

Readings in Applied Sport Psychology: Psychological Skills Training

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Information about applied sport psychology:

- Applied sport psychologists are frequently asked how to find information about psychological skills training (PST).
- To answer this question, the following reading list was developed.
- It identifies books in applied sport psychology that focus on PST. The information may carry a different label, such as mental training, but each book focuses on a set of psychological skills that will help athletes enhance their performance. These psychological skills include relaxation, concentration, visualization, goal setting, and so on.

Sources:

The list was drawn from:

- a review of library materials,
- from the appendix in Vealey's (1988) excellent article on future directions in PST,
- and from an examination of the following journals: *The Sport Psychologist (TSP)*; *the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology (JASP)*; *the Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology (JSEP, formerly the Journal of Sport Psychology)*; and *the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (JOPERD)*.

Reviews of Resources:

- In some cases the books listed have been reviewed in one or more of the journals examined.
- These book reviews are noted, if available, following each book listing.
- The primary goal of this listing is not to judge the quality of the books listed, although the book reviews may help in this regard.
- Indeed, the books range from scientifically oriented texts designed for those with more scholarly interests to popular press paperbacks designed for the layperson.
- Similarly, the quality of the books ranges from comparatively poor to excellent.

A Starting Point:

The reader looking for a good place to get started in applied sport psychology, even considering the diversity of orientation in the books available, would be most likely to benefit from the following books from the list, as they are among the best available:

- Martens (1987)
- Orlick (1990)
- Williams (1997)
- Progressing from these general volumes to more specific ones, there are many books dealing with golf, tennis, and skiing, as well as books focusing on running, basketball, bodybuilding, and other sports.

Helpfulness of Resources:

- Are these books effective?
- Some of the books are designed to be used in academic settings as parts of courses or workshops.
- Other books have been written to stand alone, to presumably give readers the basics in applied sport psychology and to let them proceed from there.
- The number of books available (and the variety of sports covered) is increasing exponentially, with many authors seeking to get their psychological skills training book to press as soon as possible.

Effectiveness of Learning Mental Skills from Books:

- Studies are not yet available in the sport psychology literature concerning the efficacy of psychological skills training books.
- One meta-analysis of self-administered treatment programs found them to be effective in comparison with no treatment, and not significantly different from therapist-administered programs of psychotherapy (Scogin, Bynum, Stephens, & Calhoun, 1990). However, limitations of the work precluded the authors from indicating that self-administered treatments were as effective as programs administered by therapists.

Additional Resources:

- Readers looking for a broader array of sensory stimulation modes will find many videotapes and audiotapes available in applied sport psychology. Many of these are listed, and some are reviewed, in issues of *The Sport Psychologist*.
- A noteworthy development since the previous publication and update of this list has been the considerable number of workbooks and related guides made available to athletes and coaches, guides that assist them in direct work through the various areas within psychological skills training.
 - Martens (1987) has had an excellent workbook available for coaches for quite some time
 - More recently, a number of authors, particularly Dalloway (1992, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1994); Miner, Shelley, & Henschen (1995); and Taylor (1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d) have developed additional publications of note.

Sport Psychology Resources about Children:

- Recent developments have included books addressing psychological skills training and children, as well.
- Orlick in particular (1992, 1993) has published a number of books that “translate these lessons [of elite performers and use of psychological skills] into practical guidelines for quality parenting and quality living” (1992, back cover).
- Vealey (1988) indicated that the Hendricks and Carlson (1982) and Kappas (1984) books were out of print and not available at a number of libraries that she searched. Readers who have trouble obtaining such volumes should enlist the aid of the librarian in requesting materials through interlibrary loan. This is often

the only way of obtaining some of the older and lesser known (not to mention out-of-print) titles.

As a final note, there are many excellent articles on applied sport psychology in the journals listed previously, particularly *The Sport Psychologist* and the *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*.

Readings in Applied Sport Psychology

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Notes:

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The reading list was updated in the previous editions of the directory and has been updated further in this current edition to include books and reviews published since the previous edition.