

HUDSON VALLEY TRIATHLON CLUB

Understanding Your Ego

By Mark Wilson-Triathlon Coach

Would you like to be a respected, confident and successful athlete? Does it feel good when your peers speak well of you as a competitor? Can you be aggressive in the heat of the moment, yet turn it off when the training session or race is over? Do you speak kindly of your training partners? All of these questions point directly at your ego or definition of self. If you are having the sensation of separateness in your workouts or life in general, then your ego has run wild and needs to be understood quickly before the world as you know it turns nasty, fast. Let's do some exploring!

Everybody wants to be respected, admired and, well...loved! But rarely does one receive those gifts by acting like an ignoramus. What is acting like an ignoramus? Well, dropping everybody on the group ride time and again. After awhile, no-one will want to ride with you because you insist on "winning" all the time. But you know the old saying, right? "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing!" This type of attitude tends to attract more of the same. Have you ever noticed that the people around you tend to be like you? Well, if you're a "win at all costs" type of person, guess who you attract into your life? You got it! Give respect, admiration and yes, love, and that's what you'll receive.

Confidence, without a doubt, has to be a part of who you are as a human being, not to mention as an athlete. It must be present or you'd crumble in a heap of fear every time you toed the start line. However, healthy self-esteem has a different feeling than cocky. Sure you're trying to stay focused for your race, but isn't a simple hello or thumbs-up to your buds a given? Don't take yourself so damn seriously! This is supposed to be fun; remember? Encourage others and you'll receive the same.

Speak kindly of everyone! There's probably not a more disgusting feeling than to hear the guys/gals next to you at a race severely judging someone; especially if you know the individual being slammed! The Universe is listening, too, so be sure that when others are attempting to grind the conversation into a personal gossip/gripe session, quietly walk away and avoid the onslaught. Or you can add, "Yeah, but man can they bike!" in order to shift the mood to a more positive light. No matter what, even if it's your most dreadful adversary, keep it clean and pleasant. Speak well of others and they'll do the same of you.

The sensation of feeling separate in one's life or among peers is an indication of ego-mania run rampant. You can ask yourself, "Am I including others in my life and activities?" If you find yourself thinking only of your training or next race on the schedule, there's a good chance others will ignore you, too. Realize that the ones that most truly love and support you are the one's who are the closest; take care of them, and they'll take care of you.

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Making goodness a daily habit is something you can do that will change your life dramatically! Allow your ego to fall to the side and give to others what you'd like given in return. Apply the "random acts of kindness" rule at your next race or training session and see what the outcome brings; you may be pleasantly surprised. See ya out there!

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