



PHOTOS SPEAK M1



Photo courtesy of Loretta Claiborne • Child photo is not Loretta



FROM UNABLE TO WALK TO OLYMPIAN

IMAGINE

... you're on a stage getting ready to introduce a President of the United States! Would you be nervous? Would you be excited? Would you be grateful for everything in your life that brought you to this place? Loretta Claiborne was, exclaiming "Every Special Olympic race I've ever won made me want to be in the running for everything else in life." She's lived her life with self-control and gratitude.

Loretta Claiborne's life didn't start in a place of celebration. She was born partially blind. She did not walk or talk until she was four-years old. The doctors told her mom to put her in a special home because she was unable to learn. Her mom refused. Instead, she chose to send Loretta to a special education classroom.

Loretta hated being in school. She thought of it as a punishment. The other kids treated her horribly. They called her names. They didn't include her in anything. They taunted her all the time. Loretta used to cry – it was all she could do. Her teacher, to try and help Loretta avoid being bullied, would open the back door to the classroom five minutes before the last bell and say, "Run, Loretta, run!"

And run she did. She ran to get away from being bullied, and she ran to burn off the anger and hurt she felt from it. She used self-control through running instead of fighting back against all the kids who were mean to her. Eventually, she "stopped running to get away, and started running to get ahead." Loretta ran 26 marathons. She placed in the top 100 women finishers two times in the Boston Marathon. She competed in the Special Olympics from 1970 to 2005. She won a total of four gold medals, two silver medals, and one bronze medal in running.

Loretta didn't stop there, though. She says, sports "has always been my saving grace and a way for me to feel like I belonged. I was very angry before and sports was the arena that turned that around for me," she says. She went on to earn two

gold medals in bowling and a silver medal in figure skating at the Special Olympics, as well, She also has her black belt in karate and taught herself four languages, including sign language. She trains in soccer, skiing, golf, basketball, softball and tennis. She also earned two honorary doctorate degrees, making her the first person with an intellectual disability to receive such honors.

Loretta credits her success to self-control, saying, "I was slow at learning, but I kept knocking at it and knocking at it and knocking at it. When they were resting, I was still working at it." Loretta applied self-control to her life to overcome her anger, to learn, to run, to do everything. And she accomplished every hurdle with the self-control to go for the next one. She understood that each decision determines your future. How will you use self-control to determine your future and write your own best TrueSuccess lifestory?

Note: See more lifestories, videos and more: www.TrueSuccessTools.org.

QUESTIONS LEAD TO UNDERSTANDING M2/5

1. What evidence is there that Loretta used self-control? How did using self-control help Loretta?

2. How did Loretta handle being bullied by her peers?

3. How can you learn from Loretta's lifestory? How can you specifically use self-control in your own life?
