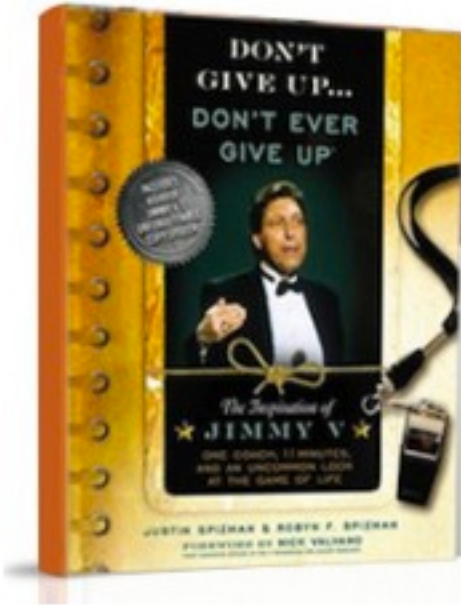


# (Taken From) Don't Give Up...Don't Ever Give Up: The Inspiration of Jimmy V – One Coach, 11 Minutes, and an Uncommon Look at the Game of Life



Jimmy V. was a catalyst. He was a dreamer. And he served as an inspiration to so many. Facing his own mortality, he stood tall and found the courage and bravery for one last call to arms. He took the world's biggest stage and delivered some of the world's biggest lessons. These lessons were the heart of the speech, and the inspiration for this book. These lessons have lived on through Jim's legacy and the work of The V. Foundation.

Moments like this are what made Jim so special. Moments like this are what made the Jimmy V. blueprint so useful. Every moment we have the opportunity to sing and dance. Or we can sit in the corner and watch everyone else light their lives on fire. Jimmy V. had a special way of lighting his own life on fire. Time is precious and there is always a chance to ignite the world, and Jimmy V. always took that chance to infuse his life and the lives of

those around him with happiness and enjoyment. There is no mystery to the equation, only opportunity. And the best part is, you have control over every opportunity that presents itself. You can always choose to cherish the moments, and light your life on fire, just like Jimmy V. did.

So what does this have to do with you and the rest of us? People spend so much of their lives regretting and carrying anger and frustration with them. Forgive easy and have a short-term memory, because when you hold negative feelings towards people, you aren't enjoying all life has to offer. You are focusing on the negatives and you will surely lose sight of the most important things in life. Life has a way of giving you its nectar one beautiful moment at a time. A long embrace with a loved one, a gorgeous sunset outside your home, watching your children grow up and become successful adults, or even just sitting down for a second and thinking about how lucky you are to be healthy and alive. Life gives you the opportunities to appreciate it, but it is your job to wrap your arms around these opportunities.

When it is all said and done, if you can reflect on your life, and with a confident breath say that you have enjoyed life, you have not only done yourself justice, but you have been a gift to all the people around you. Enjoying your life helps others enjoy their own. Jimmy V. loved his life and through his teachings and desire to view every moment as a precious opportunity, he made other people better for being around him. Jim taught others to focus on today and enjoy their own lives much like Jim enjoyed his life. Nick Valvano says, "During Jimmy's entire illness and after the speech, he used to always tell me, 'Listen Nick, you're the older brother and you better stop and take a look at your life and get a better balance in it so that you don't keep looking for the future. Find today and make the most of it.' That changed my life and seeing someone you love go through an illness like that makes you think about what you do every day and what the value of what you do every day is. That's what Jim's ESPY speech tells me."

You have the same opportunity every day you are alive. Be enthusiastic, enjoy every day you have in front of you, and make the most of life's gifts, because as Jimmy V. reminds us, life is in the details and little gifts arrive often. We just have to seize their presence and unwrap each and every one, including those not visible to the eye.