

I wrote this article several years ago for the following reasons:

I graduated in the *lower-half* of my high school class. I never felt I was capable of achieving anything meaningful. I began my life thinking that good things only happened to *other* people. Good grades, nice houses and great jobs etc.

After high school graduation, I needed a job so I applied to an X-Ray technology program because I didn't feel like I was the type of person who could attend a large college like Indiana University. I worked as an X-Ray technologist for several years.

Later, my *attitude* and *confidence* began to change and I decided to apply to a Nuclear Medicine program. I graduated and worked at that position for a few years.

After working around doctors for several years, I realized that they were not any different than everyone else. They just set their goals *higher* than many of us and they were *determined* to work *very hard* to make their goals come true. That is when I began to realize that I could do more also. That is also when I wrote the article called: **Our Greatest Quality - DETERMINATION!**

I knew that I was *determined* and I knew that, with *determination*, you can achieve any goal, so I decided that I would become a doctor! (I hope you noticed that I said, "I *would* become a doctor" instead of "I *might* become a doctor".)

I had to work another two years to save the money for college so I did that and in 1982, I sent in my application to Indiana University. My first semester there, I received a 4.0 GPA. Six years later, I was a doctor.

The six years at Indiana University were difficult. I reread the following article whenever I needed a little extra inspiration. Hopefully, it will help *you* to become inspired by the actions of the people in the article and to achieve *your* dreams...

Sincerely;

Dr. Richard D. Smith  
Founder of **website5.com**

### **Our Greatest Quality - DETERMINATION!**

I have always been impressed with the potential of the human being. When people think in a positive manner and use their *determination* to their advantage, they are the most powerful force on the face of the earth.

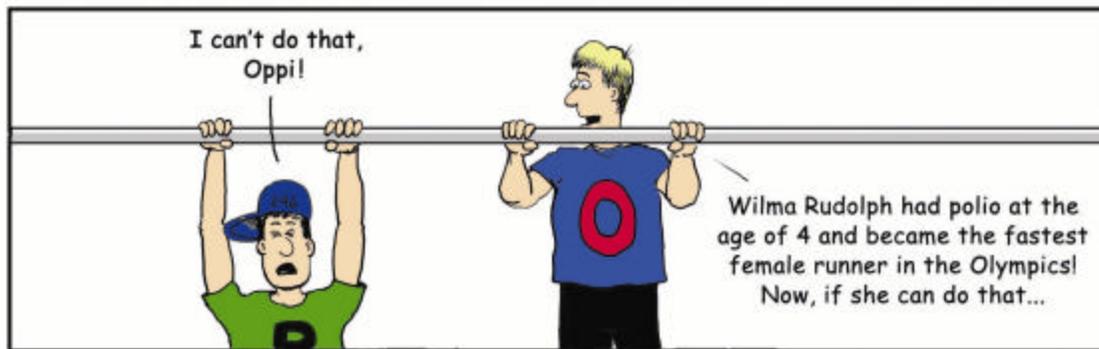
I've seen people fail who were *negative thinkers* and say, "I'm only human" and I've seen others overcome tremendous obstacles, despite failures along the way. The negative people reach their first rejection and say to themselves, "I expected that" and quit. The positive thinkers, upon reaching their first rejection, regroup and try again until they succeed because they knew they would succeed.

I recently saw a film of an Olympic marathon runner who finished last. The stadium was nearly empty and the sun had already set and this runner was still miles from the finish line. His legs were bandaged and when the film began, after several miles, the runner was on the ground. He was in severe pain and suffering from cramps. He began to run and fell again and again but he kept getting back up and trying again. There were very few people in the stadium when the runner finished the race but they gave him a *standing ovation*. The important thing that the runner will remember for life is that he finished the race! He set his goal - 26 miles and 385 yards - he gave it 100% and he ran every inch of it. It wasn't easy but he was *determined* and he did it. I don't remember who won that race but I will always remember the runner who probably tried harder than any of the rest of them and refused to quit trying.

I don't believe that some people are destined to become great runners, boxers, doctors or teachers etc. I believe *great* people are average people who realize that if they set a goal and *work very hard* and don't *quit*, they will achieve any goal that is humanly possible and in some cases, goals which *even they* may never have dreamed they could do. I'll give an example: Each year in the Olympic long jump, if a record is broken, it is by a *fraction* of an inch. An American athlete, Bob Beamon, broke the record by more than *two feet!* Many people said his record would never be broken... but it was.

