

ISSUE #00 | DECEMBER 2024
The INTRODUCTION Issue

THE MENTOR

MAGAZINE

Expertise You Can Trust

**Coaches Mental Performance
Guide: Key Concepts and
Applications**

**Unlocking Your
Potential: The Power
of Mental Performance**

Mistakes Athletes Make & How
to Deal with Them

**Supporting Young Athletes'
Mental Game - Practical
Considerations**





Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

I am thrilled to share with you the first edition of The MENTOR Magazine, your go-to source for insights into the world of mental performance and competitive sport.

In this issue, we explore the power of the mind in unlocking athletic excellence through thought-provoking articles, written with passion, dedication, and expertise. We have left no stone unturned in understanding the mindset behind peak performance to discovering practical strategies for mental strength.

We, at The MENTOR Magazine, believe that mental performance is a true game-changer and should be available to everyone. A strong mindset is a secret weapon to propel athletes beyond physical boundaries to conquer challenges and elevate their performances.

With these valuable insights and actionable tips you will transform the way you approach sports, fitness, and any goal you set for yourself. From aspiring youth athletes to seasoned professionals, we want to inspire every individual on their unique journey to success.

Before turning the page, take a moment to reflect on the incredible potential that lies in each of us. Our minds are boundless reservoirs of strength and creativity. Their fusion can conquer new frontiers in competitive sports and continuously increase our probability of success.

Thank you for joining us. Sit back, enjoy, and let the exploration of mental performance commence!

Be Well,

A.W. Wilson, PhD, CMPC
President & Director, The MENTOR Magazine, Inc.

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. We recognize and deeply respect the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous peoples and their traditional territories. Our commitment is to foster community respect and honour the ongoing connection to this land.

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The Purpose of this Issue is to:

- 1.** Provide an overview of what mental performance is and what it is not
- 2.** Illustrate why mental performance training is important
- 3.** Provide some insights on how to begin with mental performance



Author Intro

Austin “Wade” Wilson, PhD, CMPC, is a Certified Mental Performance Consultant with nearly two decades of experience in the field of mental performance and 10 plus years of experience researching, teaching, lecturing, and supervising at the post-secondary level. He has designed and taught post-secondary level courses in general sport and exercise psychology, applied mental performance, psychology of injury, and sociology of sport. He is the President & Owner of Wilson Mental Performance Consulting (WMPC) and the President & Director of The MENTOR Magazine, Inc. (TMM).

Since 2008, Wade has been a member of several professional associations, and has been instrumental in equipping athletes, students, coaches, and professionals from various sectors with the mental acumen required for peak performance. His approach integrates a systematic process of education, acquisition, and implementation of mental training skills into practice and performance regimes. His clientele spans from varsity and ESports athletes to Paralympians, extending beyond sports to include military, sales, and business sectors.

Wade’s academic credentials include a Ph.D. in Recreation and Leisure Studies from the University of Waterloo, a Master’s in Human Kinetics from the University of Windsor, and an Honours BA in Sport Psychology from Laurentian University. He also holds an Advanced Diploma as a Child and Youth Worker from Loyalist College, a Professional Certificate in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy from Wilfrid Laurier University and has received certified professional training for cognitive behaviour therapy and single-session therapy. In 2023, he achieved the status of Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC) with the Association of Applied Sport Psychology and has recently joined the registry of approved supervisors.

As a former athlete, Wade has competed in various sports, both artistic/aesthetic and power/performance, with ice hockey being his primary interest. Wade was a goaltender at the Junior C, Junior A, and very briefly at the varsity levels. Off the field, Wade enjoys walks with his rescue greyhounds, Willa and Pearl, listening to jazz music, and cheering for his favorite NFL team, the Baltimore Ravens. Born in Trenton, Ontario, and having grown up in Tweed, Ontario, with stopovers in Sudbury and Winsor, he now resides with his family in Kitchener, Ontario.

The Role of Mental Performance in Athletic Success – Mind-Body Connection

Let's dive into the mind-body connection and how it influences your sports performances.

The mind-body connection is like a powerful team-up between your brain and your muscles. It's all about how your thoughts, emotions, and brain signals can impact how your body moves and performs in sports.

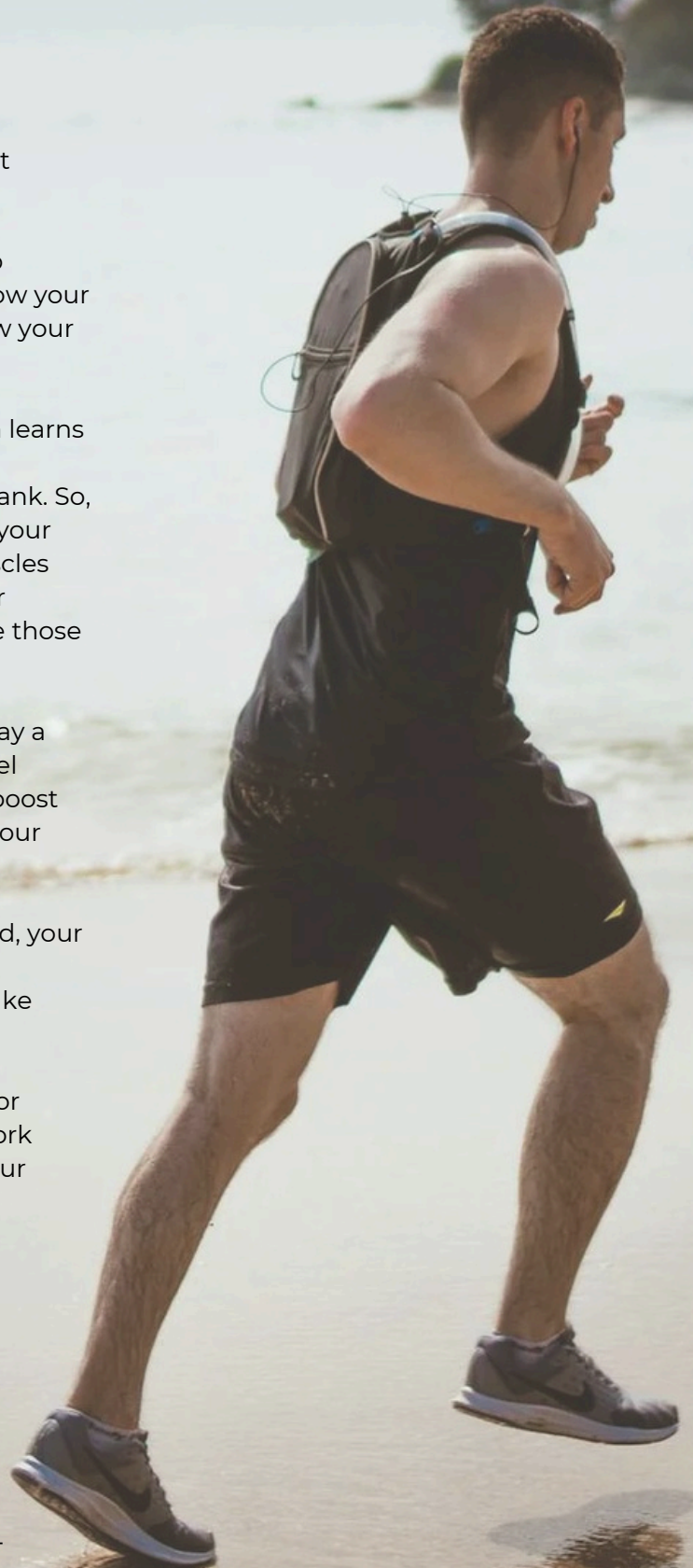
How it works: When you practice and train, your brain learns and remembers the skills you need for your sport. It's like storing those moves in your brain's memory bank. So, when you're in the middle of a game or competition, your brain can quickly access those skills and tell your muscles what to do. It's like your brain is the coach, giving your muscles the right instructions to run, jump, and make those winning plays!

But that's not all! Your emotions and thoughts also play a huge role in the mind-body connection. When you feel confident and positive, your brain sends signals that boost your performance. You feel strong and focused, and your muscles respond by giving their best effort.

On the other hand, if you're feeling nervous or stressed, your brain may send different signals that can affect your performance. You might not move as smoothly or make the right decisions in those clutch moments.

So, having a strong mind-body connection is crucial for your sports success! When your brain and muscles work together like a well-oiled team, you can perform at your best.

To strengthen this connection, keep practicing and training regularly. The more you practice, the better your brain gets at sending those effective signals to your muscles. Also, do your best to stay positive and confident - be mindful of your self-talk. Believe in yourself and know that you have the skills to grow and succeed.





Remember, the mind-body connection is like your secret weapon in sports. Take care of both your mind and body and you'll see incredible improvements in your performance!

What Mental Performance Is Not:

Mental performance is super cool, but it's not about having magical powers or never feeling nervous. It's not about pretending to be perfect or ignoring your emotions. Instead, it's about being human and using your mind to enhance your athletic abilities!

The Mind-Reader Myth: Emotions are Normal. It's natural to feel excited, nervous, or even a little scared before a game. Mental performance doesn't mean you magically erase those emotions. Instead, it helps you understand and manage them like a pro. You'll learn to use your emotions to fuel your energy and focus on playing your best.

The Perfect Player Illusion: Embrace Your Growth. Mental performance isn't about being perfect or never making mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes, even your sports idols! What's incredible about mental performance is that it teaches you to bounce back stronger after setbacks. It's about growth and learning from every experience, making you an even better athlete!

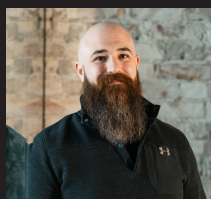
It's not about being perfect or never feeling emotions, but about using your mind to stay focused, confident, and resilient.

Additional Quick Reading:

<https://www.athleticinsight.com/sports-psychology/mind-body-connection>

Additional In-Depth Reading:

Bertollo, M., Berchicci, M., & di Fronso, S. (2021). Mind-body interaction in sport psychophysiology. In E. Filho & I. Basevitch (Ed(s).), *Sport, exercise and performance psychology: Research directions to advance the field* (pp. 118-132). Oxford University Press.



Wade Wilson, PhD, CMPC, is a Certified Mental Performance Consultant with over 20 years of experience in mental performance education and training. Wade has served as a lecturer, curriculum designer, and teaching assistant supervisor at the post-secondary level, where he developed and taught courses in applied mental performance, the psychology of sports injury, and the sociology of activity and well-being. He is also the President and Owner of The MENTOR Magazine, Inc.

Unlocking Your Potential: The Power of Mental Performance in Sports

As athletes, you're no stranger to hard work and dedication on the field, court, or track. But did you know that there's another element that can take your sports performance to the next level?

Welcome to Mental Performance – a game-changer that can unleash your full potential and propel you to new heights.

The Mind-Body Connection:

As we learned in the previous article, this is Where Success Begins. The mind-body connection is like a dynamic duo. Your brain stores all the techniques and skills you learn during training, like a treasure trove of athletic knowledge. When game day arrives, your brain sends quick signals to your muscles, guiding them to execute your moves with precision and finesse. That's why regular practice is essential, so your brain can access those skills effortlessly when it counts – and that's why being present in the moment and purposeful in training matters!

Boosting Confidence and Focus:

Your Mental Advantage. Believe it or not, your thoughts and emotions play a significant role in how you execute and perform. When you approach the game with confidence, your brain signals your muscles to be strong, agile, and sharp. On the other hand, negative thoughts or nervousness can hold you back.

Try these Exercises:

- **Visualization:** Close your eyes and imagine yourself making incredible plays, scoring goals, or executing flawless moves. Visualize the entire experience in detail, including sights, sounds, smells, and emotions. This exercise helps your brain feel familiar with success, making it more likely to happen in reality.
- **Positive Affirmations:** Create powerful and uplifting statements about your abilities. For example, say, "I am strong, I am skilled, and I am a champion." Repeat these affirmations

daily, especially before games or competitions. Positive self-talk builds your confidence and reduces self-doubts.

Staying Calm Under Pressure:

Managing Your Mindset. When the game gets intense, staying calm is an ability that sets you apart. A clear and focused mind enables you to make better decisions and react and adapt quickly to changing situations.

Try this exercise:

- **Mindful Breathing:** Find a quiet spot, close your eyes, and take deep breaths. Focus solely on your breath and how it feels, letting any distracting thoughts drift away. Practice this exercise daily for a few minutes to help stay composed during high-pressure moments.

In sports, physical training is just one piece of the puzzle. **By harnessing the power of mental performance, you can maximize your potential and achieve greatness in your sport.**

Strengthen the mind-body connection, boost your confidence, and managing your mindset – you've got the foundation to reach your potential.

Embrace the mental journey. Remember, the mind is a powerful ally. Treat it well, and you'll become unstoppable!

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Nieuwenhuys, A., Pijers, J. R., Oudejans, R. R. D., & Bakker, F. C. (2008). The influence of anxiety on visual attention in climbing. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 30(2), 171-185.

Hossner E.J. & Ehrlenspiel, F. (2010). Time-referenced effects of an internal vs. external focus of attention on muscular activity and compensatory variability. *Front. Psychology*, 1(230).



Common Mistakes Athletes Make & How to Deal with them

In the world of sports, physical skills and training are essential, but the mental game is equally crucial for success. As competitive athletes, understanding and avoiding common mental mistakes can give you the edge you need to excel on the field, court, track, or classroom. Let's explore some of these pitfalls and discover some effective exercises to help you overcome them!

