

Pressure Points

For those who perform under pressure

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Let the Games Begin!

Four years of preparation for one brief shot at glory - few, if any, events can compare to the Olympics. This issue of *Pressure Points* is dedicated not only to the athletes competing in the 2008 Summer Games, but to every individual regardless of performance domain who dares to dream and reach for the stars.

Enjoy watching the Olympics, but don't forget to get off the couch and get in a little exercise for yourself!

Charlie Brown PhD

REAL Reality TV

Make Watching the Olympics a Family Affair

In this world of chronic obesity, video games, and "let's get famous by eating bugs and/or doing something stupid on TV," the Olympics are an oasis of life lessons to prepare your children for real-world success. The 2008 Summer Games are an opportunity for parents to promote a healthy, active lifestyle and to help children learn about setting goals, working hard, handling disappointments, and dealing with pressure.

The Association of Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) has developed a series of "learning guides" for parents and children to use together while viewing the Olympics (<http://appliedsportpsych.org/resource-center/parents>). The guides are a series of topics and questions that adults can discuss with children and develop a healthy dialogue. "Your child doesn't need to be an athlete to benefit from these discussions, as children experience most of these issues in daily life," explains Dr. Sean McCann, U.S. Olympic Committee Sport Psychologist and AASP President Elect.

The topics are good (see listing on Page 2), but the real power comes in the dialogue generated by the questions. For example, here are some suggestions from the learning

guide on goal setting: Do you think the athletes set just one goal of getting to the Olympics, or did they set little goals along the way? Have you ever set a goal and not made it? Did it make you want to give up or work harder? Do you think the Olympic athletes achieved every single goal they ever set?

This is a chance to nurture your children's dreams. Many of our American athletes started their Olympic journey after being inspired while watching the Olympics on television as a youth. Each athlete started out as "the kid next door" - perhaps not next to you personally, but next door to someone. That neighborhood child dared to dream.

Olympic athletes are making their dreams a reality through dedication and hard work, rather than by deception and audacity that is too often promoted on so-called "reality TV." Families across the world will be glued to their televisions to see how these dreams play out. Take time to discuss how these athletes have arrived at this moment in time, and you will transform the experience to more than entertainment; the process becomes a lesson in life.



Where to Watch

NBC is going all out for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games with over 1,400 hours of television programming, plus 2,000 hours of on-line live coverage. Check the current schedule at:

http://www.nbcolympics.com/tv_and_online_listings/index.html

AASP Learning Guides

The Association of Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) offers free Learning Guides on the following topics:

- Importance of Good Sporting Behavior
- Negative Effects of Poor Sporting Behavior
- Cooperation vs. Competition Within a Team
- Defining Success (Winning and Losing)
- Setting Goals in Sport and Life
- What Sacrifices Do We Have to Make in Order to Do Great Things?
- Using Five Minutes Before Your Performance
- Dealing with Nervousness
- Learning to Focus
- Dealing with Disappointment
- Resilience: "Bouncing Back Quickly"

Go to: <http://appliedsportpsych.org/resource-center/parents>

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Founded in 1986, the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) is an international, multidisciplinary, professional organization that promotes the ethical practice, science and advocacy of sport and exercise psychology. With more than 1,200 members in 28 countries, AASP is a worldwide leader, sharing research and resources with the public via its Web site, www.appliedsportpsych.org.



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That which is essential is invisible to the eye
- The Fox
(from *The Little Prince*)

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