

Self-discipline remains the secret to success as we focus on our life goals

SPORT

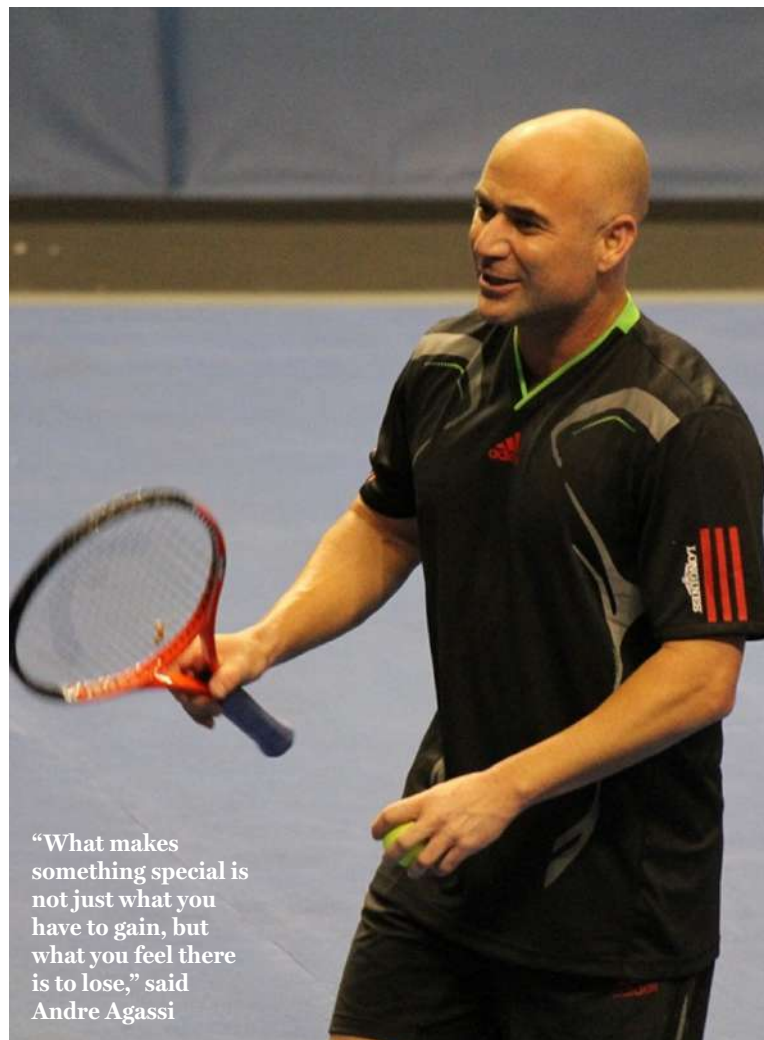
Fr Vlad Felzmann

Self-discipline - the ability to control yourself and to make yourself work hard or behave in a particular way without needing anyone else to tell you what to do - allows you to stay focused on your goals. It enables you to stay in control of yourself and of your reaction to any situation. You are the captain of your ship. How well – and safely for those around you – that ship sails, is up to you; perhaps with help from a mentor or coach.

“It doesn’t matter what you’re trying to accomplish. It’s all a matter of discipline.” stated Wilma Glodean Rudolph (1940-94), an American sprinter, who overcame childhood polio and went on to become a world-record holder and Olympic champion and international sports icon in track and field, following her successes in the 1956 and 1960 Olympic Games.

Keeping myself open to God’s presence fills me with positive energy – *highpaysha* – improving the life of those in my neighbourhoods. “What makes something special is not just what you have to gain, but what you feel there is to lose,” admitted Andre Agassi, an American former world No. 1 tennis player. He is an eight-time major champion and an Olympic gold medallist, as well as a runner-up in seven other majors. Agassi is widely considered one of the greatest tennis players of all time.

“We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort,” stated Jesse Owens (1913-80), an American track and field athlete who won four gold medals at the



“What makes something special is not just what you have to gain, but what you feel there is to lose,” said Andre Agassi

1936 Olympic Games. Owens specialised in the sprints and the long jump and was recognised in his lifetime as perhaps the greatest and most famous athlete in track and field history.

‘God sees all that is done in secret’

I refuse to buckle under the weight of a temptation. God sees all that is done in secret. So, I keep on keeping on. Whatever is on my agenda, I know I have to see it through. I also know that the best costs the most – but is, as the Spanish say, *‘vale la pena’* – it’s worthwhile. In case you wonder,

my commitment to helping God make this word a better place was the catalyst for developing my self-control.

“Mental toughness is many things and rather difficult to explain. Its qualities are sacrifice and self-denial. Also, most importantly, it is combined with a perfectly disciplined will that refuses to give in. It’s a state of mind – you could call it “character in action,” stated Vince Lombardi (1913-70) considered by many to be the greatest coach in American football history.

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishments,” taught Jim Rohn (1930-2009) who spent much of his life advocating for the power of self-discipline. He delivered his seminars for more than 40 years and died with a net worth of more than \$500 million dollars.

