

A Loss Can Be a Win

Nicolay Atkins

BEFORE YOU READ: Based on the title, what do you think this article will be about?

Soccer Is Just a Game, But...

People struggle with a lot of things in life. Sometimes it can be hard to send your children to school, to pay the bills, and to put food on the table. Struggles can make your life a living hell. They can make you want to give up on life. But it can make all the difference if you have positive people around you when you need help.

I love to play soccer. It's my favorite sport. When I was 16, I played on a team. We worked hard and had fun, but it was also sad at times.

Why am I talking about sports when I started out talking about life's struggles? Yes, soccer is just a game, but it taught me something about struggle.

You Have to Want to Win

To be the best in the league, we had to train five days a week! We worked very hard and made sacrifices. Sometimes, people of the community would come and watch us practice, and they helped motivate us. The coach showed us how to play like a team and move as one. He told us that we should play like a team that wants to win!

The first match we played my team won! We laughed and talked about the fun things that happened in the game. The next week we were back to training! We practiced hard. We won more games and our team went to the finals. We played hard but the other team scored on a penalty kick. After that, we tried so hard to score, but we did not. The other team won the final match.

If You Fight, Then You Win, Even If You Lose

My team was sad, but we were also happy. We fought hard together and improved our skills. We did better than we expected. We made friends and



we felt support from our community. We learned what it means to work together on something and to put your whole heart into it. We learned the importance of teamwork.

The struggles we face in life can be hard. They can build you up and mash you down. To face your struggles, it's good if you have a team that knows how to move as one. Maybe your team is your family, and you are all helping each other. Or maybe your team is your friends. When struggle comes at you, stay with your team and just fight to the end and be positive.

AFTER YOU READ:

- **1.** What does the author learn by playing soccer?
- **2.** Who is on your team?
- **3.** Have you ever had experience with a loss also being a win? Tell your story.

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