Once the boxing bug bites, there's not much anyone can do. Its symptoms may come and go, there will be good days followed by bad, but there's no tonic, salve, potion, tablet, capsule, pill or poison that will make it go away. Consult all the experts you want – the internists and externists, the headshrinkers and witchdoctors, every sweaty faith healer twitching in a tent – but if you've got boxing in your blood, you live with it, you die with it, you make peace with it.

Perhaps that helps explain Newton Kidd. He is a 30-year-old cruiserweight with a 5-3-1 (3 KOs) record. He lives and fights out of the Bronx. His nickname is The Butcher. Boxing is his game.

Kidd was born in St. Mary's, Jamaica in 1975. He came to the U.S. in 1989 with his brothers and sisters and they lived with his aunt in the Bronx.

"I always loved sports," the soft-spoken Kidd told me. "My first boxing that I saw on television was Mike Tyson when he fought Trevor Berbick. From there I loved boxing. Tyson was my inspiration. He was one of my idols. I liked the way he fought, so I kinda take a little bit from that and put it together with my style. I used to play soccer – I was a very athletic kid – and from there (boxing) always stuck in my head until this day when I'm finally into it."

Kidd first got into boxing at the age of 21.

"I was having a lot of headaches, so I went to the doctor. The doctor told me I have high blood pressure, I need to work out, I need to go to the gym," Kidd said. "So I came across a boxing gym and I tried it out and I fell in love with it."

What was it like the first time he stepped foot in the gym?

"I thought WOW! This really is a boxing gym!" exclaimed Kidd. "Because I never really tried to find a boxing gym. But it just so happened that I went to this gym, they had a ring, and from there I tried it out and I liked it and I just stuck with it."

He went 17-1 as an amateur. He twice won the Golden Gloves.

"After I won the second Gloves, I wanted to win the Gloves again, but my (former) manager said I should go pro now, because from Novice to Open Division, I went through it like nothing," Kidd said." I wasn't really ready to be a pro yet. I didn't have enough seasoning. I needed more experience. But they turned me to pro right away."

Does that explain the three losses on his record?

"The three losses," replied Kidd, "it was close. I believe I won all those fights. But you learn from your mistakes."

Kidd's present manager, David Berlin, wanted to set the record straight about those losses. "Newton hasn't been in easy fights," he said. "He hasn't been given set-ups. He's been in tough fights and I think in the long run that's gonna put him in a better place, because he's learning, because he's having that competition at this stage. And, as he said, his losses have not been clear-cut losses. They've been difficult fights some of them. He's growing with each fight. I think the wins are going to start coming."

I asked Kidd what he needs to do to improve his record.

"Shoring up my punches more, throwing more jabs, stuff like that."

"When he fought Emanuel Nwodo (at the Blue Horizon)," said Berlin, "even though it was a decision loss, Newton broke his hand early in the fight. I think it was the second or third round – a very bad fracture – and he fought through that and he still, according to many ringside observers, pulled it out."

Kidd was out of commission for more than six months. I wondered if the fracture was the result of poorly wrapped hands or the way the punch landed.

"The way I threw the punch," recalled Kidd. "I hit him upside the head. You throw right there you break your hand. The wrapping was good. I threw it the wrong way. I felt a lot of pain. When I tried to use it, it wouldn't let me do the things I wanted to do – that kind of held me back – and I knew something was wrong. But I didn't know it was broken."

Now that he's back in action, I asked Kidd to describe his skills for those who haven't seen him fight.

"I'm like a body snatcher," Kidd said, evoking the nickname of his fellow countryman Mike "The Body Snatcher" McCallum. "I like to work the body, go in and try to hurt the guy. I'm an aggressive fighter."

"He has power," Berlin added, "but he's also a very good boxer that has been able to adapt his style depending on who he's fighting and depending on the opponent's style. He does work the body beautifully. He also works angles beautifully. So he becomes evasive in there at the same time as he lands his own shots."

Newton Kidd is an interesting case. He's 30 years old. His record stands at 5-3-1. And all he wants to do is fight. This Friday, July 1, at the Orleans in Las Vegas, Kidd meets Joseph Gusman (6-0, 3 KOs) under the banner of Guilty Promotions.

"I love the sport," insisted Kidd. "I love its discipline. It just changed my whole attitude, my whole mentality. That's why I love the sport. It's also addictive, so I can't stay away from it too long." Newton Kidd smiled. "I've still got a few years to put my name up there."

Kidd sometimes sounds just like a kid when he talks about the sport he loves, but I wanted to let his manager have the last word about his fighter.

“Newton has a tremendous amount of talent. He has a combination of power and boxing ability and I think he has the makings of an excellent fighter,” Berlin said. “But more than what you see on the outside, it’s his inner qualities that are going to help him. Those qualities are his discipline; he’s somebody who’s reliable; he’s somebody who puts in his work; and he’s somebody who listens very well. He doesn’t feel as though he has to run the show. He understands that there are people who are looking out for him. He has a trainer who’s able to give him good advice, and he listens and performs based on the advice he’s getting. Reliability and responsibility are the important qualities that give him the foundation, and that foundation, along with his natural physical attributes, will allow him to rise to the top level.”