

## My Primary Goal As Your Teacher (or Coach or Adviser)

My professional work is dedicated to facilitating your development into an **extraordinary human being**. Or, as I like to tell the athletic teams I coach, the most important outcome is becoming a “**champion in life**.”

As I see it, extraordinary human beings are associated with a common core of qualities, all of which can be cultivated with practice. Such people are **principled, courageous, disciplined, curious, contemplative, humble, compassionate, and dedicated to self-improvement**. And here is what I mean by each of those terms:

1. **principled**: people who are rooted, who know what they stand for, and who possess a sense of justice
2. **courageous**: people who are willing to take risks to do the right thing, and who are resilient in response to adversity
3. **disciplined**: people who understand that one’s behavior matters, that work is a virtue, and that self-control—the capacity to delay immediate gratification—is essential to civilized life
4. **curious**: people who nurture a desire to learn about self, others, and the universe, and who find delight in inquiry—in the arts, the humanities, and the sciences
5. **contemplative**: people who appreciate both the life of the mind and the journey of the soul, who engage in regular reflection, who are willing to question long-held assumptions, and who reject the easy comfort of the “unexamined life”
6. **humble**: people who don’t easily conclude that our successes are deserved, but understand that a combination of accidents of birth, outrageous good fortune, and factors entirely beyond our control account for much of our path through life; and who intellectually accept the proposition that any of us might be wrong, even about our most firmly held convictions
7. **compassionate**: people who take a generally benign approach to all living things, who work to understand the perspectives of others, and who recognize that meaningful connections to other human beings are central to a happy life
8. **dedicated to self-improvement**: people who possess a realistic sense of their strengths and shortcomings and who consistently pursue progress, trying to be better today than they were yesterday

