

THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

Dr. Denis Waitley

Every four years we see those five brilliant, interlocking Olympic rings on flags and in television and billboard advertising globally. The Olympic Games are where the best in the world go for the gold and the few stand, listening to their national anthem, in the coveted winner's circle. If the five Olympic rings were attitudes of champions in every profession, these five attitudes would be prominent in the mind-set of the peak performer:

Paying the Price. Everyone wants to win, but few are willing to invest the time and effort. Paying the price means focusing on developing the skills and training regimen of champions—observation, imitation, repetition and the internalization of knowledge into habits; also, learning why and how to go the extra mile and seeing success as a marathon, not a dash. Champions view failures as temporary inconveniences and learning experiences.

The Olympian Within. Winners believe in their worth in advance of their performance. Most people base their worth on their current status or achievement level, which means that until they are judged successful by society's standards, they have little to be proud of. Champions believe in their dreams when they have only a dream to hang on to, even in the face of criticism and superior achievements by others.

Non-situational Integrity. Authentic, lasting winners have an uncompromising attitude about self-honesty. They function according to an “integrity triangle,” consisting of three basic questions: (a) Are my beliefs based upon truth? (b) Do my words and actions correspond with truth and honesty? (c) Before I speak or act, do I honestly consider the impact of my decision on other people and the environment?

The “Coachability” Factor. Champions are always open to alternatives to improve their performance. Consistent winners are not the arrogant egotists who dominate the media spotlight. The most successful individuals in the game of life are often the most approachable, most gracious, least judgmental of others and most critical of their own performances, as well as most eager to learn and improve.

Being a Team Player. A team in harmony is synergy in motion, where the whole is greater than the sum of the individual talents. When all assignments are understood, when each takes 100 percent responsibility for the outcome, a quantum leap in performance takes place. Winners learn how to become interdependent—without sacrificing individuality—and how to stand out, while fitting in.