

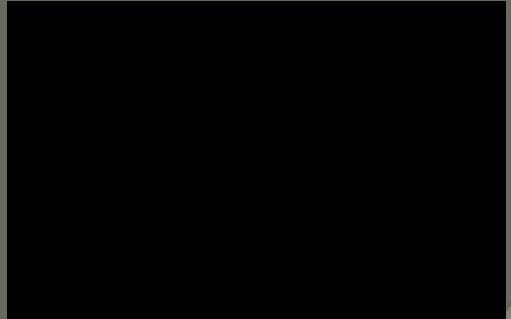
Introduction to Sport Psychology

- What is it?
- Who uses it?
- What does it do?
- How can YOU use it?

My Background

- University Lecturer in Elite Performance
- Applied sport psychology
 - Technical member of Irish Institute of Sport
 - Individual and team consultation with (amongst others) individual athletes, county / club teams, adventurers, provincial rugby academy
- Research role
 - Linked to both my teaching and applied interests

If you want to be a champion?



To understand how psychological factors affect an individual's physical performance

To understand how participation in sport affect a person's psychological development, performance and well being

India need a miracle to survive
INDIA NEED A MIRACLE TO SURVIVE
 India go into their crucial Champions Trophy match against Sri Lanka strength ahead India have on Virat Kohli's roaring role out of a century in second innings.

Morocco coach Nielsen says his team are under pressure to hold onto their top ranking in Test cricket and it will be "hard work" to beat South Africa on their home turf.
SPORT
HEADLINES: graham-johnson.com

Aussies under pressure, says Nielsen
 Australia coach Tim Nielsen says his team are under pressure to hold onto their top ranking in Test cricket and it will be "hard work" to beat South Africa on their home turf.
SPORT
HEADLINES: graham-johnson.com

France coach under pressure again ahead of key matches - Feature
Gareth Southgate fired by Middlesbrough
 Despite victory over Derby Co., former England international is relieved of duties as coach after three years on Teesside

Rob Andrew faces axe if he fails to appoint Martin Johnson
SPORT
HEADLINES: graham-johnson.com

Benitez has to go, Liverpool are an average team in the Premiership, considering they have one of the best squads, they should be much higher. Whatever Benitez is doing, is not working and his days at Liverpool surely are numbered.

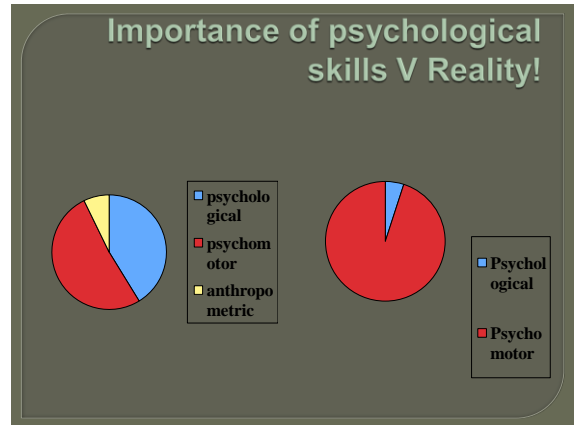
AUTO RACING
ALONSO UNDER PRESSURE TO DELIVER FERRARI F1 TITLE
BY FLORENCE PIGNATIER

“ I believe in this team and in the squad of course. We just have to not talk too much ”
 Under-pressure Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger on his team's current situation

Saturday's match...

The Mental Control Continuum

TOTAL CONTROL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This is great" • Easy/Effortless • No thought • Time flies
GAINING CONTROL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop negative thoughts • Kick start the autopilot
OUT OF CONTROL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Oh God, why me?" • Hard work • Loads of irrelevant thought • Time drags



"I have a brother in law who's very good at football but he never made it. But if I had his skill I would have been a professional player" (World class curler)

"You come across players who are physically gifted. Genetically they are ideal specimens but I suppose it goes down to what they are prepared to put themselves through to gain"

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Myths about Sport Psychology

It is only for ELITE athletes

It is only for PROBLEM athletes

It works quickly!

A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

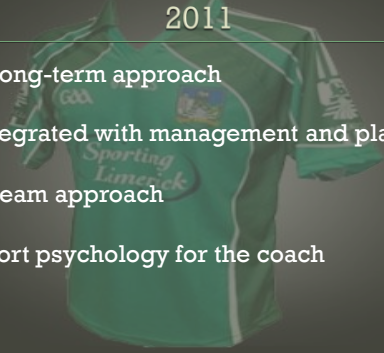
Incorporating Sport Psychology

A Coach Perspective

Shane Fitzgibbon
Limerick Minor Hurling 2010/2011

Limerick Minor Hurling 2010 / 2011

- A long-term approach
- Integrated with management and players
- A team approach
- Sport psychology for the coach



Characteristics of Excellence

WHAT MENTAL SKILLS DO YOUR ATHLETES NEED?

