



REMOVING MENTAL BARRIERS

I want to take this time to discuss removing the “Mental Roadblocks” that we put up for ourselves and for those around us. Too often, we give in to the limitations that we or others impose on ourselves. These limitations keep us from reaching our Goals and cause us to sacrifice the “Self” that we’ve always wanted to be. Because of this, we become someone that we never wanted to be and someone our Goal-Setting “Self” doesn’t even recognize.

In this issue we are going to give you some nuggets of wisdom that will set you onto a journey of Sports Psychology discovery. We are going to give you a glimpse into a world where YOU make choices that serve you better. Choices that give you more positive results. Choices that will help you chart your own course! Enjoy!

Michael Sahno
Owner of Sea & Land Fitness

SPORTS SCIENCE DEFINITIONS

TRANSLATING THE SCIENCE

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF FITNESS TERMINOLOGY

EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY MOTOR CONTROL

The process of beginning, directing, and adjusting purposeful voluntary movement (an intended physical action).

This process is planned and executed within your Central Nervous System (Brain, Brain Stem, Spinal Cord), which is then communicated through Neurons throughout your body to your Muscles.

Feedback from this movement (Did I do this right? Do I need to make an adjustment so I don’t fall?), is then sent back up to the Central Nervous System, and allows you to make corrections and adjustments to your movement or movement pattern.

This information is then stored inside your Brain’s Memory Centers to help with future movements and aid in the refinement and coordination of a learned skill.

PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY DECISION MAKING

The process of making a Choice based on the most relevant information possible and a good understanding of all of the potential results of that choice.

The study of Decision Making focuses on making Decisions Under Pressure and how Stress affects the Decision Making Process. Research has shown that we are able to create “Mental Models” that include knowledge we already possess in a specific skill.

This has led to techniques that have been shown to help individuals become more Efficient at making Decisions that have the outcomes that a person might desire. These “Psychological Skills” allow us to rapidly find and retrieve information to help guide our decisions under High-Stress Conditions.

SPORTS NUTRITION PROTEIN

Protein is one of the three macronutrients in the human diet, along with carbohydrates and fat. Amino Acids (what Proteins are made up of), are molecules that contain carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen.

Some Amino Acids can be made inside of your body (Non-Essential), while others must come from outside of the body (eaten) (Essential).

Proteins are REQUIRED because they are used in the Development, Growth, and Repair of Your Muscles and Tissues. You need them to Recover after working out.

Proteins are found in a wide-range of foods, including vegetables, grains, and beans, but are primarily found in meats and milk products (dairy).

MONTHLY EXERCISE BREAKDOWN



FOCUS PAD KNEE RAISES

FOCUS PAD KNEE RAISES are an exercise that will work the HIP FLEXORS and will aid in effectively performing both SQUATS and SIT-UPS. Boxing focus pads are recommended for this exercise, but it can be done effectively with just the open palms of your hands.

TO BEGIN, stand straight with the focus mitts (hands) out in front of you, palms down at the height of your SOLAR PLEXUS (bottom of the chest, center of your torso). This is the STARTING POSITION.

Raise your RIGHT KNEE up QUICKLY and make FORCEFUL CONTACT with the focus pad, then QUICKLY lower your leg back down to the STARTING POSITION.

Then, IMMEDIATELY raise your LEFT KNEE up QUICKLY and make FORCEFUL CONTACT with the focus pad, then QUICKLY lower your leg back down to the STARTING POSITION. This is ONE REPETITION of this exercise.

A normal evolution of this exercise is 5-10 Repetitions and 3-5 Sets.

IMPORTANT: Ensure that you maintaining the height of the focus pads and that they are NOT DROPPING TOO LOW (meaning your knees are NOT COMING UP HIGH ENOUGH), so that you get a FULL RANGE OF MOTION of the hip joint for the entire duration of the exercise.

INSIGHTS INTO SPORTS SCIENCE

MAKING THE RIGHT TRAINING DECISIONS

BY MICHAEL SAHND,
MS APK, TSAC-F

Decision Making is an important part of a training plan. From the obvious decisions we make, such as choosing which exercise to include in a daily workout, all the way down to the unconscious changes and adjustments that our bodies make to alter a movement when we encounter pain. Some of these choices are simple and don't require any real thought and will most likely not result in a negative impact on our fitness goals or our overall health.