Pete Gray is another person who realized the potential of a human as being great and the potential of a human with *positive thinking* and *determination* as being UNSTOPPABLE! Pete Gray became a professional Major League baseball player in 1945 and he became a national hero while batting .218, including six doubles and two triples. Gray batted .333 in the Southern league and stole 68 bases and was named the leagues Most Valuable Player. Pete Gray was an average player except for one fact. Pete lost his *entire right arm* in an accident at the age of six.

Wilma Randolph, as a child, could not walk without crutches. She saw her peers walk without crutches and she was determined to do the same *and more*. She worked hard to just walk as her friends did effortlessly. Eventually, she discarded her crutches. She even began to run and she kept running, faster and faster until she was the fastest woman in the world. It is said of her; "*As a child she could not WALK, but as an adult, she could FLY.*"



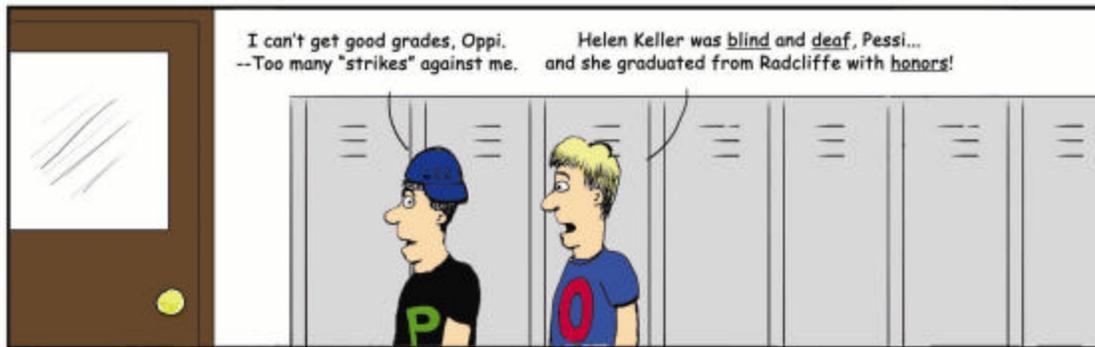
"Oppi" the optimist and "Pessi" the pessimist

Al Oerter was told that if he continued to throw the discus, even a slight injury could leave him a cripple. Al had a goal to be the best and he didn't quit. It paid off. He won *4 consecutive Olympic gold medals* over a period of 16 years.

Ray Ewry won ten Olympic gold medals in the standing broad jump and the standing high jump. Because Ray was unable to walk on his own, he had to be carried to the platform. He had plenty of reason to not even try, but he picked the one event he could perform and he did it better than any person in the world.

Mohammed Ali suffered a broken jaw in the second round of a heavyweight championship fight. He finished the fight even though he had little chance to win with such a handicap. He could have quit and nobody would have doubted his "heart". He chose to keep fighting and bear the terrible pain and he eventually lost the fight. After the fight, he said, "*Winners never quit.*"

Helen Keller was blind and deaf from the age of two. She was possibly of average intelligence without the handicaps. However, she had something to prove and she was determined to do it and she did. She graduated from Radcliff College in 1904 with *honors* and she wrote five books.



Mark Spitz won *five* Olympic gold medals in five consecutive swimming events. He could have chosen to quit with a perfect record but chose to enter his 6th and last remaining event. He put his record on the line but behind it, he put years of practice and determination that made him a great swimmer. When he arrived back in the USA, it wasn't with five gold medals, it was with six!

Olga Corbit won the Olympic gold medal in her gymnastics event, but more importantly, she won the hearts of the world. Everyone thought it was an impossible act to follow. Everyone, that is, except a fourteen year-old girl from Romania named Nadia Comaneche. She set her goal *above* Nadia's, she set her goal as "perfect" and she achieved it on *several* occasions.

Karoly Takacs was an Olympic marksman who used his right eye and hand to sight and fire his gun. Later, his right arm was amputated. He could have quit but he didn't. Even though his competition was the best in the world and had years of experience using their normal shooting form, he trained using his left eye and hand. Karoly Takacs accepted the challenge and later he beat them all to win the gold medal again.

The world laughed at Joe Namath when he said his underdog New York Jets would win the Super bowl. He believed in himself and his team. The odds were *heavily* against them but Joe and the Jets proved that it took more than "odds" to beat *them*.

