

# A LESSON FROM SOCRATES

Socrates, who lived approximately 469 – 399 B.C., was a Greek philosopher credited with laying the foundations of Western philosophy.

He would take his students to the countryside or the mountains and talk about life. One day, a young man asked him, “How can I obtain great wisdom?”

Socrates casually led the young man into the water, then grabbed him by the throat and pulled him under the surface. The young man fought with all his strength and pushed to the top.

Amazed and bewildered, not to mention soaked and scared, the student said to Socrates, “What’s the matter with you? I asked you how to acquire wisdom and you tried to kill me!”

Socrates replied, “When you want wisdom as much as you wanted air, you will acquire it.”

Here is what Socrates meant: Simply put, if you want to realize your potential, if you want to become what you can become, if you want to gain the joy and satisfaction that can be yours, you have to give it your best. And the stronger your desire, the more likely you will give it your best.

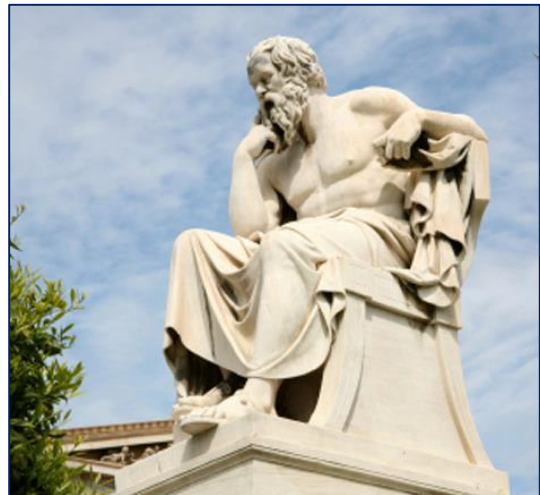
In setting, planning and working to reach a goal, you must be on the lookout for side issues that might detract from your primary purpose. You must avoid superfluous diversions that may be fleetingly pleasant but not lastingly worthwhile. In other words, to have sufficient time for things that count, you must cut out things that do not count. And if you really want something – with a deep, burning, unquenchable desire – then you will do what needs to be done to achieve it.

In sports, we often hear a losing coach make the statement: “I guess they just wanted it more than we did.”

In families, we often hear parents say: “I just can’t do anything with those kids.”

In marriages that become divorces, we often hear one of the partners say: “There’s no way we can work things out.”

In communities, we often hear citizens say: “It’s all just political, there’s nothing we can do about it.”



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The question then: How much do you really want what you say you want?

The answer requires some sober reflection.

*Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us (Ephesians 3:20 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter