

Welcome to *The Great Traits of Champions!*

MARK: As we get started, let me introduce you to my co-author, **Debbie Muir**. Debbie is one of the Olympic movement's most winning coaches. She led her athletes to win seven out of a possible nine World Championship gold medals, as well as two Olympic gold and two Olympic silver medals in the sport of synchronized swimming.

DEBBIE: My co-author, **Mark Tewksbury**, is an Olympic champion, a three-time Olympic medalist, and seven-time world record holder in the sport of swimming. We both come from a high performance sport background. Combined, we have many (many!) decades of experience in a movement that is rich with achievement, leadership, and legacy.

MARK: In this book, we are going to share with you what we know; we will take you on *The Champion's Journey*. But first, you need to know some things about us. For starters, we *do not* think we know it all.

DEBBIE: *We are not gurus.*

MARK: *We will not* solve all of your life's problems by taking seven steps.

DEBBIE: All we have is our collective experience.

We are a coach and an athlete.

We have lived what we speak.

We will share with you how you can apply what we have learned from our experience into something meaningful for you.

The objective of this book is to lay out what we believe are the building blocks to succeed in the areas we have experienced extensively. What you decide to do with that knowledge is up to you.

MARK: The information in this book is divided into three general areas. Coming from sport, the idea of being a champion is naturally a part of the culture. Champions are winners, the best, they reach the pinnacle. In this book, we take a broader approach. These traits can be applied to any number of areas in life, not just sport.

DEBBIE: We look at the idea of being a champion from three distinct perspectives.

MARK: First we have the Achiever Traits. This section starts from the premise that every one of us wants to be the best we can be at whatever it is we are doing. This first part of the Champion's Journey ensures the fundamentals ideas are in place to build the skills necessary for you to succeed. What do you want to achieve? What would be considered a win for you?

DEBBIE: Then we have the Leader Traits. Being a great achiever is one thing, being a great leader is another. In this section you lay the foundation for others—individuals, teams, and organizations—to succeed. What does it take to create champion teams and organizations? What would you define as a winning result? How can you ensure to bring out the best in those you lead? This is the second step in your Champion's Journey.

MARK: And finally we have the Legacy Traits. Achieving and leading are important, but it is equally as vital to consider what kind of impact you are making along the way. Are your actions creating a win/win? What effect are you having in your world? What kind of ripple effect are you making? Legacy explores the fundamentals needed to make a meaningful and positive contribution, and shows you how to bring all of the traits together for ongoing success.

Use This Book as a Guide to Being a Champion in Your Life

DEBBIE: We bet you live a busy life (because we all seem to these days!) We wanted to make sure that this book was presented in a way that is easy to access. We don't want the Great Traits to be a burden, we want them to enhance your life.

MARK: People often say there is a great connection between sport and life, and mean it in a more general, metaphorical sense. We explored that idea. What is it that, when stripped down to its absolute core, ensures excellence in achievement and leadership? What are the absolute fundamental principles that are relevant *and* transferrable to any experience, and endeavor, or any organization? From that lens an intense exploration of our experience was taken and, over time, the Great Traits were born.

DEBBIE: There are eight traits in each section, for a total of 24. But don't let that intimidate you. There is nothing new in this book per se. Instead, the following pages are filled with ideas you might know or recognize, organized in a logical, practical way that we believe will make them even more accessible to you.

MARK: Each trait in this book includes an icon, key concept, anecdotes and learning objectives that outline the fundamental ideas we want you to bring to life. Following each section, a simple evaluation tool will help you in identifying which of the traits you are already utilizing, and which ones need more attention. If you are looking for some guidance on where to tackle the traits, start there.

DEBBIE: Mark and I have spent the past few years leading thousands of people through Great Traits programs. Although the book presents the traits in a linear fashion in order to discover them one at a time, the truth is all of the traits work together. Mark and I often jump around and choose traits from the Achiever, Leader, and Legacy sections when designing programs based on an individual's or a company's needs. You will see as you use this book that the same will hold true for you. Because they are so essential, and the learning so clear, knowing the various Great Traits will help you quickly identify what learning is relevant to your situation.

MARK: I used to think that to be really great at something you had to master complicated concepts or skills. When I was among the best in the world I was constantly looking out for something huge that would make a difference. It was only when I went back to some fundamental ideas I knew but had taken for granted that I made my breakthrough.

DEBBIE: Whatever it is you are doing—whether you are a parent, a businessperson, a teacher, a communications expert, a volunteer, an agent, a member of a board, a co-worker, or a community

Activist—this book provides a foundation for success to be built upon. Within these pages is a frame of reference to make sure that you have all of your bases covered as you move through your life as an achiever, leader, and legacy leaver. We hope you enjoy it.

LET YOUR CHAMPION'S JOURNEY BEGIN.