Mental Mistake 1: Negative Self-Talk

Negative self-talk is like having an inner critic that constantly undermines your confidence and performance. Phrases like "I can't do this" or "I'm not good enough" can sabotage your potential and create unnecessary self-doubt.

Exercise 1: Challenge negative thoughts by countering them with positive affirmations. Whenever you catch yourself thinking negatively, replace those thoughts with empowering statements like "I am strong and capable" or "I am improving with every practice." Over time, positive self-talk will become your default mindset, boosting your confidence and performance.

Mental Mistake 2: Overthinking

Overthinking happens when you get stuck in your head, analyzing every move and decision instead of trusting your instincts. This mental chatter and noise can lead to indecision and interrupt your natural flow on the field.

Exercise 2: Before training and competition, dedicate a few minutes to engaged in mindfulness. Focus on your breathing for a few moments and allow distracting thoughts to float away. This exercise helps you stay in the present moment and enhances your ability to make quick and confident decisions in the moment.

Mental Mistake 3: Fear of Failure

The fear of failing (or fear of mistakes) can hold

you back from taking risks and pushing yourself beyond your comfort zone. Embracing challenges and learning from setbacks is essential and mandatory for growth as an athlete.

Exercise 3: Adopt a growth mindset by viewing failures as opportunities to learn and improve. Whenever you encounter a setback, analyze it objectively (contextualize the negativity), identify areas for growth, and set process goals to work on those aspects. Embracing a growth mindset fosters resilience and fuels your determination to overcome challenges.

As competitive athletes, you possess immense potential to achieve greatness in your sport. Recognizing and learning to side-step common mental mistakes is a critical step in unleashing that potential. Embrace the power of positive self-talk, practice mindfulness, and cultivate a growth mindset. This will help will strengthen your mental game and elevate your performance to new heights.

Remember, your mind is a powerful ally that can propel you toward excellence. By developing the mental aspect of sports and performance, you'll become an unstoppable force on the field, increasing your probability of success and achievement!

References:

Dweck, C. S. (2008). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.

Hardy, L., Jones, G., & Gould, D. (1996). *Understanding psychological preparation for sport: Theory and practice of elite performers*. John Wiley & Sons.



Difference between Mental Performance & Mental Health

As competitive athletes, you're no strangers to the importance of physical training and skill development. But did you know that your mental well-being is just as critical to your success?

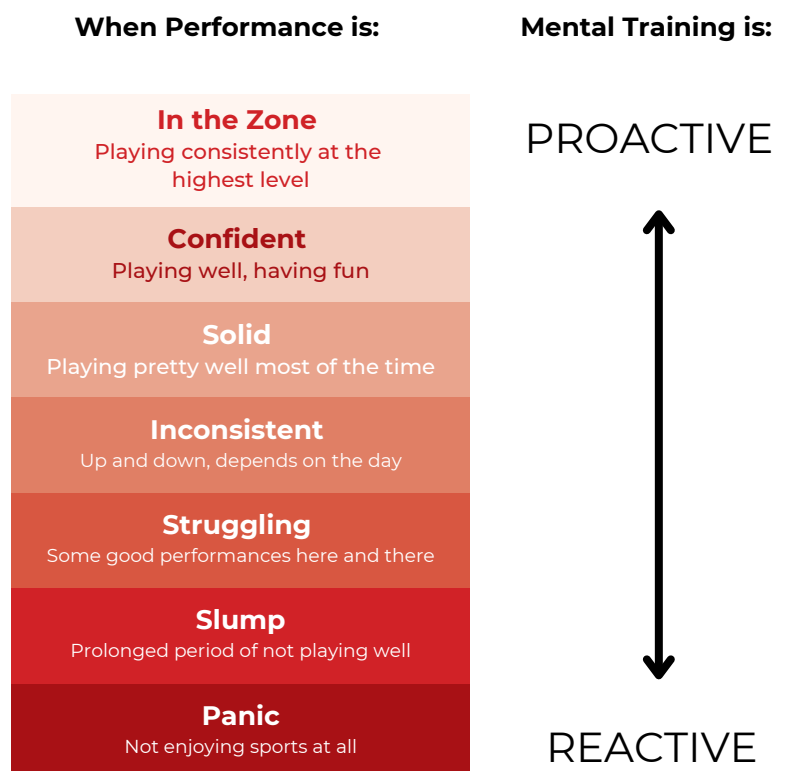
Understanding the difference between mental performance and mental health can be a game-changer in your journey. Let's explore these two aspects and where they overlap and how they impact your overall well-being.

Mental Performance: Mental performance is like the secret sauce that can take your athletic abilities to extraordinary levels. It's all about training your mind to enhance focus, confidence, and resilience, making you a formidable force on the field or court. Mental performance helps you harness your skills, visualize success, and handle pressure like a pro.

The Mental Performance Continuum (Figure 1): Think of mental performance as a continuum that ranges from "I'm struggling with my focus" to "I'm in the zone, and nothing can stop me!" Just like physical skills, mental performance can be developed and improved over time. By incorporating mental training into your routine, you can move along the continuum towards peak performance.

Mental Health: Mental health, on the other hand, is all about your emotional and psychological well-being. It's how you feel and cope with life's ups and downs, both on and off the field. Just like physical health, mental health is essential for overall wellness and happiness.

