

Wisdom from Pat Summitt



Pat Summitt, legendary women's basketball coach at the University of Tennessee, was perhaps best known for winning more games than any other NCAA Division I basketball coach, male or female.

She spent 38 years as the head coach of the Lady Volunteers, winning eight national titles and 1,098 games. Tennessee also made 31 consecutive NCAA tournament appearances under Coach Summitt. She was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000 and was named the Naismith Coach of the Century in the same year. In 2012, President Obama honored her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Summitt passed away on June 28, at age 64, after a five-year battle with Alzheimer's disease. She will be remembered for her leadership and her competitive spirit. Here are some of her quotes that inspire us:

- **On competition:** "There is always someone better than you. Whatever it is that you do for a living, chances are, you will run into a situation in which you are not as talented as the person next to you. That's when being a competitor can make a difference in your fortunes."
- **On work ethic:** "Here's how I'm going to beat you. I'm going to outwork you. That's it. That's all there is to it."
- **On life:** "It's what it is. But it will be what you make it."
- **On responsibility:** "If you don't want responsibility, don't sit in the big chair. To be successful, you must accept full responsibility."
- **On goal setting:** "It's harder to stay on top than it is to make the climb. Continue to seek new goals."
- **On potential:** "I'm someone who will push you beyond all reasonable limits. Someone who will ask you not to just fulfill your potential but to exceed it. Someone who will expect more from you than you may believe you are capable of."
- **On loyalty:** "The absolute heart of loyalty is to value those people who tell you the truth, not just those people who tell you what you want to hear. In fact, you should value them most, because they have paid you the compliment of leveling with you and assuming you can handle it."



(more)

- **On making a mistake:** “When a player makes a mistake, you always want to put them back in quickly – you don’t just berate them and sit them down with no chance of redemption.”
- **On attitude:** “Attitude is a choice. What you think you can do, whether positive or negative, confidence or scared, will most likely happen.”
- **On quitting:** “Quit? Quit? We keep score in life because it matters. It counts. Too many people opt out and never discover their own abilities because they fear failure. They don’t understand commitment. When you learn to keep fighting in the face of potential failure, it gives you a larger skill set to do what you want to do.”
- **On God’s purposes:** “God doesn’t take things away to be cruel. He takes things away to make room for other things. He takes things away to lighten us. He takes thing away so we can fly.”



A Celebration of Life service honoring Summitt will be open to the public at Thompson-Boling Arena on the University of Tennessee campus July 14, beginning at 7 p.m.

Summitt has gone to her heavenly reward, but her legacy lives on in the hearts of those who knew her – in particular, her players and the coaches associated with her.

– Beecher Hunter