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## Competition as Motivation - What is Pushing You to Succeed?

**Competition is a powerful fuel for motivation.**

As I mentioned recently, [I ran my first 10k race](#). Without that race pending on my calendar for three months, I would currently be able to run about 17 consecutive feet...maybe. I would weigh about 20 pounds more. I would not be waking up before 6:00am every day and writing. I would generally feel like crap and be a lot less productive.

Why did I finish the race? Why did I train so hard? Why am I now targeting at least one more race this year and a few next year, including setting a goal to run the half marathon next fall in less than 1:54? *Because I am competitive. I was not going to fail.* I was going to do everything I could to achieve my goal, including waking up earlier, running in the dark, running when it hurt, and running when I really didn't want to. And now I am hooked. That race was only the beginning.

***Competition helps us to get and stay motivated. It helps us generate new energy when we are stagnated.***

Let's face it, most of us are competitive to some extent. We are competitive with each other, with ourselves, with time. If we are playing a sport, I want to beat you, plain and simple. Sure, I will enjoy the game either way, but the fact is **I will get more enjoyment out of it if I win.**

We are not only competitive with each other, but with ourselves; with our pasts. If last week I ran 3 miles in 29:12, this week I want to run 3 miles in 29:00. I am going to challenge myself to run just a little bit faster or a little bit farther, every single time.

This is nothing new...it's ingrained in us, I believe from our Creator.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ~ 1 Corinthians 9:24

We set goals that challenge us. But competition makes it even more fun.

**It works...even in individual pursuits**

When I was a teenager, I played competitive golf. My senior year I was ranked #1 in Tennessee. Tournaments were what I lived for. But at that age, I really only got to play about 12 tournaments each year and most of those were during a 10-week stretch of the summer.

So, what did I do? I got with my friend Hunter and we would spend hours practicing together. Rarely did we just mindlessly hit balls or practice without it turning into a competition. Our contests on the chipping green were legendary. Incredibly competitive and deeply fierce, for one simple reason...we both hated to lose. We stayed motivated and in tournament readiness *year round*.

We got better at every aspect of our games because we pushed each other. Sometimes we encouraged each other, and there is certainly a time and place for that, but most of the time we were trying to beat in each other's brains. We talked trash, we purposely chose shots that we were good at and the other was not, all in the interest of winning. ***And we both got better.***

I am learning that what works for me is to make challenging things a competition. Sometimes it's to win an award as a byproduct of my work or to write X number of posts in a week, or simply to run five miles twenty seconds faster than I did last week. I am more excited, more motivated, and habitually dedicated to reaching my goals now...and I am getting a lot better in so many ways.

***How has competition motivated you? Who or what pushes you to get better?***