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## How sports can help us overcome past traumas

**Daniel Pressello**

The Courage and Strength Games, Canada

Life itself is in many ways very competitive, too competitive to some degree. We are more concerned about the competition (the game and our role,) that we often miss out on the joy of the game. We begin this game at early stages of our lives, being pushed to think and train our brains to always be in a competitive state of thinking. This is no pun intended when I state the term “Racing Thoughts”, which to many kids, youth and young adults are experiencing at never, at levels never witnessed before. These racing thoughts lead to high levels of anxiety, depression, problems, concentrating, reducing our cognitive abilities, which in turn can lead to anger issues, substance extermination, and abuse. A recent study showed since the release of the iPhone 5 (2007 to 2015) tweens, teens, and college/university students have confirmed, by online/phone activity (number of hours,) and by their own admittance that has never felt so alone, or not included even though we can connect and socialize more than ever before with people. With a sexual assault occurring every 98 seconds for example in the US and over 1,46,000 children a day staying home from school, because school is to be frightening and Sports can help us re-train our brains from both a cognitive aspect, as well as a mental & emotional aspect. A fall, a slip can lead to a devastating injury, that can and often is traumatic for both amateur and professional athletes from a mental and emotional aspect. One of the most important things I have learned and have been taught to overcoming my past traumas, is the quicker I am able to let it go (meaning the past,) the quicker I recover. This is also true of athletes, they can't change the fact that they were injured, because of their actions, or some else's. For a full and proper recovering to occur, they are taught, and they train themselves to quickly and properly let go of their grief and anguish of the injury and focus on their present and future. Mental and emotional recovery from past traumas is not a one size shoe fits all approach of prescribing medications for both physical and mental & emotional pain, associated with issues such as PTSD. Sports has shown to be beneficial in many aspects of helping people deal with past traumas.

### Biography

Daniel Pressello has both personal life experiences and professional experiences with mental health issues and concerns. He studied at Vancouver College of Counsellor Training, earning 16 certificates in mental health therapy courses and programs. He was studying towards his MA in Social Work, but sidelined due to on personal health issues and concerns. During the summer of Prince Harry's Invictus Games in Toronto, Canada he was suicidal, but after watching and viewing information about Prince Harry's InVictus Games, he thought why can't there, or is there any sporting event for everyone that is experiencing or has experienced mental health issues and concerns. As he watched athletes compete and during personal interviews heard repeatedly solders, tell their story of how they gained The Courage & Strength to face their demons, in dealing with grief and loss of comrades, or their own limbs and through support of others & sports. As indirect result of hearing and watching these soldiers tell and share their very same feeling of suicide, worthlessness, heading done the path of self-destruction. Through those soldiers and through Prince Harry, I decided not to kill myself and I just knew from that moment on, I found my reason for living and I had to, help others that may be dealing with PTSD etc., find their reason to want to live.

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