



## What's the Impact of Working Your Emotions in Sport?

An athlete who continuously experiences being nervous before competing has probably something unseen going on there. I have worked with many athletes that complain of being nervous before competing. I ask them a question: "What is/are the actual emotion(s) you experience at these times?". Silence. More silence. And then they say something like "I just feel nervous". Well, nervous is not an emotion I say. It's a state or condition we can all experience and composed of different emotions. How can you deal with your nervousness before competitions when you can't even describe the emotion or emotions involved? How do you want to show up confident when you are competing if you are not aware of what you are really feeling?

These are parts or aspects of yourself that you cannot see. There may be a lot of emotions that are showing up in those times but that you cannot identify. If you can't identify it's the same as not seeing. When I am coaching athletes there is never a time we don't do emotional work. And it's through this work that they get to know their emotions much better. They gain intimacy with them. They come closer to them as opposed to turning their back on them. And through this they learn to manage them better, to more openly "listen" to them, and finally, to integrate them into their performance. In other words, you get to know the *me's* in you that you have been neglecting.

Being much more in tune with your emotions means that you will be able to access deeper parts of yourself that you now can use to make more conscious decisions in your training and preparation for your ultimate performance. The Integral Athlete does that. This is part of your work if you are serious about take your performance to a new level.

**Nuno Matos, PhD, Master Integral Coach™**