Characteristics of Excellence

Motivation
Commitment
Imagery
Goal setting
Planning
Confidence
Focus
Performance evaluation
Coping skills

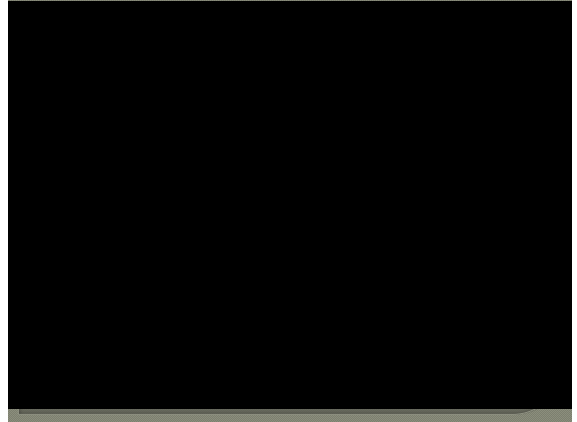
“The factors that we use are for performance generally - what changes is the way they are applied to each individual and each situation”

High motivation and commitment

- *“I think that I **worked really hard**. There were a lot of athletes that might have been more talented than I was, but I think I was more **determined**. I wanted to do well and I wasn't going to let anything stand in my way”*

Characteristics of Champions

- **Goal oriented**
- Set goals and targets
- Concrete pathways for achieving their goals
- Dedication to their goals
- **Optimistic and Positive**
- “half full versus half empty”
- Remained positive when faced with difficulties
- Rebound after failure



Characteristics of Excellence

- **Ability to focus**
- Ability to concentrate on key performance related factors
- Ability to block out distractions
- *“I can get very focused. It is almost like where you get so focused time stands still”*
- Focus on what one can control



Characteristics of Excellence

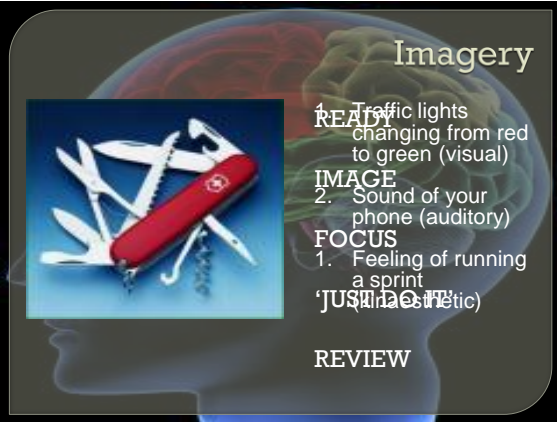
- **Ability to handle stress and deal with adversity**
- This allowed athletes to deal with setbacks and anxiety
- Low trait anxious
- High emotional control
- Peak under pressure
- *“He was good under pressure. It almost seemed that the more pressure he had on him the better he did”*

Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do



WE HAVE THE TOOLS BUT WE MUST KNOW HOW THEY WORK!





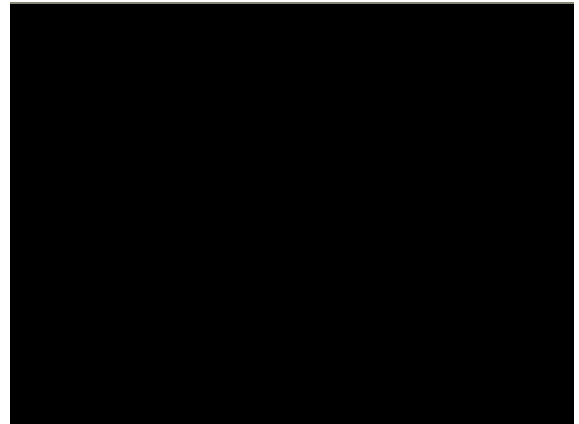
Imagery

READY
1. Traffic lights changing from red to green (visual)

IMAGE
2. Sound of your phone (auditory)

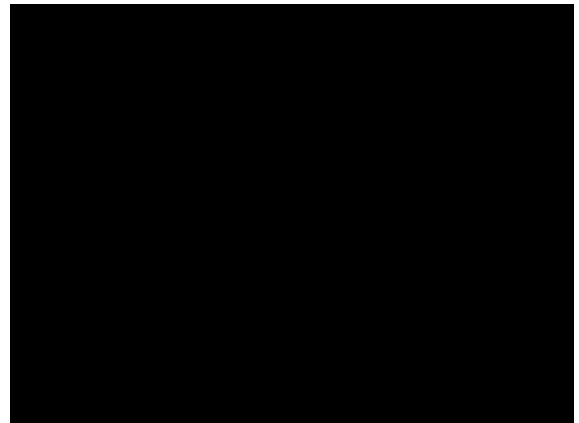
FOCUS
1. Feeling of running a sprint (kinesthetic)
'JUST DO IT'

REVIEW



A rugby example

- "It's just fantastic to go to places like that, where rugby just oozes from people's every pore," Barkley enthuses. "I've visualised all three games already. I find the more you do that, the less the shock to the system."
- "I would go so far as to say that the mental side of my game, and the mental preparation I go through, has been as big a part of my career as the physical preparation I do in the gym and on the training field. If you can imagine yourself achieving something or performing a certain skill then it becomes easier to achieve in reality."



