

Talk for FSM Youth Rally on Guam

Purpose of the rally and the talk

not to excel in sports (learn that on the court or through a coach)

not offering rules on how to get ahead in your life, and be superior to everyone else (ie, win the game of life—and watch others lose)

not offer rules on anything. (In the past I might do that, but now I just offer my experience and hope that some of it is useful to others)

“Value-Driven and Success-Focused” is the theme of the rally today. So, the theme is about more than winning the basketball game. It’s “What you do with your life.” I have three thoughts on the subject—three habits that you should cultivate to become the person you were meant to be.

Curiosity

Family sitting on the floor after dinner as it’s getting dark, listening to stories and asking questions of the story-teller. How did we come to this island in the first place? How did we get this land?

People want to understand the world, or at least their own part of the world. For me, other questions: Why does ice form over water when it’s cold? What are dinosaurs and what did they look like? (Fascination with old beasts of millions of years ago. Sought stories and books, preferably with pictures—any source that could provide information.

Later on, other questions: How did the US start? Why did men used to wear ties at work? Why don’t we ride horses any longer?

Then, after 1963: Where did Micronesians come from? Why don’t they have last names like us Americans? How does the clan system work? Why don’t families work the same way they used to work?

Other questions perhaps for other people. You don’t have to dig into all these questions, but you should have some. Life is fascinating if you don’t sleepwalk through it. Keep you curiosity sharp so that you learn as you live. (School isn’t the end of learning—it’s just the beginning!)

Discipline

We wake up, yawn, wander over to eat, and then wonder how we get through the day. If we can’t find anything to do, we can always go back to sleep. No purpose, no plan, nothing gained, no sense of accomplishment. This is not living; it’s drifting.

Don’t just wait for things to happen. Better to have a couple of goals—eg, find out more about our land, repair the porch, visit grandma, finish reading my book, get some exercise.

Exercise! My start was at Xavier in 1963: Physical Fitness begun every day. Eventually exercise became an essential part of my day—for 60 years now. But it takes discipline.

Reading, even listening, is a tool for learning, but it demands concentration and focus. More discipline.

Plan your day. Don't just wait for things to happen. (Eg, Susa working during day, attending church meetings and wakes, making sandwiches for the people on the street. It requires a plan.)

In short, we ought to have things that we want to accomplish. This means a plan of sorts. But we need discipline to stick with the plan and do more than sleep away the day—and our life.

Friendship

No one goes through life alone, not even priests and religious. We all need good friends, as well as teachers, guides, supporters who walk with us.

Sports, especially basketball, is a good way of connecting with others. As team mates we help one another and depend on one another. Working with team mates can grow into a satisfying way of relating to others and making more friends.

We can make mistakes on court and learn from them. (Story of XHS grad who left court in tears, Jason passing like a wimp).

Sports are for younger years, but friends are forever. Learn how to make friends and keep them: one is silver and the other gold, as the little chant went.

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So much more could be said. But let's start here.

FXH

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