

When You Are Right

Dave Hart, executive director of athletics at the University of Alabama, gives a good example of why we should never allow doubt and peer pressure to sway our belief in what we know is right.

According to *Souls of Steel*, written by Pat Williams with Jim Denney, when Hart was in elementary school, he was called on to give an answer in class. Afterward, the teacher turned to the other students and asked them whether Hart's answer was correct. Some of Hart's classmates agreed with his answer while others did not.

A discussion followed. The teacher made arguments against Hart's answer. To the students who supported him, the teacher suggested that more time be taken to think the answer through. One by one, all the students who had initially agreed with Hart changed their answers to the opposing view. The teacher then asked Hart if he wanted to change his answer. Hart declined. The teacher goaded him further. "Everyone in the class says you must be wrong," the teacher argued. Hart would not relent.

The teacher shocked the students when he next told them that Hart was, in fact, correct. The lesson was clear: It's better to stand your ground when you know you're right and not be cowed by popular opinion.

It's a lesson Hart has not forgotten – and one he enthusiastically passes along to the many students and athletes he works with. "I think one of the most important things we can do in training young leaders is to praise them and encourage them when they make tough decisions and demonstrate the courage to not follow the crowd," he said.

The principle is true in athletics. It's true in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home. It's true in life.

– Beecher Hunter