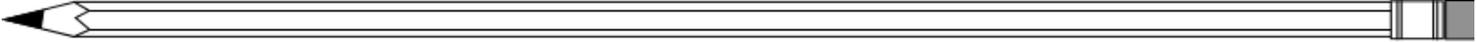
In his book *The Essential Wooden* with Steve Jamison, Coach listed what he thought were three of his assets and three of his liabilities:

Three of My Assets

1. I am meticulous.
2. I am organized and very good at time management.
3. I do not feel pressure, because my dad taught me not to measure myself in comparison to others, but rather on the quality of my efforts to improve.

Three of My Liabilities

1. I've had to work hard at being patient.
 2. I've had to work hard on self-control of my emotions.
 3. I've had to work hard on seeing shades of gray rather than only black and white.
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At the core of Coach Wooden's assets and liabilities, the determining character trait was self-discipline.

Coach Wooden's great self-discipline was demonstrated by his organization and preparation, which never wavered in over 40 years of coaching. In 1975, his final year at UCLA, he was still spending two hours to plan the details of a two-hour practice; even though his basic practice structure had been the same for 27 years.

Eddie Powell, his longtime assistant, described it this way: "Coach Wooden left nothing to chance. He had his three-by-five cards, detailing every minute of our practices, even back at South Bend Central, then Indiana State, then UCLA. It was very organized, extremely thorough. He didn't want to leave it up to luck. He wanted to take luck out of it through preparation."

Coach summed it up as follows: "I welcome good luck just as anyone does, but I worked extremely hard to avoid being in a situation in which luck was necessary to produce a favorable outcome, or where the luck of an adversary could defeat us."

To me, luck can be important. Much more important, of course, is design. Self-discipline is required for consistent preparation; then we get lucky.

"Luck is when preparation meets opportunity."

Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 BC - A.D. 65)

Yours in Coaching,
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