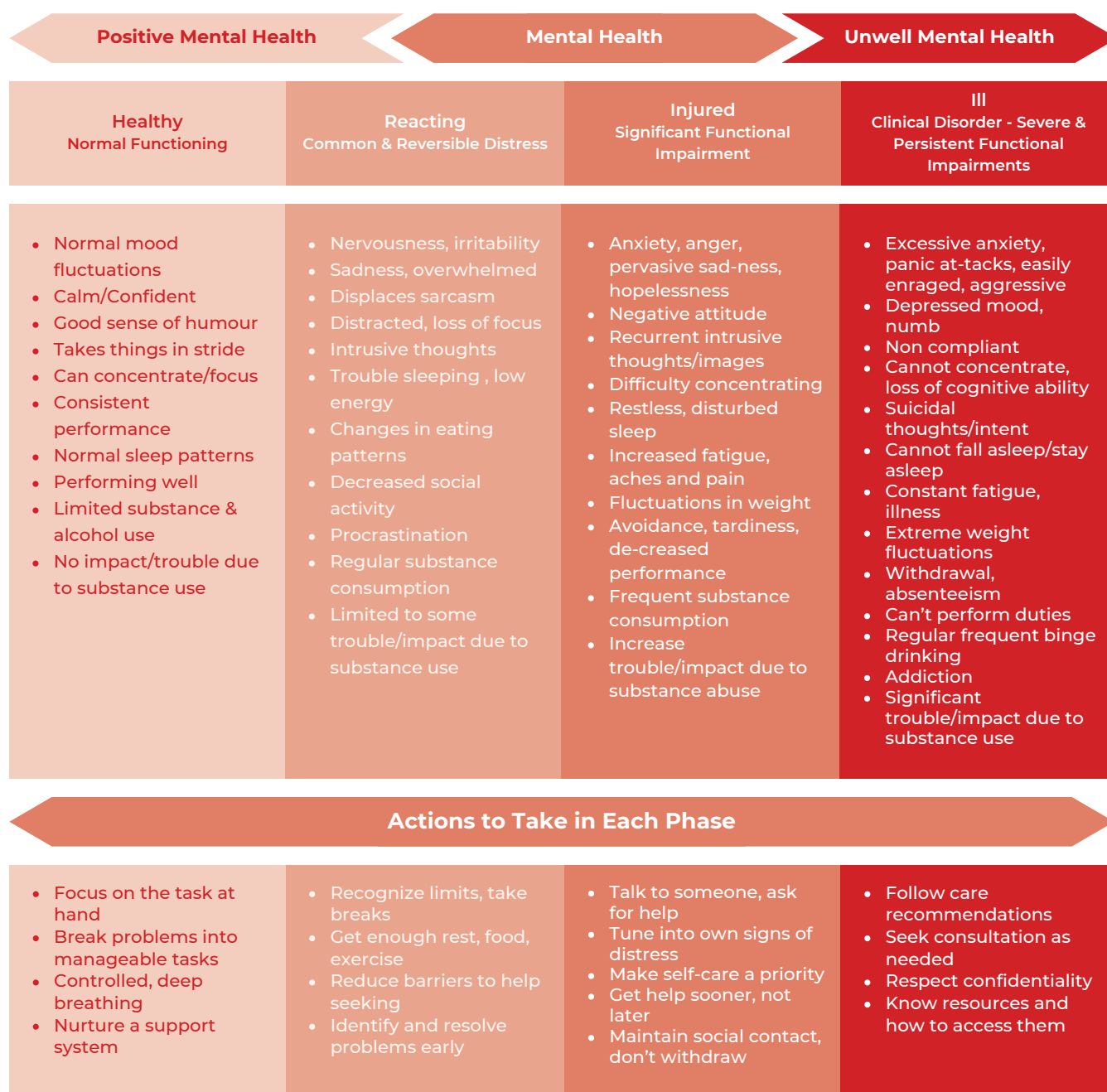
Figure 1: Mental Performance Continuum



Adapted from amplify.sportpsychology.com

The Mental Health Continuum (Figure 2): Imagine a spectrum of mental health, from "I'm feeling overwhelmed" to "I'm thriving, and life is fantastic!" We all go through different emotions and experiences, and it's entirely normal to have ups and downs. Taking care of your mental health means seeking support when needed, talking to friends or family, and finding healthy ways to cope with challenges.

Figure 2: Mental Health Continuum



Adapted from: BC EHS Mental Health



certifications from recognized organizations like the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) and the Canadian Sport Psychology Association (CSPA) and have specific training in sport and performance psychology.

Key Points:

CMPCs focus on optimizing mental skills, such as goal setting, visualization, concentration, confidence-building, and managing anxiety and stress.

They do not diagnose or treat mental health disorders but instead work on improving an individual's mental approach to sports and performance.

CMPCs provide mental performance coaching and consulting to help athletes and performers overcome mental barriers and achieve their goals.

Sport Psychologist:

A Sports Psychologist is a licensed psychologist who specializes in sports psychology and holds a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or Psy.D.) in psychology with a focus on sports and exercise. Sports psychologists have extensive training in general psychology and specialized training in sports and exercise psychology.

Key Points:

Sports psychologists focus on the psychological aspects of sports performance, including motivation, teamwork, leadership, and mental health concerns that may arise in sports environments.

They are licensed to diagnose and treat mental health conditions and psychological disorders that may impact an athlete's performance and well-being.

Sports Psychologists provide counseling and psychotherapy for athletes dealing with issues like performance anxiety, burnout, depression, and relationship challenges.

Sport Psychiatrist:

A Sports Psychiatrist is a medical doctor who specializes in psychiatry and holds an M.D. degree. They have completed specialized training in psychiatry and may have additional experience in sports psychiatry.

Remember, just like your physical skills, your mental well-being needs care and attention. Embrace mental training to boost your performance, and prioritize your mental health to thrive both on and off the field. Together, mental performance and mental health will be your superpowers on your path to becoming a champion in sports and in life.

References:

Weinberg, R. S., & Gould, D. (2015). *Foundations of sport and exercise psychology*. Human Kinetics.

Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2016). [The mental health continuum model](#).

What's In The Title?

Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC):

A Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC) is a professional who specializes in enhancing mental performance in athletes, performers, and individuals engaged in competitive or high-pressure activities. CMPCs typically hold

Key Points:

Sports Psychiatrists are licensed medical professionals who can diagnose and treat mental health disorders in athletes and individuals involved in sports and exercise.

They have the ability to prescribe medication for mental health conditions, when necessary, to help manage symptoms and improve well-being.

Sports Psychiatrists work with athletes who may require a comprehensive approach to address mental health concerns that impact their performance and overall life.

What the Public Should Know:

