

# BREAKTHROUGH POWER FOR ATHLETES

A Daily Guide to an Extraordinary Life



DAVID YOUNG

BREAKTHROUGH  
POWER  
FOR ATHLETES

*A Daily Guide to an Extraordinary Life*

DAVID YOUNG

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Round Rock, Texas

# Welcome

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# Dedication

To the memory of my father and mother, Dayton and Mina, who taught me the value of hard work. And to my wife, Christina, who showed me the power of love.

## Introduction

**P**itching legend Orel Hershiser said, “I’m proof that great things can happen to ordinary people if they work hard and never give up.” How did he and others like him achieve greatness? *Breakthrough Power for Athletes* shares their secrets. For each day of the year, it provides four great quotes, usually from athletes known for their outstanding accomplishments. Their insights are based on years of experience. You can read all four quotes in one minute, so you can squeeze them in before you start your breakthrough day.

The first quote is humorous, which will put you in a good mood, ready to face life’s challenges. The second one will help you focus on the important things in life, such as developing integrity, building a strong family, making a difference in the lives of others, enjoying simple pleasures and finding time for renewal, all critical to laying an unshakeable foundation. The third quote will help you overcome the weaknesses and seemingly impossible circumstances that have held you back. And the fourth one will help you seize the summits. These will encourage you to dream big, set goals, develop effective plans of action, follow through with superior work and persevere, even after setbacks or failures. In

short, *Breakthrough Power for Athletes* will help you leave a legacy of greatness and enjoy the journey along the way.

Former San Diego Chargers placekicker Rolf Benirschke, who had 766 career points, reminds us that “the people we admire are ordinary people that have been able to accomplish some extraordinary things. The things that make them extraordinary are things that we all possess.” So, yes, you too can be great.

**Start with a smile**

All I remember about my wedding day in 1967 is that the Cubs lost a double-header.

— *George Will*

**Focus on what's important**

The awards and championships are great, but the journey is what I'll remember.

— *Hakeem Olajuwon*

**Break the barriers**

The fight is won or lost far away from witnesses – behind the lines, in the gym and out there on the road, long before I dance under those lights.

— *Muhammad Ali*

**Seize the summits**

If you're bored with life – if you don't get up every morning with a burning desire to do things – you don't have enough goals.

— *Lou Holtz*

## ❧ *January 2*

### **Start with a smile**

Titanium: Lightweight, superstrong metal used in club-heads whose superior impact power has made it possible for older or less skilled players to hit shots into hazards, fairway bunkers, water areas and maintenance sheds they never dreamed of reaching before.

— *Henry Beard and Roy McKie*

### **Focus on what's important**

The real make of a man is how he treats people who can never do anything for him.

— *Darrel Royall*

### **Break the barriers**

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

— *John Wooden*

### **Seize the summits**

I love dangling off that cliff, not knowing whether I'm going to fail or succeed. I would rather have the chance to succeed at some endeavor and eventually falter than to never even have the chance to succeed at all.

— *Derek Jeter*

**Start with a smile**

Whenever you lose, there's going to be criticism. That's why they invented talk radio.

— *Rudy Tomjanovich*

**Focus on what's important**

A decade after the average athlete graduates, everyone will have forgotten when and where he played. But every time he speaks, everyone will know whether he was educated.

— *Theodore Hesburgh*

**Break the barriers**

It is easier to learn something new than it is to unlearn something that you have been doing wrong for a long time. This is why it is so important to get started in golf with the proper teaching.

— *Harvey Penick*

**Seize the summits**

Man's finest hour is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle – victorious.

— *Vince Lombardi*

## ❧ *January 4*

### **Start with a smile**

When he says, “Sit down!” I don’t even look for a chair.

— *Anonymous, on Vince Lombardi*

### **Focus on what’s important**

I always respected and trusted a player who owned up to his mistakes, no matter how bad they were.

— *Tom Osborne*

### **Break the barriers**

The ability to accept adversity and overcome it is one of the most important virtues, because it offers us the greatest opportunities for growth.

— *Gary Player*

### **Seize the summits**

You have to believe you’re great. You have to have an air about you. My success wasn’t because I was a great talent, but because I wanted it more than anybody. Every time I step on that field, I want to prove I’m the best player in the league.

— *Brett Favre*

**Start with a smile**

I wish I had kept my mouth shut.

— *Jack Nicklaus, after he encouraged Lee Trevino who then beat him at the 1971 Open*

**Focus on what's important**

I'll find out what my best team is when I find out how many doctors and lawyers and good husbands and good citizens have come off of each and every one of my teams.

— *Knute Rockne*

**Break the barriers**

As soon as you believe it can be done, a great psychological barrier is broken and you begin to work toward higher goals.

— *Byron Nelson*

**Seize the summits**

In a big game, you can't afford to be too high, because if you start feeling like Hercules out there, you'll make foolish mistakes.

— *Terry Bradshaw*

## ❧ January 6

### **Start with a smile**

I've been asked to make a speech about my football team. My football team that just won nine games. My football team that just won the Rose Bowl. My football team that – I'm sorry, I forgot this wasn't my football team. It really belongs to you. Last year when we won only three and lost five, that was my football team.

— *Duffy Daugherty*

### **Focus on what's important**

You must give up something in the immediate present – comfort, ease, recognition, quick rewards – to attract something even better in the future. Without that sacrifice, you'll never know your team's potential, or your own.

— *Pat Riley*

### **Break the barriers**

Concentration is why some athletes are better than others. You develop that concentration in training. You can't be lackadaisical in training and concentrate in a meet.

— *Edwin Moses*

### **Seize the summits**

My hunger is not for success, it is for excellence. Because when you attain excellence, success just naturally follows.

— *Mike Krzyzewski*

**Start with a smile**

They broke it to me gently. The manager came up to me before a game and told me they didn't allow visitors in the clubhouse.

— *Bob Uecker*

**Focus on what's important**

Stan Musial is living proof that nice guys don't finish last.

— *Ken Boyer*

**Break the barriers**

One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation.

— *Arthur Ashe*

**Seize the summits**

When Branch Rickey told me that I'd never be a major-league player after a tryout in my hometown of St. Louis, I was pretty disappointed. But I kept a positive attitude because I thought I was good enough to make it. That rejection only made me more determined, and a year later, the Yankees signed me and things worked out okay.

— *Yogi Berra*

## ❧ *January 8*

### **Start with a smile**

There is no greater fan of fly-fishing than the worm.

— *Patrick McManus*

### **Focus on what's important**

Don't worry about your individual numbers. Worry about the team. If the team is successful, each of you will be successful too.

— *Branch Rickey*

### **Break the barriers**

It's a battle of wills, not a battle of skills.

— *Isiah Thomas*

### **Seize the summits**

No detail is too small if part of an important undertaking.

— *George Allen*

**Start with a smile**

I have five boys, and they are all named George. If you want to be a good boxer, you've got to make preparations for the memory loss.

— *George Foreman*

**Focus on what's important**

Fifty years from now I'll be just three inches of type in a record book.

— *Brooks Robinson*

**Break the barriers**

First there are those who are winners, and know they are winners. Then there are those who are losers who know they are losers. Then there are those who are not winners, but don't know it. They're the ones for me. They never quit trying. They're the soul of our game.

— *Bear Bryant*

**Seize the summits**

I can accept failure. But I can't accept not trying.

— *Michael Jordan*

## ❧ *January 10*

### **Start with a smile**

When I left Pullman International Airport in Washington, I asked the baggage handler to send one bag to Seattle, one to Portland and the other to Billings, Montana. He said, “I can’t do that.” I said, “Why not? You did it two years ago.”

— *George Raveling*

### **Focus on what’s important**

I know a lot of people think it’s monotonous, down the black lines over and over, but it’s not if you’re enjoying what you’re doing. I love to swim and I love to train.

— *Tracy Caulkins*

### **Break the barriers**

Stop focusing on everything that’s wrong with your boss. Decide that you can handle his demands, or his distance, or his anger. Don’t allow your boss’s negative side to bring out your negative side.

— *Joe Torre*

### **Seize the summits**

Probe. Put pressure on your opponent’s weaknesses.

— *John McEnroe*

### **Start with a smile**

Karate is a form of martial arts in which people who have had years and years of training can, using only their hands and feet, make some of the worst movies in the history of the world.

— *Dave Barry*

### **Focus on what's important**

If you're positive about life and work, people will want you on their team; they'll want to work with you on projects; they'll want to include you when they're taking a client out to dinner to impress them.

— *Rick Pitino*

### **Break the barriers**

If you want to stay the course, it will help if you can fall in love not with improvement, but with the process of improvement. Improvement is not something you can tightly control. It will come, but you can't decide when and how much you'll get better.

— *Dr. Bob Rotella*

### **Seize the summits**

I'm not a guy that believes much in momentum or emotion. Football games are sixty minutes. The team that is the most disciplined, the most consistent, the one that hustles the most usually gets a break or two and usually wins the football game.

— *Joe Paterno*

## ❧ *January 12*

### **Start with a smile**

Doctors bury their mistakes; mine are still on scholarship.

— *Abe Lemons*

### **Focus on what's important**

We use a bit of psychology at Ohio State when it appears that some bad feelings are developing between one of our kids and one of the other team. We send in word to our player to pick up his man after the next block or tackle. It's hard to play dirty against a man who picks you up.

— *Woody Hayes*

### **Break the barriers**

I used to love waking up in the morning because I looked forward to heading to the golf course to practice and play. I just loved trying to improve a little every day. That gave me the greatest pleasure of all.

— *Ben Hogan*

### **Seize the summits**

Too many people remain in a bad or stagnant situation simply because they're afraid of any change. "This situation may not be ideal," we think to ourselves, "but at least I know where I stand." But unless you take the initiative to try something new, you may never know how much better things can be.

— *Mary Lou Retton*

**Start with a smile**

They say that fans and announcers must be quiet because golfers have to concentrate. Yeah, like basketball players don't have to concentrate to sink a fourth-quarter foul shot while hundreds of screaming fans wave colorful three-foot polystyrene weenies behind the basket.

— *Bill Geist*

**Focus on what's important**

Baseball, it is said, is only a game. True. And the Grand Canyon is only a hole in Arizona. Not all holes, or games, are created equal.

— *George Will*

**Break the barriers**

Success is the ability to close the door on your past, regardless of your failures, and move forward.

— *Bill White*

**Seize the summits**

Reaching the goal or realizing the dream is not nearly as important as the person we've become along the way. The more we allow ourselves to learn and grow in the process of reaching our goals, the better equipped we'll be to live a meaningful life and make a difference in the world.

— *Dave Johnson*

## ❧ *January 14*

### **Start with a smile**

The only problem with doing the impossible is that everybody expects you to duplicate it.

— *John McKay*

### **Focus on what's important**

Promise yourself to make all your friends know there is something in them that is special and that you value.

— *John Wooden*

### **Break the barriers**

Exercise gives you many rewards. I know that when I'm fit, my reflexes and touch are better, my eyesight is sharper, as is my hearing. Just as important, my brain is clearer and my concentration is keener.

— *Gary Player*

### **Seize the summits**

You have people telling you how good you are and all of a sudden, you might start believing it and forget what it takes to be good.

— *Lou Lamoreillo*

**Start with a smile**

I used to think that if I suffered some terrible injury to my hands, I would have the surgeon fuse my fingers so that they would fit on the home keys of a typewriter keyboard; I now know that I would have them fused in a slightly strong overlapping golf grip.

— *David Owen*

**Focus on what's important**

There's nothing greater in the world than when somebody on the team does something good, and everybody gathers around to pat him on the back. I really love the togetherness in baseball. That's a real true love.

— *Billy Martin*

**Break the barriers**

I can't believe God put us on this earth to be ordinary.

— *Lou Holtz*

**Seize the summits**

My family and coach said to think of this as a big party with a swim meet attached.

— *Amanda Beard, on participating in the Olympics at age fourteen*

## ❧ *January 16*

### **Start with a smile**

Chairman of the board: An executive who makes split-second decisions at the office which his subordinates will straighten out while he's on the golf course.

— *Martin Ragaway*

### **Focus on what's important**

I came to the ballpark today and took the chewing tobacco out of my locker and put it in the trash can. I'm not going to touch the stuff. I've chewed tobacco for a long time and I enjoy it, but life to me is a little more important than sticking tobacco in your mouth.

— *Jeff Brantley, on Brett Butler being diagnosed with cancer*

### **Break the barriers**

The road to Easy Street goes through the sewer.

— *John Madden*

### **Seize the summits**

A competitor will find a way to win. Competitors take bad breaks and use them to drive themselves just that much harder. Quitters take bad breaks and use them as reasons to give up. It's all a matter of pride.

— *Nancy Lopez*

### **Start with a smile**

Even accountants are known, in their capacity as fishermen, blissfully to ignore differences between seven and ten inches, half a pound and two pounds, three fish and a dozen fish.

— *William Fox*

### **Focus on what's important**

What you eventually find out – when you're looking only for your own individual gratification – is that it's short lived. But when you have had a hand in someone else's success, it's that connection, that bond, that can last a lifetime.

— *Rick Pitino*

### **Break the barriers**

Find a practice player who is as eager as you to improve his tennis.

— *Jimmy Connors*

### **Seize the summits**

It's okay to be upset about a bad shot. But once you get to your ball, calm down. You've got golf to play. Anger clouds your thinking, warps your judgment and can cause you to make a careless swipe at the next shot – and then you'll know what real trouble is.

— *Corey Pavin*

## ❧ *January 18*

### **Start with a smile**

The first word you see in every airport is *terminal*.

— *Beano Cook, on his fear of flying*

### **Focus on what's important**

Football teaches a boy a sense of responsibility – responsibility as a representative of his college, responsibility to his teammates, responsibility in controlling his passions, fear, hatred, jealousy and rashness. Football brings out the best there is in everyone.

— *Knut Rockne*

### **Break the barriers**

To be successful in anything, a person must always want to be better, not only than your opponent but better than your last performance. Done correctly, being competitive is a wonderful way to always try to be a better person by learning from your mistakes and capitalizing on your successes.

— *Hale Irwin*

### **Seize the summits**

Never let the fear of striking out get in your way.

— *Babe Ruth*

**Start with a smile**

The only sure way to get par is to leave a four-foot birdie putt two inches short of the hole.

— *Henry Beard*

**Focus on what's important**

I've learned if you have the chance, you'd better take it. Life's too precious. I always tell my players, "Enjoy the now."

— *Gary Williams*

**Break the barriers**

The people we admire are ordinary people that have been able to accomplish some extraordinary things. The things that make them extraordinary are things that we all possess.

— *Rolf Benirschke*

**Seize the summits**

Concentration is when you're completely unaware of the crowd, the field, the score, other than how it might affect strategy. You're concerned only with your performance, playing well at your position.

— *Tom Landry*

## ❧ *January 20*

### **Start with a smile**

The reason women don't play football is because eleven of them would never wear the same outfit in public.

— *Phyllis Diller*

### **Focus on what's important**

You are unique, a special creation of God. There is nobody else like you. Nobody else can do what you can do. Nobody else can have the impact on this world that you can.

— *Pat Williams*

### **Break the barriers**

It is safe to say that no cynic has ever played in a World Series.

— *Donald Honig*

### **Seize the summits**

Getting fired from a job may be a good opportunity, because it's a chance to start fresh and get a better job – that's the only way to look at it.

— *Yogi Berra*

January 21 ❧

### **Start with a smile**

Yachting: Standing in a cold shower tearing up hundred-dollar bills.

— *Anonymous*

### **Focus on what's important**

My wife and I have five children. To have their respect is the ultimate hall of fame. They see it all. They see how you treat each other. Getting and keeping their respect is what really matters. The question we must continually ask ourselves is, "How do we get to where we want to go and still remain a hero to those we love?"

— *Roger Staubach*

### **Break the barriers**

You have to train the mind for success. When I first joined the tour, I didn't think I was as good as I was. Now my mental has caught up with my physical.

— *Calvin Peete*

### **Seize the summits**

Sometimes, you have to bleed for the cause.

— *Erk Russell*

## ❧ *January 22*

### **Start with a smile**

My wife has developed a very explicit way of indicating she's had enough of my watching football on TV. Last Saturday she went up to the set, pointed to a player and asked, "Who's that?" I said, "That's the end." She said, "That's right," and turned it off.

— *Robert Orben*

### **Focus on what's important**

I try to keep my life in perspective, remembering to sit back and relax.

— *Tiger Woods*

### **Break the barriers**

You have to be willing to out-condition your opponents.

— *Bear Bryant*

### **Seize the summits**

A person always doing his or her best becomes a natural leader, just by example.

— *Joe DiMaggio*

**Start with a smile**

I'd get real close to him and breathe on his goggles.

— *Johnny Kerr, on the best way to guard Kareem Abdul-Jabbar*

**Focus on what's important**

Look for players with character and ability. But remember, character comes first.

— *Joe Gibbs*

**Break the barriers**

I like trouble. In a perverse way, I actually enjoy finding my ball in a bad lie or a tough situation. Trouble forces me to stretch my shot-making skills, and that's part of the fun of playing aggressive golf.

— *Greg Norman*

**Seize the summits**

If one can stick to the training throughout the many long years, then will power is no longer a problem. It's raining? That doesn't matter. I am tired? That's beside the point. It's simply that I just have to.

— *Emil Zatopek*

## ❧ *January 24*

### **Start with a smile**

The night we won the World Series, I was understandably feeling my oats. I asked my wife how many really great managers she thought there were in baseball. Glaring at me, she said, “I think there’s one less than you do.”

— *Danny Murtaugh*

### **Focus on what’s important**

My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person – he believed in me.

— *Jim Valvano*

### **Break the barriers**

I never want to dwell on spilled milk or worry about something that’s not life threatening.

— *Nick Price*

### **Seize the summits**

Every great achievement is the story of a flaming heart. Every great achievement is the story of tremendous passion.

— *Mary Lou Retton*

**Start with a smile**

You have a big year and suddenly everybody thinks you're a great speechmaker.

— *Bob Lemon*

**Focus on what's important**

If you go out with one focus in mind, to contribute to the team's success, individual accolades will take care of themselves.

— *Michael Jordan*

**Break the barriers**

If there is one constant I've found for being successful on the greens, it's that good putters believe they are good putters. Simple as that. They can miss ten three-footers in a row, and they will still say they are good putters. Good putters keep believing in themselves; for them, the opportunity to succeed overwhelms the fear of failure.

— *Raymond Floyd*

**Seize the summits**

Some people are professional trainers and do little racing. But you can make the greatest gains through competition. I never would have realized my potential if it weren't for racing. There's nothing like it to push you. You find yourself at speeds you would never attain in training.

— *Ned Overend*

## ❧ *January 26*

### **Start with a smile**

If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough.

— *Mario Andretti*

### **Focus on what's important**

The finest compliment I can pay to defensive tackle Henry Jordan is that he is a humble man and knows the true relationship between God and man. He places his dependence upon God and he seeks His help, not just to win, but to do His will whenever it is presented to him.

— *Vince Lombardi*

### **Break the barriers**

I'd rather have a self-made player than a natural-made player. I'd rather have a guy with less talent who works than one with more talent who doesn't.

— *Bum Phillips*

### **Seize the summits**

When you fail it's often not the inherent goal that was wrong or misguided, it was simply that the means to that goal were inappropriate. You must be able to separate your vision from the path to that vision – sometimes it's just the route you take that has to be altered.

— *Rick Pitino*

**Start with a smile**

All of us learn to write by the second grade, then most of us go on to other things.

— *Bobby Knight, on reporters*

**Focus on what's important**

Whatever I do, I like to stop and sniff the flowers.

— *Evonne Goolagong*

**Break the barriers**

In those early years I'd concentrate so completely that I could go into the locker room during a tournament and tell you which pair of shoes belonged to which player. That's just how intently I studied the other guys.

— *Sam Snead*

**Seize the summits**

Perhaps the most intriguing, yet at the same time most tragic aspect of distance running is racing strategies and tactics or the lack of them. The race is not always to either the swift or the strong, but to the clever, the skillful and the constantly wary.

— *Ken Doherty*

❧ *January 28*

### **Start with a smile**

I have a theory: The larger the ball, the less the writing about the sport. There are superb books about golf, very good books about baseball, not many good books about football, and very few good books about basketball. There are no books about beachballs.

— *George Plimpton*

### **Focus on what's important**

Be a gracious winner and an understanding loser.

— *Joe Namath*

### **Break the barriers**

Ultimately, success is not measured by first place prizes. It's measured by the road we have traveled, how you dealt with the challenges and the stumbling blocks you encountered along the way.

— *Nicole Haislett*

### **Seize the summits**

Even if your goal is never reached, it is a learning process that will enhance your life.

— *Walter Payton*

**Start with a smile**

Getting hit.

— *Sugar Ray Robinson, on what he liked least  
about boxing*

**Focus on what's important**

Success is being truly happy at what you do.

— *Tommy Lasorda*

**Break the barriers**

It is the quality of practice that counts, not the quantity of balls you hit.

— *Jim McLean*

**Seize the summits**

Fear promotes failure. Humor controls fear.

— *Tim McCarver*

## ❧ *January 30*

### **Start with a smile**

If there is any justice in this world, to be a White Sox fan frees a man from any other form of penance.

— *Bill Veeck*

### **Focus on what's important**

Somewhere along the line, people motivated only by money lose the edge.

— *Jeremy McGrath*

### **Break the barriers**

Don't stop believing in yourself because you haven't yet been rewarded with that brass ring. If I had stopped believing in myself, I never would have realized my lifelong dream of making it to the World Series. It took me 4,272 games as a player and a manager to finally get there, the longest wait for anyone in the history of the game.

— *Joe Torre*

### **Seize the summits**

Don't count on luck to get you out of a tight spot.

— *Harvey Penick*

**Start with a smile**

My gum company made a \$40-million profit last year, and I can't get the financial writers to say a word about it. But I fire a manager and everybody shows up.

— Philip Wrigley

**Focus on what's important**

The epic is not about the victory, but about the glorious struggle.

— Joe Paterno

**Break the barriers**

The most interesting thing about this sport, at least to me, is the activity of preparation. The thrill isn't in the winning, it's in the doing.

— Chuck Noll

**Seize the summits**

When I was young my parents knew nothing about swimming, but they knew a lot about not quitting and hard work. They told me that any activity is fun at the beginning and the finish, but it's the long middle section that's hard. They instructed me that what you start, you finish, because you are either going to face the pain of discipline or the pain of regret.

— Nancy Hogshead

Dear Friend,

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— David Young

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## About the Author



**D**avid Young is a policy advisor to the governor of Texas. He received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree, Summa Cum Laude, from the University of Arkansas and his Master of Business Administration degree from The University of Texas at Austin.

David grew up in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Both of his grandfathers were born before the Civil War. He and his wife, Christina, live in Round Rock, Texas. David has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, and has visited South America, Asia and the Middle East.

## Also by David Young

*Breakthrough Power*

*Breakthrough Power for Mothers*

*Breakthrough Power for Fathers*

*Breakthrough Power for Christians*

*Breakthrough Power for Leaders*

*Breakthrough Power for Golfers*

*Great Funny Quotes*

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“I’m proof that great things can happen to ordinary people if they work hard and never give up.”

— Orel Hershiser

How did Orel and others like him achieve greatness? *Breakthrough Power for Athletes* shares their secrets. Inside, athletes known for their outstanding accomplishments will help you:

- Build an unshakeable foundation
- Maintain a competitive edge
- Pursue and fulfill your dreams
- Impact others
- Improve your relationships
- Find time for renewal

Plus, you’ll start each day with a humorous quote that will put you in a good mood, ready to face life’s challenges. Each day’s reading will take less than a minute, so you can squeeze it in before you start your breakthrough day.

Former San Diego Chargers placekicker Rolf Benirschke, who had 766 career points, reminds us that “the people we admire are ordinary people that have been able to accomplish some extraordinary things. The things that make them extraordinary are things we all possess.” So, yes, you too can be great.

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