Vince Lombardi coached the Green Bay Packers and made them into an awesome dynasty. Not only because he didn't know the word *quit* but also because he believed that a team could become champions if they worked harder than the rest and gave it 100% and *work they did*.

During an Olympic race, an American runner was running and he fell down. The thought of quitting never even entered his mind and he got up instantly and he began running. Before he fell, he couldn't catch the faster runners and now, he was even farther behind all of them and he was in last place, behind the fastest runners in the world. He may have thought of his years of practice or maybe he was embarrassed but for whatever reason, he was more *motivated* than before and he began running faster and faster. We'll never know what *would* have happened if he hadn't fallen. All we know is what *did* happen. He fell, he got up and he began running. He caught the last place runner, then the one in front of him and he kept catching the

other runners until he was the leader and he *won* the race. Not only did he win but he set a *world-record!* He ran the distance faster than any man in the history of the world.

He had the ability to run within him but I firmly believe that the fall increased his **MOTIVATION** and that allowed him to accomplish a goal that surprised him and the entire sports world. His legs never changed, his genetics never changed but his **MOTIVATION** changed and that gave him a *world record!*



Jesse Owens was a black man in a world of white athletes. He was a poor man from the cotton fields of the South. He had nothing...nothing but *desire* and the *determination* to make his statement to the world. The rest is history. He proved to the world that Hitler and his theory of white supremacy was wrong by winning several events while Hitler watched him.

A U.S. Olympic skier fractured his ankle badly during the "downhill" competition. It was only after several operations and metal plates that he struggled to walk and eventually practice again. Four years later, he entered the Olympics again. I don't remember who won the gold medal but I remember that he won one of his "heats" which was even more impressive than a healthy person winning the gold medal.

A Japanese gymnast fractured his ankle during Olympic competition. He chose to compete in the final event even though that meant he would have to dismount from the "rings" and land with some of his weight on his fractured ankle. I can't remember which medal he won. It wasn't gold but it didn't matter. He won the hearts of the world. He showed millions of people that *nothing* could stop *him*.

During the NCAA college basketball finals of 1979, a starter for one of the teams played without a thumb, which is probably the most important finger for a basketball player. He played with a plastic substitute. He could have never gone out for basketball. He could have quit the first time people laughed or the first time it seemed he couldn't do it, but he never. Instead, many healthy young men watched him play on TV while they sat at home making excuses about why they weren't playing or how they would have performed certain plays if they were just one of the *lucky* ones who made the team.

A skydiver's chute didn't open and he fell to the ground...and lived. Doctors said he would never walk without a cane. They took into account his physical condition but they made one mistake, they didn't account for his determination. He later ran in the Boston Marathon.

Bill Rogers once smoked several packs of cigarettes per day and was beaten in a race by a sixty five year old man. He began training harder and harder and became the top marathon runner in the world.



I saw a story about a man named Curt on TV. Curt was restricted to a wheelchair because both of his legs had been amputated. He wanted to enter the marathon and compete against Bill Rogers and the best in the world but the rules denied entrants in wheelchairs. Curt fought the rules by going to court and he earned the right to enter the event. Entrants in wheelchairs began ahead of the regular runners. When the event was over, Bill Rogers was the fastest of all the "normal" runners but his victory was tainted because he never passed Curt in his wheelchair. In fact, even allowing for the extra time, which Curt began ahead of Bill, Curt's time was 17 minutes faster than Bill's time! A young man with no legs won the Boston Marathon!

Carol Johnson appeared on TV's "Real People" and on her own TV special. Carol became one of the nations best gymnasts on the uneven bars. Carol Johnson achieved her goals despite her slight handicap. You see, Carol Johnson only had *one* arm. Despite all the work it took to achieve this competence, she injured her knee severely and it had to be operated on several times but did she quit? No. Instead, she continued training while in a cast. When the cast was removed, she eventually resumed competition only to injure her knee so badly that the doctors informed her that another injury would leave her badly crippled. Only after all this did she decide to abandon her goal. People like Carol do not need Olympic gold medals to prove they are champions and they show the rest of us how determined we can be toward our goal.