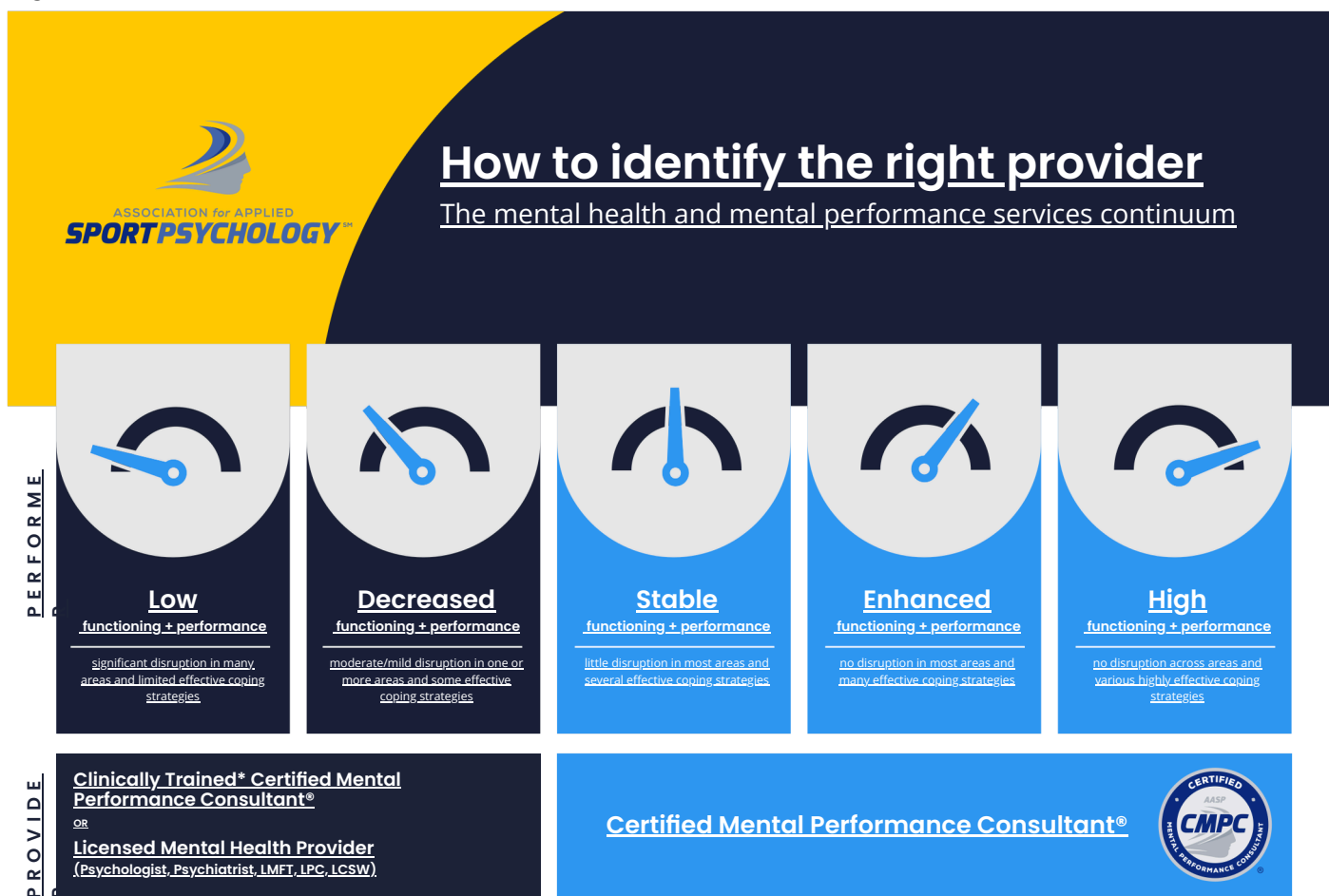
CMPCs are focused on enhancing mental performance and do not diagnose or treat mental health disorders. They help athletes develop mental skills to excel in sports and perform under pressure.

Sports Psychologists are licensed psychologists who can diagnose and treat mental health conditions. They offer counseling and psychotherapy to address psychological challenges that may affect athletes' performance and well-being.

Sports Psychiatrists are medical doctors with specialized training in psychiatry. They can diagnose and treat mental health disorders, including prescribing medication when needed, and provide comprehensive support for athletes dealing with complex mental health issues.

Understanding these distinctions can help individuals seeking support for their mental well-being and athletic performance choose the right professional to meet their specific needs (Figure 3). If you are looking to improve your mental game in sports, a CMPC may be the right choice. For mental health concerns, consulting with a Sports Psychologist or Sports Psychiatrist would be appropriate, or an available qualified mental health professional in your area (e.g., Registered Social Worker).

Figure 3: AASP Service Provider Identification Resource



It is important to note that an individual's mental health and mental performance functioning may or may not be correlated. An athlete or performer could be struggling in life but doing really well in their sport/area of performance. In this case, they may need a mental health provider. On the other hand, a person could be doing well in their personal life but really struggling in terms of their mental performance - in which case they would be better served by a CMPC.

* Clinically trained = qualified, licensed mental health provider in their field and jurisdiction.

Coach's Brief Guide to Mental Performance: **Key Concepts & Applications**

In the world of sports, mental performance is increasingly recognized as a vital aspect of athletic success. As a coach, understanding and integrating mental performance techniques into your training programs can be a game-changer for your athletes. This article aims to provide a brief guide to key mental performance concepts and their practical applications. Utilizing evidence-based strategies, let's explore how you can support your athletes unleash their full potential.

Goal Setting and Visualization:

Goal setting is the foundation of mental performance training. Whatever the objective is, encourage your athletes to set Outcome, Performance, & Process goals:

- Outcome: what is the objective to achieve?
- Performance: what can we measure to track improvement (think objective numbers)?
- Process: what are the day to day habits and actions that will up our probability of success?

Brief Application:

Incorporate visualization exercises into training sessions. Set aside 2-3 minutes before training to encourage athletes to mentally rehearse their best performances (or what they want to accomplish in the near future), visualizing every detail of their success. This technique enhances self-confidence and primes the brain for optimal execution.

Positive Self-Talk:

The way athletes talk to themselves significantly impacts their performance. Encourage productive and positive self-talk and the use of affirmations. Remind athletes to challenge negative thoughts and replace them with constructive and motivating statements. Assist your athletes by asking them W.I.N: **What's Important Now?**

Brief Application:

Teach athletes to recognize negative self-talk patterns and replace them with positive affirmations such as "I am strong," "I am focused," or "I am capable." Reinforce these positive statements throughout training and competition.



Mindfulness and Flow States:

Mindfulness and flow states help athletes achieve a state of complete focus and immersion in the present moment. By reducing distractions and anxiety, athletes can perform at their best.

Brief Application:

Introduce mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing exercises or body scans, during warm-up or cooldown routines. Encourage athletes to stay present during competitions by focusing on one play, sequence or task at a time.

**Coping with Pressure and Stress:**

Pressure and stress are inevitable in competitive sports (and life). Equip your athletes with strategies to cope effectively with high-pressure situations.

Brief Application:

Incorporate simulated pressure scenarios in training to expose athletes to stressors. Encourage stress-management techniques such as progressive muscle relaxation or deep breathing to maintain composure during high-stakes moments.

Resilience and Adversity Training:

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks. As a coach, you can foster resilience by creating a supportive and growth-oriented environment.

Brief Application:

Encourage athletes to view failures as learning opportunities and celebrate progress over perfection. Emphasize the importance of a growth mindset, where challenges are seen as stepping stones to improvement.

Pre-Performance Routines:

Pre-performance routines instill a sense of familiarity and control, reducing performance anxiety.

Brief Application:

Work with athletes to develop personalized pre-performance routines, including physical warm-ups and mental preparation exercises. Consistency is key to building confidence and creating a sense of readiness. Likewise, work with your team or group to establish group practices and pre-game routines.

Final Notes:

Integrating mental performance concepts into your coaching can significantly impact your athletes' performance and well-being. By utilizing goal setting, positive self-talk, mindfulness, coping with pressure, resilience, and pre-performance routines, you empower athletes to overcome mental barriers and reach their full potential.

As you apply these mental performance techniques, remember that every athlete is unique, and the effectiveness of each approach may vary. Encourage open communication with your athletes to understand their individual needs.

