

Overcoming a Quitter's Gene

Gordon MacDonald is a very successful person, but he admits there was a time in his life when he sadly realized that he had inherited a “quitter’s gene” from his family.

He has been a pastor, author for more than 50 years, chancellor at Denver Seminary, editor-at-large for *Leadership Journal*, and a speaker at leadership conferences around the world.

But he tells that it was while he was in high school that his track coach helped him overcome that inherent gene to quit.

“When I first ran track in prep school, my coach invited me to his home for dinner. After the meal, he pulled out a notebook with my name on the front cover,” MacDonald recalled. “He turned to the back page, which bore the heading *June 1957 – 3½ years away.*”



The coach said: “Gordon, these are the races I’m going to schedule you to run about four years from now. Here are the times you will achieve.”

MacDonald said he looked at those times. “They were light years away from where I was as a runner. Then Coach began turning back the pages of that book, page by page, showing the 42 months he had scheduled for workouts. These were the graduated,

accelerated plans for my increasing skill on the track in the coming months.”

Out of his experiences with that coach, MacDonald said, he learned important principles – run with vision, look backward only to learn from mistakes, cling to self-discipline while giving distance to self-indulgence, and find satisfaction in joining with others to make great things happen.

MacDonald characterizes resiliency – an important character trait – as being committed to consistently finishing strong.

Like that high-school coach, we in Life Care and Century Park understand the necessity of strategic planning and the discipline required to resist the forces – within and without – that seek to distract us from our mission.

God has a plan for our lives – a journey that encompasses our personal and professional goals – and we must finish strong.

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us (Hebrews 12:1 NKJV).