“The best school of discipline is home. Family life is God’s own method of training the young, and homes are very much as women make them,” reminded Samuel Smiles (1812 -1904), a Scot whose sports were writing and governmental reform. Although he campaigned on a Chartist platform – to gain political rights and influence for the working classes – he concluded that more progress

would come from new attitudes than from new laws.

“The secret of discipline is motivation. When a man is sufficiently motivated, discipline will take care of itself,” stated Sir Alexander ‘Alec’ Paterson (1884-1947) whose sport was prison reform and encouraged rehabilitation among inmates.

Simpler and more contented

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th and current Dalai Lama, made it clear that “self-discipline is crucial to a simpler, more contented life.” Michael ‘Mike’ Keller Ditka, an American former football player, coach, and television commentator, knew what he was talking about when he made it clear that “success is measured by your discipline and inner peace.”

As we know, and the John Paul 2 Foundation 4 Sport taught for years, virtues – good habits ingrained over time – make values visible. Or, as John Calvin Maxwell, an American pastor whose sport is writing books, put it: “Small disciplines repeated with consistency every day, lead to great achievements gained slowly over time.”

“All successes begin with self-discipline. It starts with you.” said Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Douglas Johnson, American-Canadian actor, producer, retired professional wrestler. It’s easy to make excuses for the lack of discipline. But excuses don’t get you anywhere “Self-discipline is about controlling your desires and impulses while staying focused on what needs to get done to achieve your goal,” stated Adam Sicinski, professional life coach who founded IQ Matrix in 2008 and has created over 400 self-growth mind maps. He also teaches doodling for personal development and transformation.

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment,” stated Emanuel James ‘Jim’ Rohn (1930-2009), whose sports were making money, writing and motivational speaking.

“The only discipline that lasts is self-discipline,” declared Oail Andrew ‘Bum’ Phillips Jr (1923-2013), head coach in the National Football League for the Houston Oilers, 1975 to 1980 and the New Orleans Saints, 1981 to 1985. (Great name!)

Helping keep your neighbourhood safe

Clint Eastwood – who needs no introduction – made it clear: “Respect your efforts, respect yourself. Self-respect leads to self-discipline. When you have both firmly under your belt, that’s real

power,” he said. You can do your bit to help keep your neighbourhoods safe.

“Without self-discipline, success is impossible, period,” affirmed Lou Holtz (1937-61) who spent 34 years coaching both college and professional football teams and is perhaps best known for an 11-season stint as head coach at Notre Dame.

“Discipline is the bridge between your fitness goals and fitness success. Choosing a volleyball goal and sticking to it changes everything,” wrote Felicity Luckey, born in 1967, author of the book *Great Minds Think Fit*.

“You have power over your mind, not outside events. Realise this, and you will find strength,” affirmed Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, whose sport was running the Roman Empire from 161 to 180ce; the last emperor of Pax Romana.

Sir Alex Ferguson CBE, who managed Manchester United from 1986 to 2013 and is considered by many to be one of the greatest managers of all time, made it clear that “I always felt that our triumphs were an expression of the consistent application of discipline. Once you bid farewell to discipline you say goodbye to success.”

‘What you do to the least of mine, you do to me’

Sir Clive Woodward OBE, an English former rugby union player and coach of the England team from 1997 to 2004, managing them to victory in the 2003 Rugby World Cup, made it clear that “one of the most important skills for me is discipline. You can win or lose a game based on the discipline of your team or an individual player.”

When tempted to get angry with someone’s absurdity, I call to mind that Jesus said, “What you do to the least of mine, you do to me.” (Mt. 25:40) It helps me calm down and control my temper.

An Icelandic proverb makes it clear: “He – or she – who lives without discipline dies without honour.”

“Motivation may get you started but it takes discipline to keep going,” wrote Bonnie Pfister, a fitness model and columnist who was once named *Club Solutions* magazine’s ‘Most Fit Health Club Professional.’

However, I need motivation to keep me keeping on and staying disciplined. My motivations include pride, fear of putting on weight, ageing prematurely, avoiding dementia by thinking and writing, vanity to control my love of fine food and wine and trying not to let down my best friend Yesh – publicly known as Jesus Christ.

LITURGICAL CALENDARS

Ordinary Form

Sunday Year B, Weekday Cycle II
Sunday, March 10: 4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) 2 Chr.

36:14-16, 19-23; Ps. 137 r. 6; Eph. 2:4-10; Jn. 3:14-21

Monday, March 11: Isa.65:17-21; Ps.30:2,4-6,11-13; Jn. 4:43-54

Tuesday, March 12: Weekday in Lent Ezek.47:1-9,12; Ps.46:2-3,5-6,8-9; Jn.5:1-3,5-16

Wednesday, March 13: Weekday in Lent Isa.49:8-15; Ps. 145:8-9,13-14,17-18; Jn.5:17-30

Thursday, March 14: Weekday in Lent Ex.32:7-14; Ps.106:19-23; Jn.5:31-47

Friday, March 15: Weekday in Lent Wis.2:1,12-22; Ps.34:16,18,19-21,23; Jn.7:1-2,10,25-30

Saturday, March 16: Jer.11:18-20; Ps.7:2-3,9-12; Jn.7:40-52