Incorporating mental performance strategies in coaching not only enhances athletic achievements but also fosters a culture of holistic development and well-being within your team. Embrace the power of mental performance and guide your athletes on a transformative journey toward excellence in sports and life. With these evidence-based strategies, you can bring out the best in your athletes and witness their growth and success on and off the field.

Purpose for the Coach's Room:

1. **Further Knowledge**
2. **Acquire Mental Performance Tools**
3. **Build Confidence**

References:

Gould, D., Hodge, K., Peterson, K., & Petlichkoff, L. (1987). Psychological foundations of coaching: A new model of coaching effectiveness. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 9(4), 357-375.

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Neff, K. D. (2003). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2(3), 223-250.

Hays, K. F., & Brown, C. H. (2004). *You're on! Consulting for peak performance*. American Psychological Association.

Literature Review

How Champions Think: In Sports and in Life

By Dr. Bob Rotella

In "*How Champions Think: In Sports and in Life*," Dr. Bob Rotella offers readers an insightful journey into the minds of champions. Through a fusion of psychology, personal anecdotes, and practical strategies, this book provides a roadmap for cultivating a winning mindset that transcends sports and influences every facet of life.

Brief Summary:

Dr. Rotella draws upon his extensive experience as a sports psychologist to explore the mental attributes that set champions apart. He delves into the thought processes, habits, and approaches that enable athletes to consistently perform at their best. Using engaging stories from the worlds of sports and beyond, the book offers valuable lessons on maintaining focus, building confidence, managing pressure, and embracing adversity.

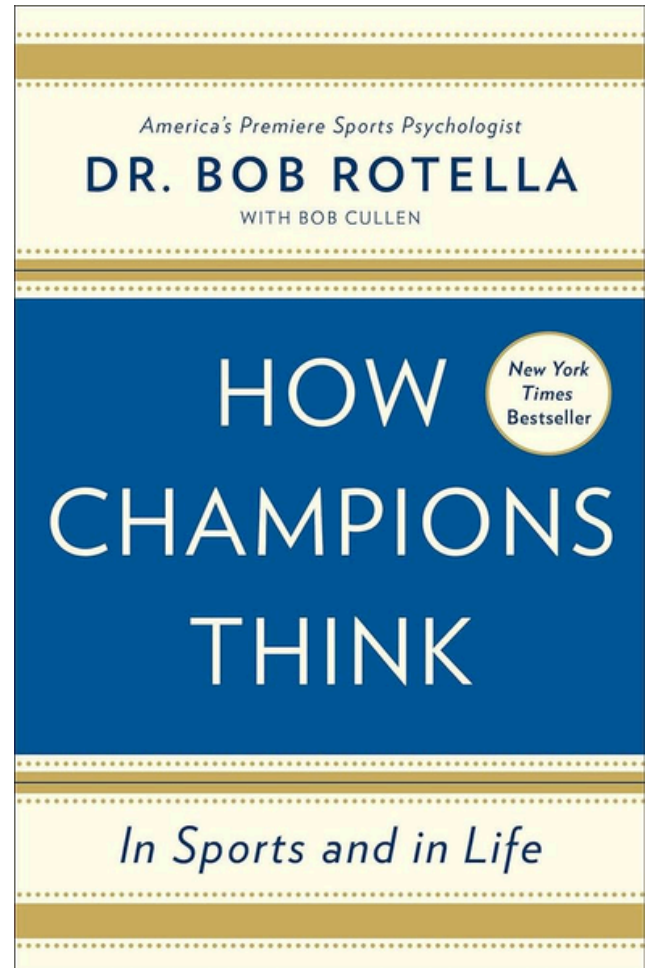
Key Mental Performance Themes:

"How Champions Think" tackles a range of pivotal mental performance themes:

- **Mindset Matters:** The book underscores the significance of a growth mindset, emphasizing that champions view challenges as opportunities for growth.
- **Unshakable Confidence:** Dr. Rotella dives into the power of self-belief and explores techniques to foster unshakable confidence in high-pressure situations.
- **Focus and Concentration:** The book offers insights into maintaining focus amid distractions and creating mental clarity.
- **Managing Pressure:** Dr. Rotella delves into strategies for thriving under pressure, revealing how champions channel nerves into performance-enhancing energy.

Application for Performance:

Dr. Rotella's principles are applicable not only to



Get your copy here: [*How Champions Think*](#)

Purpose of the

Literature

Review:

1. **Foster personal growth & learning**
2. **Encourage more reading and engagement**

sports but also to life's endeavors. Athletes can learn to apply techniques like positive self-talk, visualization, and goal-setting to enhance their performance, while also building life skills like perseverance, adaptability, and leadership.

Parent & Athlete Discussion Prompts:

- **Mindset Matters:** Discuss with your young athlete how adopting a growth mindset can influence their approach to challenges, setbacks, and opportunities.
- **Pressure Handling:** Explore strategies for managing pressure together. Ask your child how they currently handle nervousness and brainstorm techniques from the book to try.
- **Confidence Building:** Share personal experiences of building confidence. Encourage your young athlete to identify their strengths and achievements to bolster self-assurance.

Practical Exercises:

- **Success Journal:** Encourage your young athlete to maintain a journal where they document their successes, big or small. This practice fosters a positive outlook.
- **Visualization:** Guide your child through visualization exercises. Ask them to vividly imagine their ideal performance and the emotions associated with it.
- **Positive Self-Talk:** Help your young athlete identify negative self-talk patterns and replace them with positive affirmations. Practice reframing self-doubt into self-belief.

"How Champions Think" is an invaluable resource for athletes and their support teams. Dr. Rotella's insights are presented in a relatable and accessible manner, making complex psychological concepts easy to understand. The book caters to a wide range of athletes, from amateurs seeking to improve their game to elite athletes striving to reach the pinnacle of their sport.

Parents will find the book equally enlightening, as it offers guidance on supporting their young athletes' mental development. Dr. Rotella's wisdom extends beyond the field, providing tools to help youth athletes excel not only in sports but also in their personal and academic lives.



Final Thoughts:

"How Champions Think: In Sports and in Life" is a treasure trove of practical wisdom that empowers athletes to cultivate a champion's mindset. Dr. Rotella's engaging writing style, backed by real-life examples, ensures that readers can immediately apply the techniques to their own journey. With its universal applicability and timeless insights, this book has the potential to shape both athletic success and life's triumphs.

Literature Review Disclaimer

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Parents Column

Supporting Your Young Athletes Mental Game – Practical Considerations

As a parent/guardian of a competitive youth athlete, you play a crucial role in your child's athletic journey. While physical training, skill development, and nutrition are essential aspects of their growth, the mental game is equally important. Nurturing your young athlete's mental performance can significantly impact their overall well-being and success in sports. In this article, we will explore practical considerations to support and enhance your young athlete's mental game.

