

MENTAL SKILLS THE FUNDAMENTALS



MIND HEALTH

The mental aspect of the game is a key part of elite performance. As you create your mental performance plan, consider some of the core mental skills listed below.



Goal setting: Set short- and long-term goals, write you goals down, and review them often to assess your progress. Set goals for training, practice, and competition, and acknowledge your accomplishment whenever you reach a goal. Also, be S.M.A.R.T. and create goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time based.

Why it's important: Setting goals directs your focus and gives you something to work toward. Achieving goals increases your motivation and confidence.



Self-talk: Self-talk – the things you say to yourself – can be used to evaluate your performance or to give yourself instructions and encouragement. It can be positive or negative, silent or spoken.

Why it's important: Be mindful of what you say to yourself, because you are always listening. Self-talk influences confidence, attitude, and how you interact with others (including teammates and coaches). Self-talk can be contagious, so ask yourself: Are you spreading positive or negative energy?



Mindfulness: Mindfulness involves focusing your attention on the present moment.

Why it's important: Mindfulness helps you see things more clearly by allowing you to focus on what's important right now, shut out distractions, and maintain your mental poise and clarity.

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Motivation: Your drive and desire to perform a certain activity, motivation begins in your mind but influences your actions.

Why it's important: Motivation improves the quality of your training. It can be internal or external, but internal motivation may be better for maintaining effort and persistence. The question to ask yourself is, what motivates you?



Self-confidence: Self-confidence refers to someone's degree of certainty about their ability to perform. It can be developed through repetition and persistence.

Why it's important: Self-confidence significantly affects your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The athlete who believes they can and the one who believes they can't are both right. Which one are you?



Attention and focus: Your ability to identify and zero in on what's important also helps you avoid distractions.

Why they're important: Focusing on what's most important helps you determine the best response and optimize your performance.



“ My shoulders are wide enough to carry a lot of the load, but **my mind is stronger.** ”

–LeBron James