

Fitness: Two Ways of Looking At It

I grew up in the U.S., and now I live in Germany. In the two countries, I feel like sports and fitness are looked at differently.

I think everyone knows—unfortunately—the stereotype of the fat American. And, my experience in the U.S. was that some people were *very* fit, they were *crazy* about their fitness, and other people didn't try to be fit at all. In Germany, on the other hand, I feel like most people try at least to be 'normally' fit. There are a few people who are *crazy* about their fitness, and a few people who don't try at all.

So, in the U.S., it seems like people are at one extreme or the other, and in Germany most people are in the middle.

But with sports, it's the different. Most Americans I know love to play a sport when they have time, if they're good at it or not. After all, an American would say, it's all about having fun. The Germans I know, however, either don't play a sport. . . or they train to be as good at it as they can be.

To me, it's interesting that two related things—sports and fitness—can seem to be opposites in the two countries that I think I know well. How are sports and fitness seen in your country? Are they important? Do many people—and I mean adults, not just kids—play sports in your country?