

*Girls, mothers, house-keepers, in all their performances,  
The group of laborers seated at noon-time with their open dinner-  
kettles, and their wives waiting,  
The female soothing a child—the farmer's daughter in the garden  
or cow-yard,  
The young fellow hoeing corn—the sleigh-driver guiding his six  
horses through the crowd,*

*The natural, perfect, varied attitudes—the bent head, the curv'd  
neck, and the counting;  
Such-like I love—I loosen myself, pass freely, am at the mother's  
breast with the little child,  
Swim with the swimmers, wrestle with wrestlers, march in line with  
the firemen, and pause, listen, and count.*

WALT WHITMAN

Remember, sweat is your passport to sing the body electric. It doesn't matter how fast or slow you are, or what activity you are doing. If you are out there moving you are tapping the nervous system—the body electric—and you are doing it *The Athlete's Way*. You are part of the athletic culture. Kinship, physical activity, and energy balance are the three pillars of longevity, and they are all part of a modern Spartan life lived *The Athlete's Way*.

*With life and nature, purifying thus the elements of feeling and of  
thought, and sanctifying, by such discipline both pain and fear, until  
we recognize a grandeur in the beatings of the heart.*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

### EIGHT WAYS TO MOMENTOUS HAPPINESS

*To me, there are three things that we should do every day of our  
lives. Number one is laugh. You should laugh every day. Number  
two is think. You should spend some time in thought. And number  
three is, you should have your emotions moved to tears, could be  
happiness or joy. But think about it. If you laugh, you think and you*

*cry, that's a full day. That's a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week, you're going to have something special.*

**JIM VALVANO** (AMERICAN BASKETBALL COACH, NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY)

The essentials to human fulfillment are always going to be: family, friendship, love, and respect—a sense of purpose and belonging to a community. Nothing sums up these traits in sport as well as the starting line of any local race. For me, the starting line of the weekend races in Central Park embody individualism blended with collectivism, which are the heart of *The Athlete's Way*.

Sport is about people coming together to push against their own limits, to cheer one another on, to feel part of a group, and to earn respect while family and peers either run by them side by side or cheer from the sidelines. Central Park on any given weekend morning is a very cosmopolitan pagan ritual of villagers communing to move together, laugh together, gasp for air, grunt, burst open with delight, cheer, and sweat together.

*Happiness is an attitude. We either make ourselves miserable, or happy and strong. The amount of work is the same.*

**UNKNOWN**

Through my work as an athlete and as a coach I have come up with eight points that are the source of positive psychology. Put up your antennae and think of ways to incorporate this list into your life. If you live by these rules your life will be in good shape. Be creative and think of ways that you can include these into your daily athletic routine.

1. **TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY:** *Get seven to eight hours of sleep, exercise for at least twenty to thirty minutes most days of the week, maintain energy balance, drink plenty of water, don't do drugs or smoke. Practice safe sex. Respect yourself. Don't be self-destructive.*
2. **FAMILY AND FRIENDS:** *Strong personal relationships mean more than money, status, or your job title. Family, friends, and community are essential to happiness and longevity. Fortify your sense of community as an athlete and nonathlete. Join a club or a class at a local gym or community center. Be open and friendly;*

*make new friends every day. Spread good cheer in every human encounter you have.*

3. *LAUGHTER AND LEVITY: People laugh thirty times more when they are in the company of others than when they're alone. Laughter heals, stress kills. Lighten up. Make it a conscious effort to smile and laugh a lot. You'll live longer. Have fun working out with people. Exercise puts people in a good mood. Trigger neurobiological joy by smiling when you work out. Smiling and laughing sends a signal to your nervous system that all is well and you're having fun. Put the cart before the horse. This is called the facial feedback loop. Use it. Smile and the world smiles with you—it's true.*
4. *LOOK FORWARD TO SOMETHING: A sense of anticipation makes people healthy and happy. Put things on the horizon that you can look forward to. A sense of curiosity and eagerness gives you a sense of purpose and a reason to seize the day. Pick a race or have a group exercise event on your weekly or monthly calendar. Play it forward in your mind—and get yourself psyched up.*
5. *GRATITUDE AND SIMPLE JOYS: Take time to count your blessings from little things like a good meal to big things like watching your children grow up. Music and pets are also a key to improving your mood and lowering blood pressure. Take pleasure in every breath and the celebration of being alive—the joy of movement and sweat. Watch the world news and realize that of the 6.5 billion people on Earth, odds are that most are probably worse off than you.*
6. *DO SOMETHING WELL: You want to hone a skill and become really good at something. Find your calling in life and become the absolute best at it that you can. Work hard and pour your heart into it. Mastery is the key to fulfillment. Mastering an athletic skill is an easy place to start, even if it is just becoming the best spinner in spin class or the best stepper in step class. Master it.*
7. *DEVELOP COPING MECHANISMS FOR HARDSHIPS: The mechanism for getting through hard times is threefold: a belief that you are a survivor, an understanding that it is temporary, and a willingness*

*to reach out for your support network. Face the dragon head-on and do not hide under the covers, and you'll weather any storm. Sport gives you tenacity and resilience, just by getting from point A to point B and finishing what you start. Remember, these changes happen at a neural level.*

8. *GIVE SOMETHING BACK: Try to practice selfless acts of kindness toward family, friends, and strangers every day. This can be altruistic—and should be—but it also creates a positive feedback loop of feeling generous and appreciated and will bring you reciprocated kindness. Create more systematic ways of philanthropy by finding a regular activity like being a mentor or volunteering that you can use to make a contribution to the world. Once you start doing it The Athlete's Way, recruit other people, show them why you love sport, and how to make it a part of their lives.*

### THE HUMANIST ATHLETE INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

*Seven sins: wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, politics without principle.*

MAHATMA GANDHI

The Lance Armstrong “LIVEstrong” phenomenon exemplifies the perfect blend of individualism and collectivism in sport. By spending one dollar to buy a yellow rubber bracelet, any individual can donate to the Lance Armstrong Foundation for cancer research and become part of a group with an ethos and credo that could be identified across the room. The small bright yellow band of rubber serves as a daily reminder of the code of conduct the wearer has committed to and an ever-present memento to stay on course.

*A soul without a high aim is like a ship without a rudder.*

EILEEN CADDY

Individualism is a philosophy in life that stresses the priority of personal goals over those of a group. There is a desire to remain autonomous