

How Spiritual Advancement Can Improve an Athletes Performance

By
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Introduction

Usain Bolt is widely considered to the greatest sprinter of all time. An eight-time Olympic gold medallist, Bolt won the 100 m, 200 m and 4 × 100 m relay at three consecutive Olympic Games, although he lost the 2008 relay gold medal due to a teammate's doping disqualification. Bolt improved upon his second 100 m world record of 9.69 with 9.58 seconds in 2009 – the biggest improvement since the start of electronic timing. He has twice broken the 200 metres world record, setting 19.30 in 2008 and 19.19 in 2009.

As documented in America The Jesuit Review

“On your marks. Bolt holds his finger to his mouth to quiet the crowd, or perhaps himself. He steps forward. He looks ahead. His smile is gone. He stretches his feet back onto the starting blocks and spreads his hands on the track. Head down, a Miraculous Medal hangs from his neck. Feet set on the blocks, he shifts onto his knees and looks toward the finish line. Then, in front of the 35 million viewers who tuned into this race, Bolt makes the sign of the cross, closing his eyes as he swipes his hand across his chest. He raises a finger to his lips and then toward the sky, as he looks upward. His eyes linger there for a healthy moment. The starting gun fires, and the sprinters burst off the blocks. As usual, Bolt has a slow start, but at 50 meters he picks up and blazes down the track. The Miraculous Medal sways from his neck like a metronomic pulse. He burns through the finish line and eases into a jog in front of the crowd. He gets down on a knee, lowers his head and crosses himself again before standing. Born and raised in Sherwood Content, Jamaica, Bolt grew up in a Seventh-day Adventist home. Although he attended an S.D.A. church during his youth, he did not become a member as an adult. As a Catholic, he has taken the middle name St. Leo. He has talked about praying the nights before his meets. He is open in interviews about his belief in God. The Vatican even invited Bolt to speak at the TEDx Via della Conciliazione conference on religious freedom in 2013.”

According to the Iron You – Andy Murray, A Bikram Yoga Enthusiast

“Whatever your game, there’s a point at which your physical conditioning become more important than the ritual of practice. And apparently including Bikram yoga in his training has played a crucial part in his physical metamorphosis. The tennis star admitted that Bikram Yoga has helped him beat players like Roger Federer because it made him mentally stronger.

According to SFGATE – Keeping the Faith / Chang gets strength from his religion

"Everything kind of works out the way it should," said Chang, who began first-round play in the Sybase Open last night at San Jose Arena. "God has a plan for everything."

Sports and religion always have formed an uneasy alliance. Just as in real life, no one wants it showing up, unannounced, at the front door. Any talk of God's will imposing itself on a high

fastball or a well- placed passing shot elicits reflexive groans from those who think God is probably off imposing his will in more important venues. Chang, however, sees ripples where others see pinpoints. You win the French Open at 17 -- the youngest men's Grand Slam winner -- and the world opens up to your message. At least that part of the world that doesn't immediately turn itself off".

Is their evidence to suggest that these religious/spiritual practices helped Bolt's remarkable achievements in athletics; Murray's performance in beating Roger Federer, winning 3 grand slam singles titles and 2 gold medals at the Olympics; and Chang's performance in being the youngest men's grand slam winner at 17 years, 110 days? And could these athletes have improved their performance with different religious/spiritual practices?

Forces of Nature

The four fundamental forces of nature are well established as the gravitational force, weak nuclear force, electromagnetic force and strong nuclear force. The weak and strong forces are effective only over a very short range and dominate only at the level of subatomic particles. Gravity and electromagnetic force have infinite range.

In March/April 2013 the author felt a force as something leaving the body whilst visualising a bird in supposedly the spiritual world. This suggests that there is an additional force in nature of something of spiritual substance in which cannot be defined by science. This encounter with the bird appears to reflect the situation when Jesus was baptized as documented in the Bible. Mathew 3:16 "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him". Even further, there was a dead bird present a few days later with only the feathers (there was no body present) indicating some form of 'resurrection'.

Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is a conversation between Arjuna, a supernaturally gifted warrior about to go into battle, and Krishna – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his charioteer. In the course of giving Arjuna all manner of spiritual and material advice, Krishna explains karma, the self, the Supreme Self, the purpose of yoga, the difference between our self and our material body, how our environment affects our consciousness, and how to attain the perfection of life. The Gita appears as a central chapter in the Mahabharata, the history of greater India. It is the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important books of Vedic literature. Lord Krishna spoke the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna about 5000 years ago and through disciplic succession the Bhagavad Gita As It Is gives commentary on the verses by Lord Krishna by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Pradhupada. Essentially the Bhagavad Gita As It Is is the highest authoritative text to explain the universe and the commentary is "almost" 100% accurate.

