

Heart of a Coach – June 2010

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List your chosen attribute: Perseverance or persistence

What is your personal definition of this word?

When times get tough, you just keep plugging away doing what is right and believing that in the end good things will happen.

What are some of your favorite quotes from other people about this word?

Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did. ~Newt Gingrich

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan "press on" has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race” Calvin Coolidge

What is your favorite Biblical passage that deals with this characteristic?

Romans 5:3-5 ...rejoice in our sufferings, because we know suffering produces perseverance; perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint us...

Why did you choose that particular passage?

I have tried to be a man of character, a man of my word and someone who others can depend on- especially my family. When times get tough, I like to read this passage and realize that I am just working on my character. When I am tired, physically or mentally or emotionally which can be often in the teaching and coaching business, I tell myself to just keep plugging away and God will make something good emerge from my efforts. He has never failed; therefore, I have hope and hope never disappoints. I have given in to disappointment many times, but that does not last for I have hope in the Lord.

Please give an application/example of this word in your life.

It took me seven years to earn my degree, but I owed only \$1200 when I graduated. I worked in a manufacturing shop 10 hours a day eight on Saturday and went to junior college for a semester at Palmer JC; there were times I had to quit school and work full time to return; I worked construction part time most semesters; my father died during my college years(that nearly broke me); there was a time I went three weeks eating only tomato soup and pop corn and drinking only water so I could finish out a semester because I was completely out of money; I picked up nickel deposit cans and bottles to buy gas to travel to Cedar Rapids for my student teaching; there were plenty of times I wanted to quit but I became the first person in my family to graduate from college.

How do you apply this word in your sport?

I coached baseball for 17 years, football for 29 years, basketball for 31 years and of late I have coached soccer in high school for 10 years. The word perseverance comes to mind when there is something to overcome like injuries. My third season as head coach of football at Albia we lost our starting RB and our best lineman in the second game of the season. We lost our number two RB in game four. Though we got all of them back before the season was over what promised to be a good season turned tough. Still we persevered won some games. Coping with losses takes perseverance as well. While at Cascade we lost our starting QB and we were playing my Alma Mater Central of DeWitt. We on a wet Friday night with a gale force wind. It was miserable, but we plugged away and sent the game into OT. In the final drive our junior QB was hit so hard the senior QB ran to me and asked if he should put his pads on- I said no and our junior got up and threw the winning pass.

As a coach you face so much second guessing and internal pressure it is hard on the heart and on the family. Yet you keep plugging away knowing that the work and time will pay off one way or the other- in wins or in the building the character of your players. "Make adversity draw you together not split you apart!" I don't know how many times I have said that to my teams and to my family.

How did you become involved in FCA?

I saw a pamphlet at the FCA breakfast at the baseball coach's clinic in Cedar Rapids and that sparked me. Then Wyman Martinek a fellow assistant football coach at Cascade suggested we start a huddle. We had our first meeting and one player showed up. We had our second meeting and one player showed up, but he was a different player so we had two! The group grew from there.

How active within FCA where/are you?

Now I have been a huddle leader since 1985. We moved to Albia in 1997 and the number of members could sit on the couch in my living room. The group has grown with the help of Jesus, my wife Sue, my children Sarah, Katie, Jessie and Gabe and Scott Farrington an assistant FB coach to where we have had as many as 60 at our kick off and 27 at retreat and 20 at camps.

I love FCA and so do so many of my students. I love the FCA staff, Dave Turnball, Jan Werling, Ashley Lewis and all the others who have been associated with FCA.

I love the other coaches I have met. The activities, the football games, the basketball games, the camps have been such fun and such a blessing to my family.

All of my children have attended FCA Retreat in Marshalltown and participated in the FCA Sorts Camp at Central College. My two oldest have been college huddle leaders at both. My oldest Sarah is now working with the Navigators on campus at UNI and Katie belonged to FCA at UNI and will be a PE teacher in 2011 and I am sure she will look to start her own huddle someday.

My wife is our unofficial secretary and runs our Facebook Page.

What is your athletic experience? (Where?)

I was a high school athlete playing baseball, basketball and football. While at the University of Iowa I took a PE class in soccer and was asked to join the U of I Soccer Club and played with them for five years. I continued to play in Dubuque with the Dubuque Steamers after graduation and while I taught in Cascade.

At one time I was the president of the Soccer Club and my roommate Al Kainz was the president of the rugby club at Iowa City.

What is your coaching experience? (Where?)

I began my coaching career in Lakota Iowa as the cross country coach (We didn't have enough boys to field a FB team and there was no 8-man in 1978), I also was an assistant basketball coach and the track coach there.

In Cascade Iowa I was a football assistant for nine years and head coach for nine years. I also coached basketball in junior high for four years, high school assistant for 14 years. I coached baseball for 15 years as an assistant.

In Albia I was an assistant coach in football for three years and head coach for eight years. I was an assistant baseball coach for two years. I was an assistant girls basketball coach for 12 years and I have been the high school soccer coach for 10 years.