Understanding the Importance of Mental Performance:

The mental aspect of sports, often referred to as the "mental game," encompasses various psychological skills that can make or break an athlete's performance. Confidence, focus, resilience, stress management, energy management, and emotional regulation are among the key components of mental performance that directly influence an athlete's ability to perform optimally in high-pressure situations.

Creating a Supportive Environment:

- **Open Communication:** Encourage open communication with your young athlete about their thoughts and feelings related to

sports. Offer a non-judgmental space where they can express their fears, anxieties, and aspirations. AVOID the interrogation on the ride home.

- **Positive Reinforcement:** Provide constructive feedback and celebrate efforts, not just outcomes. Acknowledge progress and hard work to boost confidence and motivation.
- **Setting Realistic Expectations:** Understand your child's individual abilities and set realistic goals together. Avoid placing excessive pressure to achieve unrealistic standards.
- **Promote Balance:** Encourage your young athlete to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Balancing academics, social life, and sports can help prevent burnout and foster a positive mental state.

Emphasizing Mental Skills Training:

- **Visualization:** Introduce your child to visualization techniques, where they imagine themselves performing at their best.



Visualization can enhance their confidence and mental readiness before competitions.

- **Goal Setting:** Teach your young athlete the difference between Outcome, Performance, and Process goals. Goal setting provides direction and motivation for training efforts.
- **Breathing and Relaxation Techniques:** Practice deep breathing and relaxation exercises together to help your child manage pre-game nerves and stay composed during high-pressure situations.
- **Self-Talk:** Teach them to recognize and replace negative self-talk with positive and constructive affirmations. Positive self-talk boosts self-belief and can be a powerful tool in overcoming challenges.

Handling Setbacks and Failures:

- **Resilience Building:** Emphasize that setbacks and failures are a natural part of sports and life. Teach them to view setbacks as learning opportunities and to bounce back stronger.
- **Focus on Process, Not Just Outcomes:** Encourage your child to focus on their efforts and the process rather than solely on winning or losing. This mindset shift can reduce performance anxiety and help them stay present during competitions.
- **Modeling Resilience:** Be a role model for resilience by demonstrating how you handle challenges in your own life. Your example can inspire them to develop a growth mindset.
- **Seeking Professional Guidance:** If you notice significant changes in your young athlete's behavior, confidence, or mental well-being, consider seeking guidance from sports psychologists or mental performance coaches.

These professionals can provide personalized strategies and support to help your child navigate mental challenges effectively.

Supporting your young athlete's mental game is a journey that requires patience, understanding, and empathy. By creating a nurturing and supportive environment, encouraging mental skills training, and teaching resilience, you can equip your child with invaluable tools to excel both in sports and life. Remember that every young athlete's mental game is unique, and providing unconditional support is the key to their growth and success.

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Disclaimer: This article is for informational purposes only and should not replace professional advice or medical recommendations. Please consult with a qualified sports psychologist or mental performance coach for personalized guidance.



Ask the Experts

Ask the Experts

Do you have burning questions about mental performance? Are you looking for insights and guidance to enhance your mental game and achieve peak performance in sports?

Welcome to "Ask the Experts," a dedicated segment in our digital magazine where you can seek insights from seasoned mental performance experts. Whether you're a competitive athlete, a coach, or a supportive parent, or even an association administrator we're here to address your inquiries and help you navigate the challenges that come with competitive sports.

How This Works:

Email us your questions related to mental performance, mindset, goal setting, motivation, coping with pressure, overcoming setbacks, confidence, focus, and any other mental performance topics that pique your interest. No question is too big or too small!

Expert Insights:

Our network of experienced mental performance coaches and consultants will carefully review your questions and provide comprehensive answers based on their expertise and years of working with athletes at all levels.

Anonymity:

No identifying information will be shared in responses to questions.

Read the Responses:

Check out future issues for the "Ask the Expert" segment of our magazine. We'll feature a selection of the most intriguing and relevant questions along with our experts' insightful responses.

How to Submit Your Questions:

- **Email:** info@thementormagazine.ca
- **Subject Line:** Ask the Experts

Remember, mental performance is a vital component of achieving success in sports, and our mission is to provide you with valuable content and support you on your journey.

Don't miss the opportunity to get expert insights that can elevate your game and help you perform at your best when it matters most. We're here to assist you in unlocking your full potential in sports and beyond!

The Purpose of Ask the Experts:

1. To connect subscribers with CMPCs
2. To showcase and Highlight professionals in the field



Disclaimer: The responses provided in "Ask the Expert" are for informational purposes only and should not replace personalized advice from a qualified mental performance consultant or licensed mental health professional. If you have serious psychological concerns, we recommend seeking guidance from a certified sports psychologist or qualified mental health professional in your area. In the case of mental health distress or mental health emergency, call 911.

AASP: <https://appliedsportpsych.org/certification/cmipc-directory/>

CSPA: <https://www.cspa-acps.com/professional-members>

Mental Performance Moment

***The purpose of the Mental Performance Moment is:
To provide readers with something that can be used right away***

Welcome to the "Mental Performance Moment" of The MENTOR Magazine, where athletes can learn simple and effective mental training techniques and exercises to enhance their performance on and off the field. In each forthcoming issue, we will present a quick and easy exercise that can be utilized right away, with no prior experience required. Let's get started on the path to mental toughness and peak performance!

Mental Performance Moment Disclaimer:

This section provides general mental performance information and should not replace personalized advice from a qualified mental performance professional. If readers have specific psychological concerns, we recommend seeking guidance from a certified sports psychologist or mental health professional.



AASP: <https://appliedsportpsych.org/certification/cmhc-directory/>

CSPA: <https://www.cspa-acps.com/professional-members>



Game Tape: Team Dynamics Tips

Why Film Reviews?

Movies were a big part of my childhood (VHS Baby!!). We had three channels on a good weather day, and going to rent a movie in town was a big deal. I like movies and sports movies get you fired up and can have the ability to illustrate many of the mental performance concepts in a variety of creative ways. Each Issue, we will review one film and break down the important points.

The Replacements (2000)

"The Replacements" is a spirited sports comedy that infuses football with humor, camaraderie, and an underdog spirit. With a blend of unconventional characters and feel-good moments, the film tackles themes of resilience, teamwork, and the triumph of the human spirit.

Plot Summary:

Set against the backdrop of a professional football players' strike, *"The Replacements"* follows the journey of a makeshift football team composed of replacement players. Shane Falco (Keanu Reeves), a former star quarterback seeking redemption, is thrust into the spotlight as the team's leader. Under the guidance of Coach Jimmy McGinty (Gene Hackman), the eclectic group of misfits must navigate personal insecurities, camaraderie challenges, and the pressure of stepping onto a professional field. As they come together to prove their worth, they discover the true meaning of teamwork and rise to unexpected heights.

