

SELF-ESTEEM AND SPORT PERFORMANCE

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1. INTRODUCTION

Example of the self-handicapping boxer

Self-esteem is a feeling of personal well-being and self-efficacy that interacts with sporting performance by integrating all experiences as growth and development opportunities.

2. SELF-ASSESSMENT:

Exercise: Who are You? (note what factors included & omitted)

Exercise: The Circle of Yourself (% sectors home, fam, occ, friends, activities, roles, athletic role),

Exercise: The Circle of Your Identity in Sport (% importance of practice, competition, performance, relative standing, coach's esteem, team members, fans, media, other teams, family, friends, etc.)

Note how these factors help and hinder performance. You will tend to perform within the parameters of your comfort zone.

3. SIGNS OF DIFFICULTIES WITH SELF-ESTEEM

Self-Handicapping, The Underdog, The Apology Lifestyle

(procrastination, underpreparation, seeming "laziness")

Negative Self-Talk

Problems of Containment of Errors, Overgeneralization

Being Intimidated by Other Teams or Venues

Sloppy Appearance, posture

Overly Showy Appearance or Behavior

Victimhood and Blaming, Shame

Obsession with Comparisons

4. SETTING THE SELF-IMAGE OF SUCCESS

A Realistic Self-Image, ensure external reality checks

Yourself as the Standard, "playing the computer"

Mind State Management: Lowering Activation for Absorption

Guided Imagery Exercise: The Room for Improvement (ideal performance state, inoculate your subconscious to regain your state of grace; lock in with feeling-states, life is a series of patterns, it is knowable, and it will work out positively)

Anchor with a Cue

Cueing in During Higher Arousal States

RECOVERY FROM ERRORS

Monitoring Self-Talk

Preparation and acceptance with simulations well in advance of the competition, precompetition and competition strategies.

(a) Anticipated Error: see it, see the correction, do the correction, do I.P.S., then file it.

(b) Error during sequence execution:

Technical focus: do a compensating correction as best you can. Mark it and park it. Metaphor for storage and later retrieval. Continue from here. Prepare next move in sequence.

Emotional focus: this is now a technical run, go for improvement under adversity.

(c) In break in the action after error:

Technical focus: focus on the correction, erase all further replays unless you do not know how the error occurred. Does this need correcting now? If possible, delay correction considerations until after the competition. If not, handle like Anticipated Error.

Emotional focus: restabilization of self-image. Seek positive support. Learn how to prompt and receive it.

(d) At the end of the day:

Technical focus: less important now, but if you have any doubts about the lesson of the error, discuss with coach or team captain.

Emotional focus: much more important. Reset your objectives for the remaining tournament, be realistic, not pessimistic. Put things in perspective. More emotional support transactions, allow contained grieving to occur.

(e) In the weeks after the event:

Technical focus: careful technical analysis. Resimulations to overlearn the corrective response until confidence restored. If necessary, go back to fun and confidence drills then work up to corrective resimulation.