What defines a human

From the Bhagavad Gita As It Is our bodies are composed of both material and spiritual. The material body contains the gross body (earth, water, fire, air and space) and the subtle body (mind, intelligence and false ego). But above all these elements there is the spiritual soul. There's no life in the material elements, life is the spiritual soul which is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. The soul contains two parts the individual soul and the Supersoul (a plenary expansion of God). The soul is one ten thousandth the size of the tip of a hair and is located in the heart, and cannot be measured under laboratory conditions. The material body is currently dead. The only thing keeping it alive is the soul or consciousness (energy emitted by the soul). At the end of this life we reincarnate into another body depending on our karma. Ideally you want to achieve a spiritual body and escape the re-birth and death process and hence travel the entire universe with Krishna in total bliss – that is our purpose in life. Three quarters of the universe is spiritual. There are 8.4 million species of life including 400,000 species of humans (based on our level of consciousness). Every form of life contains an individual soul and a Supersoul.

Types of life

Typically, there is plant, animal and human forms of life. But there is a higher form of human life known as demigods but still have a material body (they are not God, which is purely spiritual). Demigods can typically walk through walls, walk on water and have healing powers. Jesus for example was a demigod. Through quantum tunneling it is proven scientifically that a human can walk through a wall with a very low probability. The highest level of consciousness for a human is walking through a wall. Therefore, it could be argued that a demigod is in fact the highest form of a human. This also shows the transition from material to spiritual knowledge. It is well established in the Bible that Jesus as a demigod had healing powers (Jesus even brought someone back to life). This somewhat proves scientifically that any disease can be cured by spiritual advancement.

Karma

According to Vedic literature and summarized in the Bhagavad Gita As It Is, karma is the law of cause and effect. For every action there is a cause as well as a reaction. Karma is produced by performing fruitive activities for bodily or mental development. One may perform pious activities that will produce good reactions or good karma for future enjoyment. Or one may perform selfish or what some call sinful activities that produce bad karma and future suffering. This follows a person wherever he or she goes in this life or future lives. Such karma, as well as the type of consciousness a person develops, establishes reactions that one must experience. So, when the living beings take birth again, they get a certain kind of body that is most suitable for the type of consciousness they have developed. There are 8.4 million species of life, each offering a particular class of body for whatever kind of desires and consciousness the living being may have in this world. In this way, the living entity is the son of his past and the father of his future. Thus, he is presently affected by his previous life's activities and creates his future existence by the actions he performs in this life. A person will reincarnate into various forms of bodies that are most suitable for the living entity's consciousness, desires, and for what he deserves. So, the

living being inevitably continues in this cycle of birth and death and the consequences for his various good or bad activities as long as he is materially motivated. For example, if one chooses to eat meat, then they run the risk of being reincarnated into a tiger since tigers are used to eating meat. If a young girl walks around half naked attracting attention of the opposite sex, then they run the risk of being reincarnated into a tree since trees stand their naked all day.

Types of yoga

Yoga can be classified into four types: Hatha Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. Yoga is typically known amongst Western society as Hatha Yoga and this is generally the way society is introduced to yoga by performing postures in a gym. Karma Yoga generally applies to our working lives; where carried out properly one should not become attached to the results of their work but rather all the work is done for the Supreme and owned by the Supreme, and thus the living entity has no reactions of lamentation or hankering. Jnana Yoga is about knowledge of the absolute and typically applies to knowledge that we obtain throughout our educational experiences. The problem with Western society is the knowledge taught at secondary and tertiary level is focused on 'material' knowledge rather than spiritual or true knowledge. The highest form of yoga is Bhakti Yoga (which also integrates elements of Hatha, Karma and Jnana Yoga); and this is a complete devotion to the Supreme. Religion could also be considered a form of Bhakti Yoga since religion generally involves worshipping a Supreme. However, the highest form of Bhakti Yoga is Krishna Consciousness (also known as the Hare Krishna movement). This involves regular chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra and abstaining from sense gratification of smoking, gambling, alcohol, meat-eating and illicit sex (and even no egg, onion or garlic). By following a yoga process one can progress in spiritual life and increase their level of consciousness.

In the flow

According to Verywell Mind – 'Flow' Can Help You Achieve Goals

"If you ever felt completely immersed in an activity, you might have been experiencing a mental state that psychologists refer to as *flow*. What exactly is flow? Imagine for a moment that you are running a race. Your attention is focused on the movements of your body, the power of your muscles, the force of your lungs, and the feel of the street beneath your feet. You are living in the moment, utterly absorbed in the present activity. Time seems to fall away. You are tired, but you barely notice. According to positive psychologist [Mihály Csíkszentmihályi](#), what you are experiencing in that moment is known as flow, a state of complete immersion in an activity. He describes the mental state of flow as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost. Flow experiences can occur in different ways for different people. Some might experience flow while engaging in a sport such as skiing, tennis, soccer, dancing, or running. Others might have such an experience while engaged in an activity such as painting, drawing, or writing. These moments of flow often occur when you are engaged in an activity that you enjoy and in which you are quite skilled."

