

# “That’s Not it”

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Theoretically this happens throughout a season!

Last week, we had a parent/athlete come to us and "inform us" that the son/daughter would be gone for a one week vacation.

The son/daughter was not much of a swimmer, but had some endurance capacity and comes regularly to workout at 6:00 am and again at 2:40 pm daily. The athlete works hard, demonstrates little talent, but lots of determination.

The parent may or may not be athletic and clearly does not value our individual and team athletic goals. The parent and athlete are proud to be part of the team and really wants to be involved. We expressed our dismay that they would be missing for 1 week in the middle of the most important training of the season. The parent’s response?

"Who cares, they’ll never be an Olympic swimmer, so what does it really matter?" This is. a dagger in the heart to any swimming coach (or any coach of any sport), and it is to me.

If we only cared about and worked hard with, those 52 people who will eventually, once every four years, go off to the Olympic Games, it would be a small, empty and meaningless sport.

My response was "That’s really not it."

## **What is it?**

**It** is the fact that young people need to learn to dedicate themselves to something that is difficult, something that requires perseverance, guts and the daily determination to get their butt out of bed and go out and push their body till it can't go anymore.

Why do they need to learn this?

Because their lives are too easy, too soft, too catered for. Too many people carry them, make excuses for them, never allowing them to try to be "heroic." Is it "heroic" to get your butt out of bed and go swim at 6 am? It is if you haven't done it before. Is it heroic to "make" 10 x 200 fly on 4:00? It is if you haven't ever done it before. Is it heroic to finish your swim and turn around and cheer for the teammate who is even further behind than you are, and is struggling to make the set? Need I say it? It is if you've never done it before.

And that is what "**It is about**." About doing what you haven't done before. And learning that sometimes you succeed. Sometimes you fail. If you fail, you go again until you learn to succeed. It’s not about being an Olympian.

It’ s about **being Olympian. Learning to be a hero.**

And what it takes to learn that.

Or, you can Be Comfortable and teach your child that its more important to be Comfortable.

So, if that is your choice, I only have one question?

What will happen to your child on the day when they are made "uncomfortable" by life?

Coach Tribendis