Planning for peak performance

- Schedules
- 'Plan A' & 'Plan B' Behaviours
 - What if?
- Performance checklists
- Bottom Line – Check EVERYONE knows why they do what they do
- Realistic evaluations
 - Review Sheets
- Any 'special' competition carries extra pressures

SO GET SOME PRACTICE!

Pre-Competition and Competition Questionnaire

Name _____ Date _____

Please answer the following questions truthfully. False or inaccurate answers may result in inappropriate advice being given to you. Please read each question carefully before answering it.

- Approximately when do you begin to prepare yourself mentally for a forthcoming, major competition? (weeks in advance? days? hours?)

 - How do you begin this type of preparation?

 - What do you think about most during this preparation stage? (Performance? results? opponents? pleasing your coach or your parents?)

- Do you like people who are very close to you (parents, brothers, sisters, husband, wife, best friend, girlfriend) to be present at competitions?

Yes
No
 - If yes, please state who in particular and for what reasons. If no, why?

1


Table 23.1 Planning sheet for swimmer day of race holding room

Time	Physical activity	Mental activity
6:00 am	Wake-up call, phone	
	Short walk and stretch	Loosen off from sleep
	Get up, shave, dry off, keep hydrated (0.5 L)	
	Check kit and add water bottle	Use checklist to ensure I've got everything I need. <i>Preparation is complete</i>
	Breakfast (4 x OJ, cereals, toast/rolls + 0.25 L water)	
	Sit @ table (or outside), read paper if available + 0.25 L	Entertain self with easy chat or read
	Sit at 'meeting point'	
	<i>Full plan included detailed warm-up and stretching sessions, plus diversion activities, at this point</i>	
	Watch swimming with the rest. Keep hydrated and loose	Feel <i>loose</i> and <i>ready</i>
	Take a walk (outside?) keep water bottle with me	Feel <i>calm</i>
	Pick up kit go to change into race kit. Hat + goggles in pocket	
	Go back and put bag down. Speak to coach	<i>'Got everything I need to race'</i>

Planning for peak performance

The A-B-C Model

- **A**ntecedents
- **B**ehaviour
- **C**onsequences



FUTILITY
Because no one actually cares if you can do it.

Incorporating Sport Psychology principles into YOUR coaching

- How do you want your athletes to behave?
- How to encourage these behaviours?
- How to reward these behaviours?

I want my athletes to give 100% at training

COACH SYSTEM	COACH BEHAVIOUR
Set clear objectives about the training session Discuss objectives with the athletes	Public and private recognition of EFFORT at training Reward athletes who are trying

I want my athletes to be on time for training

COACH SYSTEM	COACH BEHAVIOUR
Publish a timetable in advance Always start and finish session on time Log of attendance Adhere to schedule	Positively reinforce athletes who arrive on time Set a good example and always arrive on time

I want my athletes to use imagery in their sport

COACH SYSTEM

Meet with athlete to discuss imagery and how to use it

Allow time within your session to use imagery

COACH BEHAVIOUR

Question the athletes about their use of imagery

Reinforce and reward athletes who use imagery

I want my athletes to block out distractions during an important match

COACH SYSTEM

Simulate match situations in training

Allow athletes develop skills in training to cope with competition pressures

Allow time to practice these skills

COACH BEHAVIOUR

Discuss potential distractions with athletes and plan for these effectively

Emphasise the importance of focusing on relevant cues

I want my athletes to set goals for training

COACH SYSTEM

Meet with athlete to discuss individual goals and to monitor progress

Encourage the athlete to keep a written log of their goals

COACH BEHAVIOUR

Provide feedback to the athlete relative to their individual goals

Monitor and reward progress relative to individual goals

I want my athletes practice on their own

COACH SYSTEM

Give the athletes guidelines about what to practice

Discuss the content of the next session in advance

COACH BEHAVIOUR

Question the athlete about their practice

Reward athletes who engage in individual practice

Reinforce the importance of individual practice

Chris Hoy

Why he surpassed the "talented" kids

"Maybe because they were so gifted and won so easily, they didn't really have the desire to work hard when they had to, and they also didn't like the feeling of losing when it happened."

From Orr & Kemp, "Be a Winner"

Thank you for your attention and interest

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