

## EFFORT

By Tony Johnson

I have always sought guidance from inspirational quotes and stories.

One quote that I remember well is:

“The values we live by are worth more when we pass them on.”

I actually don't recall when or where I heard it, but it has stuck with me and has, in part, driven my efforts to promote positive character values through the “Treasure Life” message.

In delivering the program to area students, I have related experiences on subjects such as teamwork, respect, education, adversity, sportsmanship and responsibility.

At the end of the program, I always emphasize that to truly “Treasure Life”, it takes effort! Effort is what allows one to make the most of the skills, abilities and values they have.

Getting an education, for example, takes effort.

Just think, it grades 1-12, a person will spend about 20,000 hrs attending school. To succeed, one has to put forth the effort in the classroom. I know there are some that seem to just naturally “breeze” through school, but in reality, you'll find that those who get good grades are usually the ones that are disciplined in their studies and are the ones who are willing to exert the extra effort that it takes.

I think everyone knows someone who, with a little more effort, could have done better in school.

To be an athlete, in any sport, takes effort.

I learned this early on in my athletic career primarily through my high school football and track coaches at Farmington (Dan Smith and Dave Giagnoni).

Coach Giagnoni helped me understand the link between setting goals and implementing self improvement efforts to reach them.

Coach Smith saw the potential I had as a Division 1 college football player and motivated me to increase my efforts in the weightroom. Because of these efforts, I have developed a strong work ethic that has paid dividends both on and off the athletic field.

To have a strong character, it takes effort.

In today's world, there are many factors that challenge us. It seems that we're constantly having to choose between right and wrong.

As students, we must balance the primary focus of education with the lure of social acceptance.

As adults, we must balance the demands of a career or job with the responsibility that comes with raising a family, paying bills, being healthy and enjoying life.

Unfortunately, it takes effort to make good decisions and to build values that are respectful of oneself and others.

In the “Treasure Life” message, I emphasize to students that effort is the simple fact behind the old premise that nothing comes easy.

Remember, “Treasure Life ... Everyday!”



Quote to remember:

“A solid work ethic and focused effort will pay dividends throughout their life. It has for me!”

Phone: (309)673-1000

Email: [treasurelife@peoriapiratesaf2.com](mailto:treasurelife@peoriapiratesaf2.com)

Web: [www.peoriapiratesaf2.com](http://www.peoriapiratesaf2.com)

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“Treasure Life” is a positive life message created by Caterpillar manager and Peoria Pirates coach, Tony Johnson. The program encourages students to be “pirates” by filling their “treasure” chests each day with some of life's most valuable traits, values and experiences. The “Treasure Life” program has been recognized as one of the Arena Football League's best community relations program.