Rocky Blier played one year for the Pittsburgh Steelers and then he was drafted. He went to Vietnam to serve his country. While serving in Vietnam, a grenade exploded and shattered several bones in his right foot. A dozen or more pieces of shrapnel were later removed. The doctors gave Rocky a 50% chance of ever walking again. When discharged, Rocky was listed as 40% disabled. After several operations, Rocky began his recovery. He not only recovered to the point where he had been *before* the injury, but he actually ran the 40-yard sprint *faster* than before his injury. It's rare that it takes a player more than three or four years to become a starter but it took Rocky *six* years. During that time, Rocky showed that he had the *determination* to "stick with it" and it paid off. He became a starter and was a "star" for his World Champion Pittsburgh Steelers. He even had a season with over 1,000 yards. Rocky speaks to many kids and adults and he often gives them a poem that he wrote:

Life's battles won't always go  
To the stronger or faster man.  
But sooner or later the one who wins  
Is the one who thinks he can.

Carl Joseph played nose-guard for the Madison, FL high school football team. He threw the discus in track and he could even dunk a basketball. When his track team needed a high jumper, they called upon Carl and he responded with a jump of 5 ft. 10 inches. Carl is an amazing athlete. What makes him even more amazing is that Carl only had *one* leg. His left leg was amputated near his pelvis. Carl had a wooden leg but he didn't use it during sporting events. Instead, Carl stood on his *pride* and *determination*.



The people mentioned in this article are champions but they will be the first to tell you that they were not born "special." They had to work hard, very hard for what they got. I'm sure they would tell of times they felt like quitting but they *didn't*! That is what separates them from people on the other side of the television or from people who continually tell themselves and others that they gave it 100% but life just isn't fair.

I hope this article helps people to realize the great potential that *each* and every one of us has, even if we have a handicap or, as the case may be, even if we *don't*. For people to say, "I'm only human" is ridiculous. The potential of humans, every human, can be *unstoppable*.

Napoleon, who barely stood five feet tall, changed the course of history. Many may say that it was easy for him because he was the leader of an army but we must think, was he *always* that leader?

We can look at Joan of Arc or Mother Theresa. Mother Theresa had a goal, to help the suffering people of the world. To reach her goal, she would have to give away *everything* and she did it! People should realize that these champions made sacrifices, *tremendous* sacrifices for what they got. I believe that is the *secret*. The secret that gives *every* person on the face of the earth *freedom*. Freedom from being poor, freedom from not making good grades in school, freedom from being in a "rut" of failures. Every person *can* reach their goal. If they want to have more money, they must sit down and make a *plan* and *work hard* to follow it and possibly work two jobs. If a person wants better grades in school, they must study longer and more efficiently and it will be work but if they want it *bad enough*, it's the greatest feeling in the world to know that they really *can* do it. If a person temporarily fails, they should get back up like the runner and use what you learned by your mistake to try again and if necessary, again and again until you succeed and if you don't quit, you will succeed.



The philosophy of these champions applies to every aspect of our lives. People's marriages can run smoother if each partner realizes that they *can* do the little extras for their spouse. Many children believe that it is not humanly possible to apologize to someone that they dislike. These same children grow into

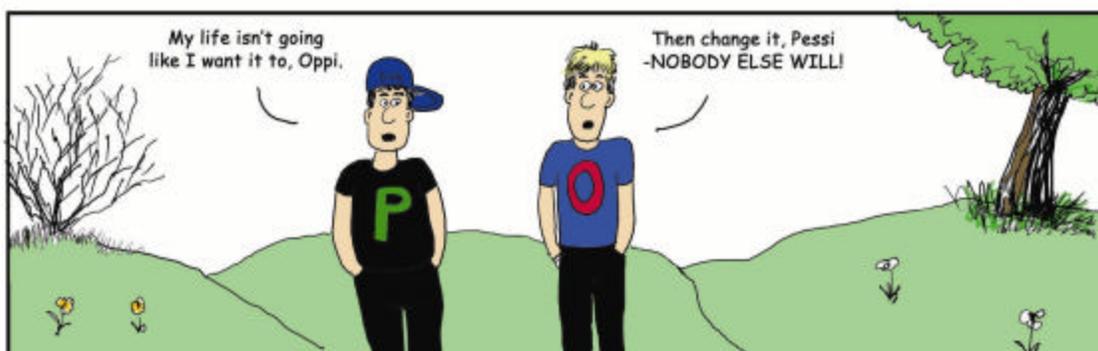
adults and that is why we have wars today, because we think that peace is too much for humans to achieve.

