

Sustaining a lifetime passion for your sport

By Brad Stulberg, *Outside*

We all want to have long and healthy relationships with our athletic pursuits, so we take care of our bodies through proper training, sleep, nutrition, and mobility. And while that's all important—vital, even—few of us pay as much attention to how we nurture our minds.

For example, how do we sustain passion for a sport over the course of a lifetime? How do we keep a healthy perspective on competition? How do we bounce back when we fail to achieve our goals, and at the same time, prevent ourselves from becoming addicted to success and results?

The key, psychologists say, may lie in the difference between two mindsets: harmonious passion and obsessive passion. In harmonious passion, you become hooked on an activity—music, art, writing, sport—because of how it makes you feel; you are driven from within and want to get better for the sake of personal improvement and fulfillment. With obsessive passion, externals like achievement, results, rewards, and recognition become more important.

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