

Study Guide #6

What Sacrifices Do We Have to Make in Order to Do Great Things?

Parent & Child Study Guides to Watching a Sports Event

*Association for the Advancement
of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP)*

Watching a sports event can be a valuable learning experience for young people. Within the sporting arena we see both good and poor examples of such topics as: setting and working towards goals, focusing attention, managing emotions, handling disappointment, relating to others, dealing with nervousness, etc.

In order to maximize this learning opportunity, AAASP has developed a series of study guides for parents and children to use while watching a sports event, either in person or on television. Each guide is brief and focused around a limited topic. It suggests certain observations and presents several questions for the parent and child to discuss. The study guide concludes with a brief summary of important facts regarding the topic.

We hope that these guides will promote a healthy dialogue between parents and their children about various issues that athletes face during sporting events, as well as in preparation for competition. Your child doesn't necessarily need to be an athlete to benefit from these discussions, since children experience most of these issues in daily life, such as in school. We hope that this information is helpful to you in promoting healthy ideas about sport, exercise, and human performance in general.

Discussion questions: What Sacrifices Do We Have to Make in Order to Do Great Things?

While you watch a sports event:

1. What sacrifices do you think these athletes have made to get to the level at which they are competing?
2. Have you ever had to make a choice between playing your sport and doing something else that would be fun? How did you decide?
3. Can you think of other people in their lives who have made sacrifices to help them get there?
4. What have they all given up?
5. Do you think they are comfortable with the sacrifices they have made?
6. Have you ever had to make a sacrifice for something you do that's important to you? At school? In music? For your team?
7. What did that feel like to you? How did you deal with it?
8. Can you think of a sacrifice your family has made for you that has helped you achieve something you wanted?

Lesson conclusion

Successful athletes realize that sacrifice is part of competitive sport. Young athletes give up alternative activities to excel in one particular area. Often educational experiences are

modified and social experiences are limited to their sport, and coaching relationships. Parents and families of athletes make many sacrifices as well: carpooling, washing uniforms, preparing two dinners — one for a child involved in sport and one for the rest of the family — as well as attending practices, games and competition. There are also financial sacrifices families make to support the travel and training expenses of talented athletes. Most sport psychology consultants agree that the key to whether a sport experience has been worthwhile is whether the athlete has had the opportunity to grow and develop as a person. It is often the case that when parents are overly invested or identified with their child's success as an athlete, the experience may be considered a failure – regardless of outcome. Most parents support their child's experiences in sports because when done right, the experience often can do more than teach a child a particular physical skill. It can also teach the child some important life lessons.

AAASP encourages parents to do their part in creating a supportive youth sport environment so their child will develop a life long interest in physical activity and playing sports. By teaching the fundamentals, you can help your child develop a winning attitude, not only in sports but also throughout her or his life.

About AAASP

Founded in 1986, the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP) promotes the ethical practice, science and advocacy of the psychology of sport, exercise and health. AAASP is the premier international, multidisciplinary sport and exercise psychology organization, and is the only professional organization in North America that offers certification to qualified professionals who practice sport, exercise, and health psychology. For more information on this and other topics, or to find a certified sport psychology consultant in your area, visit <http://www.aaasponline.org>

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