

Listen to Life

Wisdom in Life's Stories

September 24, 2006

A free newsletter about learning and getting more from life by paying attention to our own stories and the stories of others, based on the presentations, writings, photography and workshops by Dion McInnis (www.dionmcinnis.com). Copyright 2006 Dion McInnis. All rights reserved.

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RUN TO SUCCEED

Decades ago, my dad and I watched my school's eighth grade football team compete. I was in seventh grade at the time, so I watched the players as if they were the school's grown men, and, of course, all eyes would go to the quarterback and running backs.

I couldn't quite make out the peculiarities of the team's star running back, but something seemed amiss whenever he got the ball. Keep in mind that the team wasn't very good, even among other small Catholic schools.

"He's running like he is ready to fall. You can't succeed like that," my dad explained.

I watched more carefully. The runner seemed as prepared to fall down as to run forward, even on his successful gains of yardage. Over the subsequent decades, I've come to appreciate that wisdom in life, too.

We may be able to make progress and achieve things if we're tentative, running ready to fall, but to fully utilize our abilities, we must move forward assuming we're going to succeed—searching for our stride and strength. We are more fluid, nimble and confident that way. That concept is not original, but the lesson from the gridiron serves as a good reminder. Something else fits into this lesson, too. Consider the pure joy and exhilaration that was ours when we ran with abandon as children. As we grew up, there was less abandon, but still there was great joy and excitement in bursts of speed that brought us to base in hide-and-go-seek, or racing across campus to catch a friend. Keep the exhilaration; run, willing to fall, but not ready to.

Listen to Life is an electronic newsletter that presents lessons for living by listening to life, based on the writing, poetry, photography, presentations and workshops of Dion McInnis. Stories such as these inspired the book, "Listen to Life: Wisdom in Life's Stories," published in 2005, available at Barnes and Noble, Amazon and Borders. Dion's next book will share his views of being father and son.

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