

"Things are never what they are. You are always what you make of them." (Jean Anouilh)

Focus for improvement (change):

If you always do
What you've always done,
You will always be
What you already are.

Some athletes have multiple reasons why they cannot do what they want to, when all they need is one reason why they can.

Keep an open mind, question, experiment -> if it works then OK, adapt it, be flexible; otherwise bin it.

There is more chance of an athlete becoming a winner if he does not have winning as a goal (Unestahl LE).

"Goal setting gives direction to your motivation."

"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n."—John Milton, Paradise Lost

"I don't want people who want to win; I want people who want to prepare to win." Bob Dwyer (Australian RU coach)

"If things went wrong there would be tears before bedtime; but I came to realise that when things go wrong it's generally because of preparation."
Shirley Robertson

"The game is won or lost far away from fans or spectators. It is won on the practice field & in the gym & out there on the roads, long before the big day itself arrives." Mohamed Ali

"When mental & physical practice were combined better performance was achieved than by physical practice alone." Feltz & Landes

“The only man who never makes mistakes is the one who never does anything” Roosevelt.

“No such thing as failure - it is temporary non-success”

“No one will handle this better than me”

“Tough times never last; tough people do”

“No room for those of weak character and negative attitude. You must be courageous and serious.”

“Make the mind run the body not the body run the mind”

Daniel Gould of the University of North Carolina found that 82% of wrestling coaches rated mental toughness as the most important psychological attribute of success.

“Success is knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.” (You can’t control your competitors, so why focus on them and what they are doing?) John Wooden, legendary basketball coach

“People say I have a great talent, but in my opinion excellence has nothing to do with talent. It is about what you choose to believe and how determined you are to get there. The mind is more powerful than anything else.” Michael Phelps. 2009

“I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.” Michael Jordan

“I must keep moving forward, just this step, one more step. Every step brings me closer to my goal.”

“Sport psychology intervention can help athletes to break the cycle of a mental block. Techniques such as imagery, positive self-talk and relaxation can all be used to help the athlete overcome their mental block and allow a skill to be performed autonomously again.” Caroline Heaney, OU lecture

Did you know that eight out of ten athletes are likely to have some sort of pre-match superstitious ritual?

Research in this area goes right back to the 1940s with experiments that first discovered superstitions among pigeons!

- Rituals help reduce psychological tension in athletes and more often than not will help an athlete. Indeed the enactment of rituals may help athletes perform better.

- Superstitious individuals are probably less self-confident and experience higher levels of psychological tension before a match than less superstitious players.

“Don’t worry. It’s OK. We’ll just take it out of the Get Screwed Fund (GSF).”

No matter how well you planned, things go wrong. When they do, the cost to you—money, time, energy, change of plans—could come out of the GSF.

It gives an out, a reason to stay calm and say to yourself, “Of course this happened, it’s expected that things will change, so now I’m going to adapt and reset my expectations.”

Allow stress-free adaptation to injuries, sicknesses, weather, etc. Don’t be so hard on yourself when they happen—remember, it’s expected!

“The mental preparation is everything. It's above and inside physical, technical and psychological training. Without mental preparation I would spend a lot of my energy before THE RACE. The ultimate goal is what I'm preparing myself for and I want to save all of my energy and power to that goal.”

Jani Lakanen: WOC 2013 Silver medal

“Control the controllables— that means you and only you. Your attitude, actions, behaviours, thoughts — no one else’s — control your thoughts to be only in the present. The past is gone. Lamenting won’t change it. The future isn’t here, you only control what you think and do now. And only by taking that control do you have the opportunity to influence the future.”

Lesley Paterson: Xterra World Champion

The smallest change that’s yielded the largest benefit has been a psychological one. It has revolutionised how I deal with training on a day-to-day basis. My husband, Simon (who has a sports psychology background), helped me with this one. In the past, when I was having a bad day (body feeling tired, poor mental attitude), I would get very negative and see the session or race as a failure. Simon expressed to me that I should see those days or moments as gifts to truly learn about myself and develop techniques to help deal with them. That way, those “bad days” are actually good days because you’re learning how to cope with the challenges that will come along. One technique he came up with was creating a character for myself that I become when I train and race—like a superhero character. Mine is called Paddy McGuinty (Celtic badass). She is a fighter to the bitter end. Never give up no matter where you think you’re going to finish or how the session might pan out. ... That’s where my Braveheart comes in!

Think carefully
for your
thoughts will
become your
words



Choose your
words carefully
for your words
will become your
actions



Develop your character
carefully for your
character will shape your
destiny

Form habits
carefully for
your habit will
become your
character



Act carefully for
your actions will
become your
habits

