

Playing to Win

In the Philippines, deep in the dense rain forest, lives a group of primitive people known as the Agta Negrito. They are hunters-gatherers who wear loincloths and little else.

Several years ago, a missionary family who was working among them set up a croquet game in their front yard. Before long, several of their Agta Negrito neighbors curiously gathered to watch them. Soon they wanted to play, too.



The missionaries explained the game and gave each of the natives a mallet and a ball. Halfway into the game, one of the natives' croquet balls landed next to another's. The missionary excitedly explained one of the more aggressive rules: You can put your foot on your ball and smack it hard with the mallet, causing your opponent's ball to go flying far away.

The native understood what he was saying, but couldn't comprehend why anyone would do it. He said, "Why would I want to knock his ball out of the court?"

The missionary replied, "So you will be the one to win!"

The native shook his head in bewilderment. You see, competition and winning is not important in hunting and gathering societies. People survive, not by competing but by working together.

The game continued, but no one followed the missionaries' advice. When the first player successfully got through all the wickets, he did not see himself as the victor. For him, the game wasn't over. He went back and gave aid and encouragement to the others.

Finally, when the last wicket was played by the last player, they all shouted happily, "We won! We won!"

The application is obvious.

In each center of Life Care and Century Park, we all win when each associate successfully gets through the wickets of his or her responsibilities. We must work *with* and *for* one another to provide the best care and service to our residents and their families.

That's what we are called to do, and that's what we are equipped to do with the complementary talents each has been given.

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind (1 Peter 3:8 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter