



This newsletter is brought to you by carrot cake, bolognese with carrots, and bright orange shorts! If you enjoy it, I'd be grateful if you could share with one or two others!

Cheers to new sports!

I happened to be browsing the REI YouTube channel after watching a silly yet inspiring [video](#) about two guys doing their first 100 miler. I came across an [interview](#) with adaptive mountain "shredder" [Annijke Wade](#). We can all learn from the advice she offered to new adaptive athletes: "The biggest piece of advice is just to go and try the sport and really keep an open mind and be okay with not knowing what you're doing. I think one of the hardest things about trying a new sport is just going out there and doing it, right, because you can build it up so much in your mind, like what if I look silly, what if I fall, what if I don't know what I'm doing, what if I can't get in and out of the equipment, what if I what if what if, you can just go on and on and on, but you really just need to take that first step and just try it."



Photo of Annijke Wade, from REI YouTube.

Coaching snapshot: flow state!

Is there any science behind flow state? Why does it just come to me sometimes and other times seem so elusive?

Flow state can be achieved in work, in art or music, in athletics. [It's a state](#) of total immersion in and optimization of the task at hand, with subjective experiences of automaticity, distortion of time, intrinsic reward, altered consciousness, and effortlessness.

Flow seems to occur when there is a balance between perceived challenge and skill. According to some limited research, this [equilibrium engages](#) both attentional and reward systems in the brain, involving mesocorticolimbic (reward) pathways and temporary downregulation of the prefrontal cortex (reduced self-monitoring). These neural connections are still being researched with mixed results, one explanation being that the neural pathways to flow may be task-dependent (i.e. different for a long-distance athlete vs a chess player). However, it's evident that when the balance between challenge and skill is disrupted—such as by anxiety, distraction, or fatigue—flow becomes harder to access.

That being said, there are [philosophically-](#) and [study-derived](#) methods that may help set you up to find a flow state, including:

- Doing an intrinsically rewarding or purposeful activity
- Outlining clear, process-based goals
- Practicing [mindfulness and imagery](#)
- Engaging in appropriate physical and mental preparation, building confidence
- Performing the activity in a well-known scenario, often for prolonged time
- Putting full attention into the activity
- Decreasing self-consciousness and eliminating worry during the activity
- Getting immediate positive feedback about performance



Reply to this newsletter or [email me](#) with questions, and I'll answer one in a few weeks!

Let your friends know that I'm taking more athletes! Send them to my [website](#) to submit an inquiry or just pass along my email. Thank you so much!

Cream cheese icing!

Last week was [carrot cake](#), and this week is its cousin, cream cheese icing! Sometimes I add some coconut flakes to the icing for a little twist.

Ingredients: 4 oz softened cream cheese, 3 tbsp softened butter, 1 tsp vanilla, 1-1.5 cups confectioners sugar (to desired taste and texture), coconut flakes (optional).

Beat cream cheese, butter, and vanilla. Add in confectioners sugar and continue beating. Taste and adjust as needed with the sugar. Optional to add in coconut flakes too!



Help me grow!

As a small business, I rely on word of mouth to grow. Please share my [website](#) (ssendurance.com), [Instagram](#) (@coach_serena326), or [newsletters](#) with anyone and/or over social media! Reach out with any questions or comments by responding to this email. Thank you all!

Hi from Ramona!

Proper kitty queen Ramona sitting on a few thrones!



Sending warmth and regality this week!

