



Fall 2014

### **A new Fall season: Time to find your passion and set your goals!**

Now that the summer is over and we have had the chance to rest our minds, bodies and souls, it's time to shake the cob webs out of our heads and get to work! Whether it's back to school or work it is time to think about our goals, objectives and how we can reach them. In this article we will focus on how to realize your true passion in life! We will look at what motivates you and how to turn that motivation and passion to reach your ultimate goal!

Sports coaches, professors, and corporate leaders regard passion as the main personal characteristic that distinguish individuals that succeed in life. It is their perseverance and true desire to excel that pushes them to maintain a positive outlook on the tasks ahead of them. It is their keen sense of determination and wanting to achieve their goals that prevail over the many obstacles encountered along the way.

The development of what is called **healthy passion** starts when we place personal interest into an activity that brings us joy and self-fulfillment. We devote time and effort into a chosen sport or profession because we feel personally rewarded and, in the process, obtain a great sense of personal gratification. When we feel healthy passion, individuals attach positive feelings and thoughts. These individuals are better able to manage the emotions related to the chosen activity and are more capable of navigating obstacles that are encountered along the way. Healthy passion promotes independence, competence and responsibility, which in young athletes are traits to a successful future.

On the other hand, **controlled passion** is linked to external fulfillment. When athletes do not fully embrace the chosen sport, they may spend a lot of time and effort working on improving their skills, but they lack true enthusiasm. Eventually, this creates inner conflict and, sooner or later, frustration and resentment. In controlled passion, individuals do not fully own their decision making. When young

athletes breathe frustration for not meeting self-imposed or somebody else's expectation, they leave the sport all together. Hence, the development of a healthy passion is what ultimately provides the gateway toward the achievement in a chosen sport or profession that fully brings self fulfillment, gratification, and positive emotions.

Let's work on identifying your passion!!

Start by taking a piece of paper and a pencil. Turn off any distracting noise and choose a place where you will devote time just for you. At the top of the paper write: Passion. Then, start by looking at what really motivates you. What is that you see yourself doing that brings a sense of ownership, gratification and self-fulfillment? Is it to be captain of a soccer team, receive a promotion, or improve your musical skills? Treat these goals as if they were your personalized mission statement!! What makes you get up early in the morning wanting to push forward and excel? What do you really want to accomplish? What would you like people to say about your accomplishments twenty years from now? As you imagine achieving what you set out for yourself, just notice what it feels like and what sensations come up for you. Imagining how proud and happy you will be. What positive emotions and thoughts do come to your mind?

The above questions are meant to stir in you an image where you are accomplishing your passion. They emphasize the "WHAT" we want to achieve. We now need to focus on the "HOW" to achieve them.

1. **Set doable goals:** Write down your ultimate goal and then break it down in short-term doable goals. Make these goals reasonable enough that they can be reached. As an example, you may use the work out experience at your gym. Set a goal to reach a certain number of reps knowing it will require just a bit of extra effort to make it.



2. **Implementation:** Focus entirely on your goals. This is not easy to do; we can become easily distracted by outside experiences or circumstances. However, your objective is to regain your focus on the task at hand. Practice different triggers, such as: stating positive words (I can do it, three more reps, five more minutes, etc), breathing (from your abdomen and in a slow motion), and/or imagining reaching your goals (visualize your success) to bring your full attention back to where it needs to be. Write these goals down and bring them with you to school, practice, or work.

3. **Finish line:** Give yourself permission to make mistakes and understand that setbacks will happen. Learn from each experience. Use unmet expectations as learning lessons. If you got distracted by somebody else's actions, then implement a mental trigger that will help you stay on course.

In essence, the key to reaching your goals is to maintain a healthy passion, stay focused, use directional triggers, allow for set backs, and direct your attention to the task at hand.

There is only one you. It is your game; your sport; your future.

If you are interested in how you can learn to reach your goals, please visit my website

<http://sportsmentaledge.com/>.

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*Alex Diaz, Ph. D.*  
*Sports Mental Edge™*  
*Sports Psychology Consultant*  
*Certified Performing Edge Coaching Professional*  
[WWW.SPORTSMENTALEDGE.COM](http://WWW.SPORTSMENTALEDGE.COM)  
*68 Main Street, Suite 340*  
*Tuckahoe, NY 10707*  
*(914) 793-9719*



*Dr. Alex Diaz is a Sports Psychology Consultant and a Certified Performing Edge Coaching Professional. He is also the Sports Consultant for Concordia College in Bronxville, NY. Dr. Diaz provides sports psychology mental strategies to school age and recreational athletes looking to enhance their performance when it matters.*

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