Flow is essentially a 'high' state of consciousness where the individual soul connects with the Supersoul (this is the very definition of yoga – to connect). There are 400,000 species of humans defined by their level of consciousness. There is material as well as spiritual consciousness. This is evidence to suggest that being in the 'flow' is having spiritual consciousness and working directly with the Supersoul (as a plenary expansion of God). Anyone can increase their level of consciousness by following a yoga (or religious) process.

Spiritual encounters

In March/April 2013 a series of three separate events took place for the author of a spiritual nature at his student residence 22/122 Culloden Rd, Marsfield, Sydney. The first event featured a black bird tapping its beak on the author's front glass door several times before turning its head to look the author in the eye, and then flying off. The second event involved a black bird swooping down from the opposite apartment and pecking on the door several times/looking the author in the eye in the same spot of the previous bird before flying off. The author was standing in the kitchen of his apartment at the time when a strange feeling of energy was felt (as a force) whilst observing the bird swooping down. During this process the author's sense of hearing appeared to block the surrounding sounds and a strange 'whizzing' sound was heard of the bird flying down to the door. The third event featured the skin/feathers of a 'dead' black bird appearing in roughly the same spot that the previous birds had pecked on the door. The exact dates of these events are difficult to trace but can be confirmed to have taken place between the 27th March and the 8th April. These events occurred as a direct result of making the connection with yoga and conflict resolution within an ideology, such that 'Yoga is the most effective method to resolving conflicts'. Given that all religions are circumstantial for their period in history, it can therefore be concluded that this ideology and associated policies is a revelation that has been approved by God as a method for how society today should function to assist to bring about world peace. This is documented in 'The Book of Tristan'. The events also appear to symbolize Jesus, since the final event featured a dead bird with no body present and hence a 'resurrection'. The author's 'out-of-body' experience was such that the author was 'killed' by God and then raised from the dead. Also, the best explanation for how the feathers appeared on the author's doorstep days after the 'out-of-body' experience is such that a Spirit Being descended and placed them there and this Spirit Being was actually God, since from Vedic literature there are many incarnations of God. To be killed by God and raised from the dead in such an 'out-of-body' experience is a very high achievement that any individual can obtain. For this reason, the author has been appointed by God as the next King for the Jewish people following Messiah Jesus. It is worth noting that the author had very little understanding of religion and spiritual knowledge prior to these spiritual encounters. The significance of the author's 'out-of-body' experience whilst visualizing a bird is directly connected with the Bible. Mathew 3:16 "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him". The author contacted the Australian Institute of Parapsychological Research about the spiritual encounters. The response was that the out-of-body experiences (which occur in about 20% of the population) was not a typical out-of-body experience which is regarded as a veridical out-of-body experience. One of the reviewers regarded it as something more of a mystical

experience and therefore can be regarded as something very unique. More information about typical out-of-body experiences can be found <http://www.ai princ.org/Out-of-body-experiences/>

The force felt when the author's soul left the body as an out-of-body experience by visualizing a bird in the spiritual world is an indication that there is a fifth force of nature (the will of God) which cannot be explained by science. Further, Einstein read the Bhagavad Gita and recognized that there was a Supreme that could not be explained by science and makes this quote "When I read the Bhagavad-Gita and reflect about how God created this universe everything else seems so superfluous". Further, parapsychology is a recognized science and analyses the supernatural including the Supreme and out-of-body experiences. Essentially spiritual knowledge is actually a science (or the science of God).

Improving an athlete's performance

Based on the above there is evidence to suggest that there is a fifth force of nature present – the will of God and being in the 'flow' (as a high state of consciousness) by following a yoga process (including religious/spiritual practices); helped Bolt, Murray and Chang achieve these remarkable results in sport. In particular, there is evidence to suggest that the will of God could influence the outcome of a point in tennis in say a close line call. However, there is evidence to suggest that these athletes could have further improved their performance by reading and understanding the Bhagavad Gita As It Is, daily chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, adopting a vegetarian diet, no egg, garlic, onion or caffeine (based on Bhakti Yoga and hence increase their level of consciousness). This is assuming that athletes don't smoke, drink alcohol, gamble or engage in illicit sex. Similarly, any athlete can improve their performance based on the above.

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