

GAME ON!

Master your mental game & take control of your performance

In this issue...

- *How to balance life and sport.*
- *Finishing your season strong.*
- *Stop wasting your time!*

"How I start the game is how I finish the game."

Gilbert Arenas, NBA Washington Wizards

THE BALANCE CHALLENGE

It's the million dollar question. Your athletic endeavors often require a significant time commitment, so how do you balance it all? It can be challenging to juggle your work, social life, family life, and personal life with your sport. There are times when you are thrown a curve ball or you get so consumed with the everyday details of life that you feel like your life is no longer in balance.

During these times it's important to take a step back and figure out how to regain your bearings.



Here are some signals life will throw you when your balance is off kilter:

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- You're forgetting or misplacing things
 - You're suddenly clumsy
 - You're easily angered or irritated
 - You get easily distracted
 - You're not getting your training in
 - You're not enjoying your sport
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SPRING FEVER!

When you're playing a sport, it doesn't have to be spring in order to get "Spring Fever". Spring Fever is a disease of motivation. Is your motivation starting to fizzle? Spring Fever is similar to another motivational disease called "Senior-itis". If it's getting close to the end of your season – do you have one foot in the door and one foot out? Are things calling to you from outside of your sport, like trips to the beach, lattes and apple fritters, pizza

and beer with friends?

Get a hold of yourself!

The way you end your season makes a bold statement. Do you want to blow past the finish line, or ease up to it?

Try a dose of this medicine to ease the symptoms of Spring Fever and Senior-itis. (Side effects may include accomplishing your goals and having a great season.)

Play Hooky - Sometimes a day off is all you need to

rejuvenate. Go do something spontaneous and fun.

Get Creative – Do something different and spice things up with some cross-training.

Replace Your Spark Plugs – Jump start your motivation with a little inspiration. Look at some photos or highlight reels of you kicking ass. Or check out some videos of other inspiring athletes in your sport.

Now get moving!

Stop Wasting Your Time

Is it possible that your inability to balance your sport participation with your life is a case of poor time management? Working on these skills can help in both areas of life.

Big time-wasters:

Obsessive E-mail Checking

Pick 3 times a day to check and respond to e-mails and stick to it!

Phone-aholic

You DO NOT need to answer the phone every time it rings.

First things first

Important projects, including training, should be given priority and done 1st (even before checking your e-mail!)

THE BALANCE CHALLENGE, CON'T

If you don't seek out that balance, life has a way of seeking it out for you. Everyone's balance between sport and life will be different. You have to figure out what the balance is for you (and also for your family). If you are experiencing any of the signals above, it's time to take stock.

The Multi-Tasking Myth

Multi-tasking is the most detrimental western cultural value. The myth of multi-tasking is that by splitting your focus between two things you will get more accomplished in less time. The reality is that it contributes to a culture of people who can't focus on one thing at a time!

Multi-tasking has its place, but if it's pervasive then it lessens the quality of everything you do. The #1 thing you can do to strike a balance between life and sport is to *be where you are when you're there*. When you're training, you're not

thinking about your to-do list for work. When you're at practice, you're not thinking about your chem test the next day. When you're hanging out with family and friends, you're not thinking about how stiff tomorrow's competition will be.



If you're in one place, but thinking about something else, you are never giving 100% of yourself to anything you do. Being in the moment will help you improve the quality of your relationships and the quality of your training and performance.

What Does it Mean to Me?

Being an athlete should add to the quality of your life. Your relationship with your sport will change over time. The meaning it had for you in the beginning may be different

than what it means to you now. Like any relationship, there is give and take, ups and downs... but overall, your participation should give you some joy.

If you feel like there is more stress than joy, it's time to take a step back and re-evaluate your relationship with your sport. It may just be a blip on the screen and life will bring you back to homeostasis once again. However, you should also be prepared to adjust. What was once in balance for you may not be the case anymore. It might be time to adjust your priorities and un-weight one side of the scale. This could mean taking an extra rest day to visit with family or saying "no" to the extra mile at work to get your training time in.

The only constant thing in life is change. You can fight the change and be miserable, or embrace it and look forward to the new joys and challenges you will face.

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