



MONTH OF APRIL

Life Lessons Part 2

from

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Thanks to MT. Hood Summer Ski
Camp for supporting VARA click the
logo for camp details!

Spring is here! We are still racing in Vermont through the weekend of April 7-8. There are a few more opportunities on the slopes to realize and address the life lessons that being involved in sports can provide.

Good luck and enjoy!

Julie Woodworth - VARA Executive Director

LIFE LESSONS PART 2



As promised...

[\(Life Lessons Part 1 link\)](#)

LIFE LESSONS IN YOUTH SPORTS-PART 2

11. Know Your Strengths and Weaknesses: Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses and knowing these is an important skill of self-evaluation. It's important for athletes to know what they're good at and what they struggle with so that they can address their weaknesses and use their strengths to their benefit.

12. Being Healthy is Important: Young athletes will have a far greater chance of staying fit and healthy later in life if they play youth sports at a young age. They develop skills and movements that will carry-over to other sports. As an adult it will be that much easier to jump on a bike or take a family ski vacation.

13. You Must Discipline Yourself: Improving your skiing skills means having the self-discipline to work hard on the things you need to work on. Not necessarily

the things that are the most fun such as fundamental ski drills. This is what is best for LTAD (long term athlete development).

14. How to Deal with Pressure and Stress: Whether we like it or not, there can be a lot of pressure in youth sports. Youth sports allows for learning how to deal with the nerves and stress they feel in these situations in a safe environment. This is all a learning experience and will help them get comfortable with pressure situations they'll encounter later on in life like public speaking or sitting for their first exam.

15. You're Responsible For Yourself: Youth sports, especially ski racing, is one of the first places where children start to take on some serious responsibility. There is a lot of equipment in ski racing that you need to make sure you have for a day of training. It is not mom or dad's responsibility to remember skis, boots, poles, helmet, goggles, mittens, neck warmer, ski pass, water, food etc. and let's hope the jacket is worn on the way out the door! Not only are athletes responsible for their equipment but they are also responsible for their actions and for their own improvement.

16. Life Isn't Always Fair: This is a tough rule for athletes to learn at an early age but one that is gradually taught nonetheless. Injuries happen, sickness happens, family incidents happen, things will happen and athletes have to learn to accept them and move on because most of the time, sulking about it isn't going to change anything.

17. Together Everyone Achieves More

T - Together
E - Everyone
A - Achieves
M - More

Athletes will gain social skills by interacting with and meeting new people with similar interests which will carry-over into all of their relationships.

They'll learn how to deal with conflicts between teammates, how to interact with a number of different personality types, and even how to get along with people they don't like.

18. There Will be Tough Times: Perseverance is a skill that's important for athletes to learn at an early age. There will be setbacks, failures and obstacles they must overcome. Athletes will experience the emotions that come with these obstacles and failures and will learn how to push through them and not quit when it gets tough.

Then it comes back to consistent hard work and being patient. Remember, success doesn't happen overnight.

19. How to Manage Time Efficiently: Depending on age, most youth sports athletes have a lot of commitments that they must juggle. Attending school, homework, sports, family, friends, employment, and possibly other activities. This leads to an overly packed schedule for most athletes. The only way to get it all done is to prioritize and manage your time efficiently. Children can start developing time management skills by planning their

days themselves. Obviously, this is done with parental assistance but it's a fantastic skill to work on for their future.

20. Focus on What You Can Control: Two things that athletes can control at all times are their effort and attitude. There's simply no point being upset over things that you can't change. Athletes must learn that there's no point dwelling on things that are out of their control. For example, you can't control the weather so focus on the things you can control like the line you want to ski as you head on to the steep pitch or the line you want to ski through the under gate on the GS course. You have no control over someone else's run so focus on your run not your opponents.

Conclusion: You now have 20 life skills that are learned through participating in youth sports. So whether it's ski racing, soccer, football, swimming or any other sport, GO OUT there and HAVE FUN and learn a little along the way!



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Please visit the [VARA Youth Coordinator Page](#) on the [VARA](#) site.