

Intervention goal setting

Psychology



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Intervention – Goal Setting Solution of Athlete Problems Athletes frequently experience stress during competitions or games and this affects their physical performance (Olivarez, 2010). In this case, an athlete from Bulldogs baseball team wants to bat .300 this season but he is not sure, how he is going to achieve it. The athlete also wants to have a higher fielding percentage. In most cases, athletes work to develop their mental strength and self-confidence before and during the game. Overthinking performance is one mistake made by many athletes. Sports psychology assists the athletes to solve this problem and help them train their brains to become supportive during sporting activities. The sports psychologists to solve athletes' problems usually use two methods and they include diaphragmatic breathing or progressive muscle relaxation, and cognitive restructuring. Progressive muscle relaxation technique helps in reducing physical response to anxiety such as shallow breathing and tense muscles. Cognitive restructuring entails the process of changing habits. Changing habitual thinking assists the athlete to channel pressure and adrenaline into motivation and excitement instead of worry (Olivarez, 2010).

Basic Mental Skills Training

The individual's ability to control emotional and mental elements helps in task performance and the psychological foundation for well-being and confidence. There are two training techniques for mental skills training and they are somatic and cognitive methods. Some of the cognitive methods consist of mental visualization and imagery, cognitive-behavior therapy, visuo-motor behavior rehearsal, and mental rehearsal. Somatic methods or techniques include meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and biofeedback. Although these techniques (somatic and cognitive) develop the

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individual's psychological apparatus from various perspectives, overlap is in excess because of the psychosomatic function nature. Both somatic and cognitive techniques are used to improve the performance of an athlete. Reducing anxiety, achieving critical levels of arousal, and proper attention processes all need a level of psychosomatic congruency. These methods require a deeper level of self-awareness that permits self-monitoring and self-regulation for one to be successful in determining psychosomatic signals for intervention. However, the early and continued capability of the person to self-monitor influences or determines their ability to utilize mental skills training. Without this capability, any application of the cognitive-somatic technique to improve performance becomes limited (Behncke, 2004).

Mental Peak Performance

Coaches, sport scientists, and athletes believe that physical preconditions, motor skills, and physiological states are critical for peak performance in sports. Mental abilities such as attention control, concentration, attention, and psychological factors (such as anxiety, staleness, will-power, self-efficacy, self-confidence, motivation, stress resistance, and emotions) are important for achieving excellence. Peak performance in competitive sports such as baseball require high degree of mental and motor abilities, thus, brawn and brain are supposed to function together with optimal regulation in a certain time and situation (Hackfort and Tenenbaum, 2006). Thus, the athletes' mental peak performance is achieved when the athlete is able to gain maximum mental control thus producing optimum performance in any situation. Developing consistency, focus, and confidence puts the athlete in the best position to improve his or her performance and in the winning position.

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