Key Mental Performance Themes:

"The Replacements" delves into several prominent mental performance themes:

Resilience: The replacement players face adversity on multiple fronts, from their individual insecurities to the skepticism of fans and opponents. Their ability to rebound from setbacks embodies the essence of resilience.

Team Unity: The film underscores the importance of building a sense of unity and camaraderie within a team, regardless of individual backgrounds or skill levels.

Overcoming Self-Doubt: Characters grapple with self-doubt and insecurities. Their journeys demonstrate the power of self-belief and the impact of overcoming personal barriers.

Leadership and Mentorship: Coach McGinty's mentorship and Shane Falco's leadership offer valuable lessons in guiding a team towards success.



Main Character Analysis:

Shane Falco, portrayed by Keanu Reeves, emerges as the heart of the film. Scarred by a past mistake, Falco battles inner demons while leading the replacement team. His transformation from self-doubt to self-assuredness is a focal point of the narrative.

Takeaways for Athletes:

Believe in Yourself: Overcoming self-doubt is essential for success. Shane Falco's journey reminds us that self-belief is a crucial stepping stone towards achievement.

Embrace Diversity: The replacement team is a mosaic of backgrounds and skills. Embrace the diversity within your team, recognizing that every member brings a unique strength.

Unity Wins: No matter the odds, unity among teammates creates an unbreakable bond. The film shows that supporting each other can lead to remarkable victories.

Takeaways for Coaches:

Foster Belief: Coach McGinty's approach highlights the importance of nurturing self-belief in your players. Providing mentorship and guidance can transform a team's mentality.

Celebrate Diversity: A team composed of diverse talents can excel if they learn to channel their strengths toward a common goal.

Build a Resilient Team: Teach your players to bounce back from setbacks. The replacement players' ability to adapt showcases the significance of resilience.

Discussion Questions:

- How does Shane Falco's personal journey mirror the team's transformation?
- What techniques does Coach McGinty use to unite the replacement players?
- How does the film portray the challenges of overcoming public skepticism and proving one's worth?

Final Thoughts:

"The Replacements" is an entertaining and heartwarming story that highlights the power of perseverance, teamwork, and embracing one's unique strengths. Through its engaging characters and dynamic performances, the film reminds us that success isn't determined solely by skill, but by the heart and unity of a team. While filled with lighthearted moments, the film carries a poignant message: **when individuals come together, they can achieve greatness that transcends the field.**

Disclaimer: Please note, these movies were made in different times. The MENTOR Magazine, Inc. does not endorse or promote any film or the message therein. These films are mentioned solely for the connection to mental performance concepts.



Have Your Say

Opinions & Thoughts

What mental performance skills are most important to you?

[Access the survey here](#)

Let us know your role in the competitive sport/elite performance domain:

- **Athlete/Performer**
- **Coach**
- **Parent**
- **Administrator**
- **Combination of Roles**

Then rank the importance of the following mental performance skills as they relate to you at this time:

- **Motivation**
- **Confidence/Self-Esteem**
- **Concentration/Attention**
- **Emotional Management**
- **Energy/Arousal Management**

Purpose:

- 1. To engage with subscribers and readers**
- 2. To improve content delivery**

Note: Readers, your input is valuable to us! We will only use this information to tailor our content and provide you with relevant resources. Thank you for sharing your opinions with us!



Gratitudes



TMM believes it is important to express thanks and appreciation for everyone's time, contributions, and effort.

Expressing Gratitude is an important part of Mindfulness and our individual *CHOICE* to see the Positives in our Lives.

When we express gratitude, we're acknowledging the contributions and appreciation of others.

This regular acknowledgement of gratitude can foster a sense of accountability, as it reminds us of the choices we've made and the impact they've had.

Be grateful for what you have and where you are at this moment.



MENTOR Quote

Why Quotes?

1. Inspiration & Motivation
2. Highlight Themes of Mental Performance
3. Add Depth & Diversity to Mental Performance
4. Memorable Content & Easy to Recall
5. Much SMARTER & WISER People have said it...

"Fortune favors the Prepared Mind" – Louis Pasteur

The phrase *"Fortune favors the Prepared Mind"* is often attributed to the French chemist and microbiologist Louis Pasteur.

He is known for his significant contributions to the fields of chemistry and medicine, including the discovery of the principles of vaccination, pasteurization, and microbial fermentation.

The phrase reflects the idea that success and opportunities tend to come to those who are well-prepared, proactive, and ready to seize the moment.

Let's break down how the phrase *"Fortune favors the Prepared Mind"* relates to mental performance in a way that resonates with you.

Imagine you're getting ready for a big game or competition. You've been training hard physically, but have you ever thought about training your

mind too? That's where mental performance comes in. Just like you prepare your body for peak performance, preparing your mind is equally important.

"Fortune favors the Prepared Mind" means that if you put in the effort to train your mind and become mentally prepared, you increase your chances of success and achieving your goals.

Here's how it relates to the competitor in You:

Confidence Booster: When you're mentally prepared, you feel more confident in your abilities. Positive self-talk and visualization techniques can help you believe in yourself, and that confidence can make a huge difference in how you perform on the field.

Focus and Concentration: Sports can be fast-paced and full of distractions. Mental preparation helps you stay focused and in the zone during crucial moments. Mindfulness exercises can keep your mind from wandering and help you stay present in the game.



Handling Pressure: Competitive sports can be nerve-wracking, especially during high-stakes situations. Mental performance techniques teach you how to manage stress and pressure, so you don't get overwhelmed when the game is on the line.

Resilience and Overcoming Challenges: It's natural to face setbacks and challenges in sports. Being mentally prepared means you're better equipped to bounce back from disappointments, handle any pressure situation, and keep pushing forward.

Visualization: Ever daydreamed about making that game-winning shot or scoring the winning goal? Visualization is a powerful tool in sport psychology that allows you to imagine yourself succeeding. When you visualize success, you're more likely to make it happen in reality.

Pre-Competition Routines: Just like you have warm-up routines for your body, mental preparation involves having pre-competition routines. These routines help you get in the right mindset before the game (and during the game), ensuring you're mentally ready to perform your best.

Remember, mental performance is not about being perfect or never feeling nervous. It's about learning to manage your thoughts and emotions, so they work in your favor when the time arrives. Just like you put in hours of training on the field, invest time in training your mind too.

So, embrace the idea that *"Fortune favors the Prepared Mind"* and make mental preparation an essential part of your training. When you combine a strong, prepared mind with your physical skills, you'll be unstoppable on and off the field and achieve great things in your sports journey. Keep working smarter, stay positive, and never stop learning and growing—success will come your way!

All the Best & Be Well!
Dr. W.

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***Courage, Balance, Loyalty,
Compassion, Humour, Wisdom***