What will have a real impact though are decisions that overlook guidelines for safety and health that have been put in place by experienced professionals and organizations. Making training decisions that disregard these guidelines can put the individual at risk of injury, and at times, depending on the intensity of the evolution, even at risk for death.

While we are of course talking about the extreme end of the spectrum there are reports of individuals who have made, what I would call, "poor training decisions". Training in a pool without supervision, working at heights without the proper tie-off, even training in high heat or altitude without the proper hydration or nutrition can have catastrophic consequences. Consequences that could result in an unfortunate ending to what the individual thought was "just another training day".

We all want training results that meet or even surpass our expectations. But we cannot ignore the guidelines for health and safety that have been put into place by organizations like the National Strength and Conditioning Association, the International Society of Sports Nutrition, and the American College of Sports Medicine, just to name a few. There are even fitness guidelines for safety published by all of the US military's service branches regarding required rest intervals and individual hydration plans.

All of these groups developed them for a reason. To help ensure that the day after your workout, you'll be able to get back out on or back into the field. Please, push yourself, but do it responsibly. Remember, always train smart and always train safe.

HONEYBADGER SPOTLIGHT



DEREK MANN, PH.D.

Dr. Derek Mann is an esteemed mental performance coach and an expert in emotional intelligence and performance psychology. Currently serving the University of Florida as an Instructional Assistant Professor in the department of Applied Physiology and Kinesiology, he also serves as Managing Partner of the Performance Psychology Group, LLC, where he consults across performance sectors including sports, military, and corporate organizations. Dr. Mann specializes in understanding how emotional and attentional processes impact performance, particularly under pressure. His work includes guiding athletes and professionals in developing psychological skills and self-awareness to reach peak performance.

HOW DO YOU THINK SPORT PSYCHOLOGY CAN HELP AN ATHLETE?

As a Mental Performance Coach, I view my role as essential to helping athletes develop mental skills that enhance their performance and overall confidence. Sport psychology can assist athletes in numerous ways, from building resilience and enhancing focus to managing stress and improving confidence.

1. **Enhancing Mental Toughness:** Mental toughness is key for athletes facing high-stakes situations. Sport psychologists work with athletes to build resilience by using strategies like goal-setting, visualization, and self-talk. Research shows that athletes with higher resilience levels can better manage pressure and rebound from setbacks more effectively.
2. **Improving Focus and Concentration:** Most sports and performance domains require sustained focus, whether it's during a high-stakes golf putt or blocking out distractions on the basketball court. Techniques like emotion-regulation, mindfulness or attention control training help athletes stay present, improving their attentional flexibility while preventing performance decrements from fear, uncertainty, and doubt or simply ineffective attention allocation.
3. **Stress and Anxiety Management:** Sport psychologists teach stress management techniques, such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and imagery, which can reduce anxiety levels before and during competitions. Research shows that athletes with effective stress management skills are more likely to manage stress effectively and often find themselves able to perform more consistently under pressure.
4. **Enhancing Confidence:** Confidence is a major factor in achieving peak performance. Through positive reinforcement, affirmations, and building on past successes, sport psychologists help athletes improve their self-efficacy, which increases their likelihood of success.
5. **Enhancing Motivation and Goal Setting:** Motivation is another area where sports psychologists provide support by aligning athletes' personal values and goals with their training, helping to sustain commitment over the long term. When athletes struggle with motivation—whether due to burnout, training plateaus, or a general lack of enthusiasm—a sport psychologist can help them reconnect with their purpose, by setting effective and achievable goals that align with their personal mission, vision, and values.
6. **Recovery and Injury Rehabilitation:** Injuries can be mentally and emotionally challenging for athletes. Sport psychologists provide coping strategies to deal with the frustration and fear of re-injury, often using cognitive-behavioral techniques to aid in the rehabilitation process. This psychological support can accelerate recovery and ensure athletes maintain motivation, confidence, and mental acuity during the physical rehabilitation process.

In essence, sport psychology helps athletes fine-tune the mental aspects of performance, helping to transforming obstacles into opportunities. By building mental skills, athletes can perform at their best more consistently and enjoy a more effective approach to competition and training.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE THAT SHOULD BE FEATURED IN THE HONEYBADGER SPOTLIGHT? SOMEONE YOU SEE AND WHO YOU THINK SHOULD BE SEEN AS AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS?

