

Coaching the Mental Side of the High School Athlete

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- **MENTAL TOUGHNESS** - An athlete's ability to focus, rebound from failure, cope with pressure, and persist in the face of adversity.
 - Mentally tough athletes have
 - a high sense of self-belief
 - an unshakeable faith that they can control their own destiny
 - can remain relatively unaffected by competition or adversity
 - Research on elite athletes shows that most successful athletes differ from less successful ones in the following ways:
 - Higher confidence
 - Greater self-regulation of arousal.
 - Better communication.
 - More positive thoughts and images.
 - More determination or commitment.
 - Psychological skills, such as self-confidence, focus, and emotional regulation, can be learned but must be practiced and integrated into a person's daily routine.

- **SELF-CONFIDENCE**
 - The factor most consistently distinguishing highly successful from less successful athletes
 - Optimal level of self-confidence
 - Building Self-Confidence
 - Ensure performance accomplishments
 - Include good physical, technical, and tactical instructions
 - Use game-pressure simulations
 - Goal Mapping
 - Act confidently as a coach
 - Teach the athlete to respond with confidence
 - Athletes should focus on responding with control and confidence, as opposed to reacting with emotion or unproductive behaviors.
 - **Accept**
 - **Center**
 - **Think**
 - Teach athlete to think confidently - *The root of decreases in self-confidence is negative self-talk*
 - Focus on instruction and motivating thoughts.
 - Avoid judgmental thoughts.
 - Focus on remembering good performances, not poor ones.
 - Use imagery

- Prepare:
 - Develop performance plans and precompetitive routines
 - Plans give you confidence because you know what to do.
 - Dos and Don'ts for Building Self-Confidence
- **CONCENTRATION AND OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE**
 - Elite athlete peak performance is associated with
 - being absorbed in the present and having no thoughts about past or future
 - being mentally relaxed and having a high degree of concentration and control
 - Internal Distracters - distractions from within ourselves, our thoughts, worries, concerns
 - Attending to past events - Looking backward prevents from focusing on present
 - Attending to future events
 - Attending to too many cues
 - Over analysis of body mechanics
 - The process of “*choking*”
 - Interventions to alleviate choking
 - Imagery builds athletes' confidence
 - Preshot routines help to keep athletes task-focused and relaxed
 - Secondary task focus helps athletes to focus on one task-relevant cue.
 - Exposure to stressful situations allows athletes to feel more comfortable.
 - Coaching Behaviors and Athlete Self-Talk
 - Supportive coaching behaviors help produce more positive and less negative self-talk.
 - Negative punishment coaching behaviors help produce more negative self-talk and less positive self-talk.
 - Uses of self-talk
 - Motivation
 - Initiate Action
 - Sustaining effort
 - Instructional
 - Skill acquisition
 - Six rules for creating effective self-talk
 - Preperformance and preshot routines
- **THE SYSTEMATIC AND CONSISTENT PRACTICE OF MENTAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS IS INTEGRAL TO ITS EFFECTIVENESS**