



## The connection between sports and leadership

The very nature of sports is such that if one wants to play a game, it becomes necessary to understand two basic conditions. One thing is, there can be no sport unless one plunges into it 100%. You may go to work halfhearted, you may live halfhearted, you may do everything in your life halfhearted, but a sport is one thing you cannot do halfhearted. Unless you plunge yourself into it, there is no game. Incidentally, this is an absolute requirement for a leader too—that he learns to participate, that he doesn't hold himself back in anything, that he learns to give himself absolutely. Sports set the rhythm for every human being to become a leader in his own right.

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The second aspect that is common for both sports and leadership is to understand that you cannot play a game unless you develop a strong desire to win. If one says he does not want to win, or if he has no desire to achieve, there is no sport. At the same time, sports also sets this condition – you really want to win, but you're willing to lose. If you lose, it is alright with you. This is most essential for a leader: that he goes out to achieve things; at the same time when things do not happen, he will not become a bundle of frustrations. Whenever you set big goals in your life, many things don't happen. People who do not set big

goals may believe that many things are happening in their lives; just because they are not aspiring for more.

So the very fundamentals of leadership is that you aspire to achieve certain things, to take people on with you towards that goal, and when it doesn't happen, for whatever reason, you are only seeing how to make it happen, but never will you become a bundle of frustration. These two conditions and these two requirements, which are most essential for leadership, are naturally inculcated in the very nature of the sport. So sport can become a tremendous tool in building leaders, as we have seen with the rural sports that we organize as a part of our social project – Action for Rural Rejuvenation. We have built any number of leaders just by playing a game. We have seen through the various programs that we have conducted - of all of which sport is an essential part - how people are able to come out of their limitations and take on the leadership for that moment of handling that particular situation, just because they are involved in a game which sets them up as a leader.

So leadership and sport are very, very directly connected. All the qualities or the fundamental qualities that are necessary for a leader are naturally brought forth when one learns to play a game.

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*Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is a visionary humanitarian and a prominent spiritual leader who is equally at home whether addressing the World Economic Forum, working with heads of States, consulting executives of multinational corporations, or talking to hardcore criminals at prisons. He serves as a reminder that inner sciences are not esoteric philosophies from an outdated past, but a contemporary science vitally relevant to our times. Readers are welcome to send queries about spiritual or worldly matters to [sadhguru@ishafoundation.org](mailto:sadhguru@ishafoundation.org). For more information on Isha Foundation, please visit [www.ishafoundation.org](http://www.ishafoundation.org)*