IF SO, THEN REACH OUT TO US AT INFO@SANDLFIT.COM

HONEYBADGER SPOTLIGHT



DEREK MANN, PH.D. [CONT.]

WHEN SHOULD AN ATHLETE CONSIDER GETTING ASSISTANCE THROUGH SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY?:

A performer should consider seeking a sport psychologist when they face mental or emotional challenges that impact their ability to consistently execute their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the upper range of their potential or if they want to proactively enhance their mental skills to optimize their performance.

Here are a few thoughts to consider. The pressure to perform well, whether from external expectations or internal standards, can create stress that impacts performance. A sport psychologist can teach performers coping strategies for managing stress and creating a balanced approach to performance.

If heightened anxiety becomes problematic before or during performance, effecting concentration or physical execution, a sport psychologist can offer tools like relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring, and breathing exercises to manage these responses effectively. Equally, when performers struggle to stay mentally present under pressure, sport psychologists use techniques like mindfulness and visualization to strengthen attention control, which helps reduce self-doubt and distractions.

Low confidence or lack of motivation may stem from repeated setbacks, self-doubt, injury, or burnout. Sport psychologists can help by working on self-efficacy, goal-setting, and self-talk, which can help performers maintain high motivation and belief in their abilities. For performers facing emotional challenges like frustration or anger during performances, a sport psychologist helps in developing emotional regulation skills, which are essential for maintaining composure and adaptability under stress.

That said, sport psychologists provide valuable mental training and coping tools, but they are especially helpful when performers aim to cultivate a sustainable, positive mental approach to both practice and performance.

WHAT CAN'T SPORT PSYCHOLOGY HELP WITH?:

As a sport psychologist, it's important to recognize the areas that fall outside the scope of sport psychology and to refer athletes to other specialists when necessary. While sport psychology is valuable for performance enhancement, mental resilience, and managing competition-related stress, there are some limitations.

1. **Mental Health:** Mental Performance Coaches and Educational Sport psychologists cannot treat clinical mental health conditions, such as eating disorders, depression, or bipolar disorder to name a few. These require licensed mental health professionals, like clinical sports psychologists, clinical psychologists, clinical mental health counselors, or psychiatrists, who are trained in diagnosis and treatment. Mental performance coaches and sport psychologists might work alongside these professionals but do not address the root of such medical conditions directly.
2. **Physical Health and Injury Treatment:** Sport psychologists are not medical doctors and therefore do not provide physical rehabilitation, diagnose injuries, or prescribe medications. While they can support athletes in coping with the mental challenges of injury, the physical aspects require physical therapists, athletic trainers, or physicians.
3. **Life Stressors:** Issues outside the realm of sport—such as financial difficulties, family conflicts, or personal relationships—often need support from life coaches, counselors, or licensed therapists. Sport psychology primarily focuses on areas related to sports and performance, so life challenges that aren't directly tied to athletic performance typically fall outside the scope of sport and performance psychology.

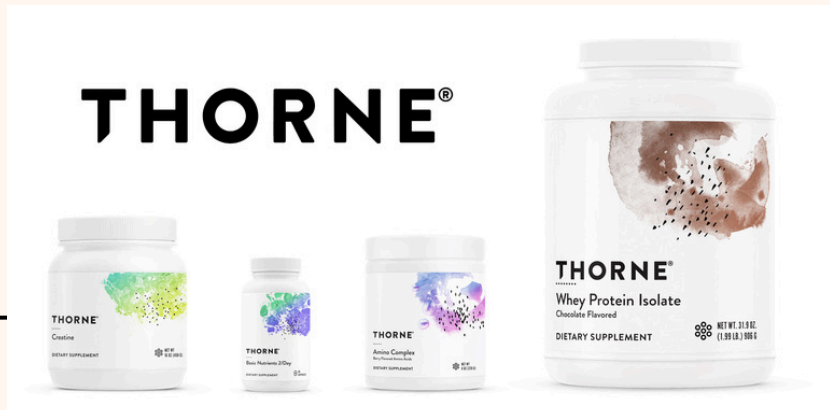
Sport psychology has a significant impact within its domain, but by understanding these limits, we can collaborate effectively with other professionals, creating a holistic support system for athletes.

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