

## IS WINNING EVERYTHING?

*"Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."* -- Henry Russell (Red) Sanders

Is this true? An absolute truth?

I will try to explain this controversial issue in this essay. When we are little kids all we hear is "*Winning is not everything; participating it's what really counts*". From my experiences in life I can tell you that this statement is not necessarily true. While this answer might sound arrogant and not "politically correct", I will explain why "winning IS everything" for me.

In my opinion, winning is what counts. "*Win or die*" is a phrase I like to use which, although sounds strong, is what I think towards any competitive situation in which I have been involved throughout my life. I have learned plenty from my experiences. These experiences have shown me that just participating or losing is not significant. But really, who likes to lose? I would dare to state that no one likes to lose. No one. I think it's human nature to strive to win. Participating gives you many different and sometimes good feelings but, at the end winning is what really counts.

Personal experiences have taught me plenty about participating, losing and winning. These experiences have made me accept that winning is everything. It shows you to fight for what you want and believe in yourself. I was the president of the Student Council of my school and this was one of the experiences that made me believe that fighting for what you want and winning is everything. Had I not won the elections, I would not hold that honorable position nor the experience that I lived in that moment.

When it comes to sports I can talk plenty of it. Playing competitive sports such as Soccer and Flag Football has made me believe in myself and recognize what I can do and what I don't. To be able to win you need to fight for it, you need to put as much effort as it is required. Team success is achieved when all individuals work together and win. It depends on me, on the effort and dedication I put to the sport I play. Always do your best and strive passionately towards it, because if not, don't expect to win.

We live in an ultra-competitive society; this applies at all aspects of it. Simply participating will not assure you success. This applies to most everything in life: academics, sports, careers and yes, even personal relationships. While our past generations could "get by" and become successful by just participating, today's socio-economic reality forces me to believe that winning is everything, just like Henry Russell's quote.

There is a recent, politically correct view that believes that just participating, whether you win or lose is everything. There's an actual debate nowadays about who should get recognitions such as trophies, medals, etc. There is a vision that

everyone who participates should be recognized, just for participating. But how can then you distinguish and reward those who actually win? It can be argued that those that win, worked harder to get to where they are. That's why only they should get the awards or rewards they deserve.

The belief that 'winning is everything' is refuted by many. For example, we have the modern Olympic sentiment expressed by its founder Pierre de Coubertin: "*The most important thing. . . is not winning but taking part*". Another example comes from sports journalist Grantland Rice that, "*it's not that you won or lost but how you played the game...*" While these are valid sentiments, I don't necessarily agree with them or those who also believe in these views.

I am a competitive young woman who will fight to win. I have lost some battles throughout my 17 years of life. These failures have made me a firm believer in what I am striving for when competing. Rest assured that my next challenges in life will not be an exception.