

Athletics

Dance is an accepted form of athletics now, and the athleticism of some dancers awes many of us. Exercise is much more pervasive, since we are so much healthier and have focus on cultivating health. All kids in all schools have regular and diverse athletic, dance, exercise, movement and physical activity. It is common for us to walk, run or bike through beautiful parks to get to work, school, or anywhere.

Showers are available to the public in many places, so we can clean up afterwards. Gyms are common, and many are open and free to any who behave themselves in communities. Waters are now clean, so we can swim safely in city rivers and lakes, and pools are widely available, many of them shared freely. It is very common for people to exercise in nature, combining benefits of exercise and being in nature.

To a very large extent, we have de-emphasized or de-commissioned high-stakes competitive sports. Their focus on creating opposition, conflict, primitive tribal energies, harm to players, money and winners and losers is mostly viewed as inconsistent with our shared principles, values and intentions.

Some were ritualized warfare, with teams like armed forces, coaches as generals and players as fodder. They glorified winning and made losers feel bad. They set up competition, winning and losing as normal. Professional sports were fleecing the public of their hard-earned money to make money for the wealthy. It was an addictive obsession for many, spending free time passively watching it, instead of living life. Unbelievably, fans hated each other, and they would fight and harm each other over physical games.

Today, most spectator sports involve athletes engaging with physical challenges, many of them novel. Obstacle courses are right out of fantasy novels, with obstacles that are mentally and physically hard. We enjoy seeing people's experiences with these challenges, and their feats of individual athleticism.

The focus of many races is less on who's fastest, often determined by mere fractions of seconds, and more on who is really improving, or who is overcoming what personal challenges along their ways. Spectators may be far more captivated with seeing someone with a handicap overcome their challenges than seeing the best athlete do well, over and over.

Team sports often involve shared challenges, with the goal to overcome the challenge, not beat others. We love experiences requiring coordination and cooperation between team members to succeed, and we love seeing novel challenges confronted and overcome with clever thinking and collaboration. Confronting shared challenges in sports models ways we confront shared challenges elsewhere.

Good sportsmanship is as important as good performance. We respect and admire character.