When average people finally realize that humans really do have this tremendous potential, they will be able to enroll into the college courses which they have dreamed of but were afraid to apply for because they didn't think they could do it. People can actually quit smoking or lose the weight they want. Ken Dachman of Skokie, IL tried all kinds of diets. He weighed 415 pounds on his 14th birthday. On New Years Day, 1974, he began to lose weight. He lost 255 pounds in less than one year. His secret was simply hard work and self-responsibility. He said the most difficult part is realizing that there are no miracles, no shots or pills that melt the pounds off, only *hard work and self-responsibility*.

The main thing is to do your *absolute* best and to keep doing it until you succeed. Remember the Japanese gymnast who continued competing despite his injured ankle. I'm sure many, who saw his display of courage, will remember him the rest of their lives even though few people can remember who won the gold medal in the event. He didn't win the gold but he finished much higher than he would have if he had *quit* and he definitely proved to himself and the world that he was a *champion*.

Now, don't think that, if the odds are greatly against us and we fall behind, that we should keep giving 100% so that we can be winners *only in our own minds*. I have only to mention a group of young American boys who played a hockey team from the Soviet Union, who had beaten our professional teams and was considered to be the best team in the world. Everyone told our boys that they didn't have a chance but they *refused* to believe it. They fell behind but they never quit and they tied the score. They fell behind *again* and *again* but they never quit and eventually they beat the Russians and won the gold medal and in the process, gave Americans one of our proudest moments.

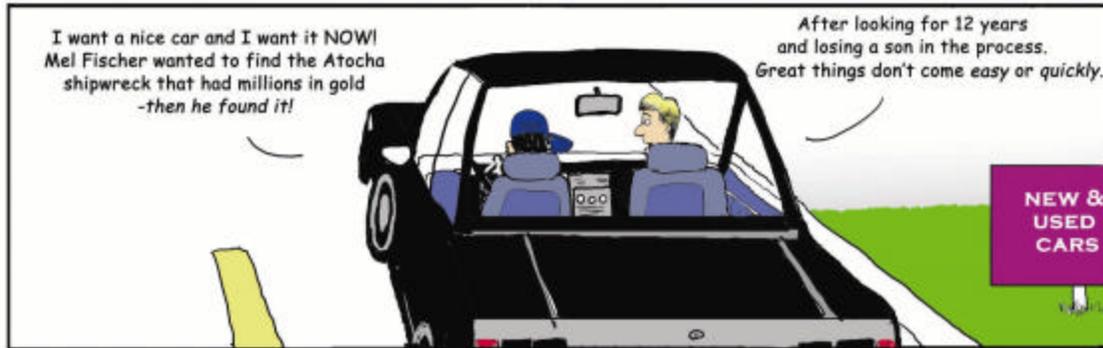
Neil Diamond sang a song with the words, "Did you ever read about the frog who dreamed of being a "king" ...and then became one?" These words are important because, as that frog *dreamed* of being a king, the chances of it happening were greatly against him but he really wanted it so he wasn't about to cop-out and accept a lesser goal and go through life disappointed. It probably never happened the first time he *dreamed* it and I'm sure he had moments when he thought of giving up but he *didn't* and, according to the song, one day he became a "king". Now, this is just a song, but after all, isn't it just as hard to believe that Wilma Rudolph, a crippled child, would become the fastest woman in the world or that a one armed boy named Pete Gray, who dreamed of playing professional baseball, actually would and in the process *would* be named the "most valuable player"?



I personally know of two doctors, one who was in an automobile wreck and became an orthopedic surgeon and one who was born with only one kidney and became a doctor with the kidney as his specialty. This article tells of several people who had a "handicap" and achieved goals in direct response to their affliction. The National Football League had a "kicker" with no toes! This was the one job in the world that he was least qualified to do but he proved he could do it, even with a set-back, and he was as good as anyone in the world. I often wonder how people with *no* physical handicaps could use the same

determination within them to achieve any goals that they desire. It's sad but it often seems that a person has to have a traumatic incident, such as the runner who fell, to ignite this inner source of power, which we all have. I think it's *sad*, only if the person goes through their life and never realizes that *they* had it too.

Determination is a quality that *every* human has. It can be developed or it can be wasted. If developed, we can become champions. If it is wasted, then we never will. As Mohammad Ali said, "*Winners never quit and quitters never win*".



The end

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