

## *From a Coma to a Hero*

It wasn't like Scott Kregel to give up. He was a battler, a dedicated athlete who spent hour after hour perfecting his free throw and jump shot during the hot summer months of 1987.

But just before fall basketball practice, everything changed. A serious car accident left Scott in a coma for several days. When he awoke, a long rehabilitation process lay ahead.

Like most patients with closed head injuries, Scott balked at doing the slow, tedious work that was required to get him back to normal – things such as stringing beads. What high school junior would enjoy that?

Tom Martin, Scott's basketball coach at the Christian school he attended, had an idea. Coach Martin told Scott that he would reserve a seat on the varsity team for him – if he would cooperate with his therapist and show progress in the tasks he was asked to do. And Coach Martin's wife, Cindy, spent many hours with Scott, encouraging him to keep going.

Within two months, Scott was riding off the basketball court on his teammates' shoulders. He had made nine straight free throws to clinch a triple-overtime league victory.

It was a remarkable testimony of the power of encouragement.

And that power is available in any aspect of life. The Duke of Wellington, the British military leader who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, was not an easy man to serve under. He was brilliant, demanding, and not one to shower his subordinates with compliments.

Yet even Wellington realized that his methods left something to be desired. In his old age, a young lady asked him what, if anything, he would do differently if he had his life to live over again.

Wellington thought for a moment, then replied: "I'd give more praise."

As a leader in Life Care and Century Park, it is your responsibility to demand excellence in performance.

And encouragement can go a long way in helping you – and those you lead – achieve it.

*And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all (1 Thessalonians 5:14 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter