Signature Sport Psychology Techniques
That Link Theory & Practice

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**Featuring the Signature Sport Psychology Techniques
of the following invited speakers:**

John Heil, PhD, CC-AASP

Eric Bean PhD, CC-AASP

Taryn Morgan PhD, CC-AASP

Chris Harwood PhD, CPsychol

SIGNATURE TECHNIQUE INVITED SPEAKER BIO'S

John Heil, PhD, CC-AASP - *Partner, Psychological Health Roanoke*

Dr. John Heil is a sport psychologist and clinical psychologist with Psychological Health Roanoke, and has recently founded Zen Zone Digital Publishing. Dr. Heil works with Olympic, professional and youth athletes. He also provides performance consulting to police & public safety agencies, sports organizations and in the medical field. He is the author of numerous publications in sport and performance psychology including the Psychology of Sport Injury. He served as Chair of Sports Medicine & Science with USA Fencing for over 15 year, and is editor of the Sport Science column in American Fencing Magazine. Dr. Heil also served as Director of Sports Medicine for the Commonwealth State Games of Virginia for over 20 years. He is a lecturer at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and an instructor at the Roanoke Police Academy. He is the author of numerous publications in sport and performance psychology including the Psychology of Sport Injury. Dr. Heil is currently, President-Elect of the Exercise & Sport Psychology Division of APA. He has been recognized as a Fellow by both AASP and AASP.

Eric Bean, PhD, CC-AASP – *Master Resiliency Trainer, CSF2, Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA.*

Dr. Bean has been providing performance enhancement and resilience strategies to Soldiers and their families for the past 3.5 years as a Master Resilience Trainer – Performance Expert with CSF2. Over that time Eric has worked with Special Forces preparing for Combat Diving Qualification School, Wounded Warriors, as well as a variety of other Soldier populations. In 2010, Dr. Bean began providing performance enhancement training to surgical residents and staff in Ophthalmology. The performance enhancement training was deemed successful by the staff and residents and piqued the interest of other programs around the hospital. In the Spring of 2012 Dr. Bean developed a comprehensive training curriculum for five resident programs and designed a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. Early results have indicated significant success not only during high-stress performances (e.g. surgery, emergency situations, etc.) but also in their personal lives. For the past year, Eric has been a member of the Directorate of Curriculum updating the performance curriculum for all of CSF2. Dr. Bean earned his M.S. from California State Fullerton and his Ph.D. from Michigan State University. Eric lives in University Place, WA with his wife, Nicole, his young son Avery, and his two dogs, McLovin and Kava.

Taryn Morgan, PhD, CC-AASP – *Assistant Director, IMG Academy Athletic and Personal Development*

Taryn is a mental conditioning consultant who has worked at IMG Academy since 2006. She is the Assistant Director of Athletic and Personal Development, which encompasses physical conditioning, mental conditioning, nutrition, leadership, vision training, and athletic training for athletes of all ages. During her tenure at IMG, she has aided many youth, collegiate, professional and Olympic athletes to mentally prepare to perform at their best both in and out of sport. She has worked with athletes in many sports, including tennis, basketball, soccer, baseball, golf, figure skating, volleyball, rowing, dressage, gymnastics and swimming and diving. She received her BS in Exercise Science and BA in Psychology from Stetson University. She received her Master's of Science in Exercise and Sport Psychology from the University of Florida and her PhD in Sport Psychology from the University of Tennessee.

Chris Harwood, PhD, CPsychol. – *Reader in Applied Sport Psychology and Leader of the Sport Psychology Research Group at Loughborough University (UK).*

Chris is a HCPC Registered Sport Psychologist and BPS Chartered Psychologist as well as a BASES High Performance Accredited Sport Scientist. He has consulted with a variety of National Governing Bodies, Professional organisations, athletes and coaches over the past 18 years. His applied experiences reflect his interest in coach education and parent education, alongside the psychological development of junior and senior athletes. He currently acts as a consultant for the Lawn Tennis Association, the English Football Association and Nottingham Forest FC Academy, having served as Club Psychologist for Nottingham Forest FC between 2002-2004. In 2011, he was awarded a BASES Fellowship in recognition of his contribution to applied sport psychology in the UK and long term services to BASES in promoting the development of psychology, supervised experience and accreditation programmes.. Formerly the Vice-President of the European Federation of Sport Psychology, Chris serves as an Associate Editor for the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, as well as being an editorial board member for The Sport Psychologist and the Journal of Sport Psychology in Action.
In his spare time, Chris is a senior county tennis player for Leicestershire who run's, golf's and ski's.

'Team Game' Training
Dr. John Heil

Introduction

The' Team Game' project was a key element of the high performance plan developed with USA Fencing National Team Coach, Paul Soter, for the Athens Olympics. Although success in team competitions was clearly the best path to Olympic success an "individual first" mind-set dominated the culture of American fencing, with no prior efforts at systematic study of team competition.

Purpose

The 'Team Game' training method was developed to prepare the US Men's Epee Squad to focus on team competition as a path to Olympic qualifying. Challenges to preparing for effective team competition included: limited competition opportunities, the absence of dedicated team training methods and an historical failure to address the distinct and unique tactics of team competition. There were additional challenges to implementing a team building program, notably: the absence of a centralized training center, the need to integrate multiple coaches, a geographically disbursed corps of athletes, and the need to blend a group of journeyman veteran fencers with a successful group of rising junior level competitors. In all, 13 athletes and 5 coaches contributed to placing 3 fencers in the Olympic Games.

While the methodology was initially developed as a pragmatic effort to meet the unique psychological, organizational and logistical challenges of USA Fencing, this method has been subsequently used in various high performance sport and public safety settings.

Method in Concept

'Team Game' training focused specifically on the cognitive and tactical dimensions of team competition, addressing the emotional and relationship dynamics indirectly, as a byproduct of the group problem solving process.

The 'Team Game" training methodology combined a Rogerian (Rogers, 1951) intervention style (client centered, active listening) with a lessons learned approach to post event critique often used in military environments (Weber, Aha, & Becerra-Fernandez, 2001). Content generated in discussion was organized by theme and assembled into a hierarchical structure in a way consistent with the inductive qualitative research method.

Method in Action

Athletes and coaches participated as equals in Socratic style post-competition debriefing that identified barriers to success and potential remedies, generating a series of systematic post event debriefing documents. The event critiques gave rise to a series of theme focused documents that served as the core of the problem solving enterprise. The stated goal of the process is to "crystallize intuition" that is, to convert an implicit understanding of fencing team competition into a series of action plans.

The sport psychologist lead a layered inquiry process, served as a scribe recording comments, and integrated these into key themes, which were operationalized as action plans – then implemented and re-evaluated, in a repetitive manner.

Functional Outcomes
The program fostered a culture of group problem solving, developed a systematic approach to team competition, and facilitated communication in and across the competition and training environments.

Action plans include a first delineation of tactical team roles, a series of mental training routines, a lexicon for communication during competition, and a set of team norms. Also developed were a series of preparation routines including, a team preparation routine integrating existing individual routines, and group developed pre-competition and between bout routines.

The project was summarized in a 38 page Technical Report. Specific materials were shared in various formats with other weapon squads and with the general membership, including a team-authored article in *American Fencing Magazine.* The collaboration laid the foundation for the subsequent development of two commercial products - "The Competition Master Plan" (a multi-media mental training program) and "Stripside Coaching" (a "game-day" coaching guide).

Performance Outcomes
The team qualified for the Athens Olympics and secured a 6th place finish, far exceeding expectations.

Significantly, the team also prevailed in implementing an athlete replacement strategy at the Olympics in opposition to the prevailing conventions of the sport, with a subsequent culture shift internationally.

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The Impact of Working Memory and Cognitive Load
on Surgical and Non-Surgical Residents

Eric Bean, PhD

Key Terms/Theory:
1. **Cognitive Load**: The total amount of cognitive activity imposed on working memory at an instance in time. (Sweller, 1999; Van Gerven et. al., 2003)
2. **Working Memory**: A cognitive system that temporarily holds a limited amount of information in an active state so that it may be quickly accessed, integrated with other information, or otherwise manipulated. (Drew & Vogel, 2009)
3. **Cognitive Overload**: The processing demands exceeds the processing capacity (Mayer & Moreno, 2003)
4. **Working Memory Capacity**: The amount of information that can be held in mind successfully at one time. (Cowan, 2004)

Introduction:
Many professionals are exposed to a tremendous of information throughout the day. Surgical and non-surgical residents are not only continuously learning new information, but applying that information during clinic, in the emergency department, during grand rounds, and on live patients during surgical or non-surgical procedures. As a result they have a tremendous dependency on their working memory and are at risk for cognitive overload. Working memory is critical because it is used to manipulate information in terms of reasoning, decision making, comprehension, and plays a role in encoding information into long-term memory. If a physician is experiencing cognitive overload, he or she is significantly more likely to make diagnostic errors (which is the largest contributor preventable errors in the ER), miss relevant stimuli, and negatively influence encoding of information into long-term memory. Lastly, Beilock & Carr (2005) have demonstrated how increased cognitive load can negatively impact motor skill execution.

Purpose:
The purpose is to teach surgical and non-surgical residents the concepts of cognitive load, working memory, and cognitive overload. Then, instruct them on how psychological skills can decrease cognitive load.

Technique:
1. Introduce the concepts of relevant and irrelevant attention stimuli.
2. Hand out some pieces of red paper and some pieces of green paper.
3. Ask the participants to identify a task or procedure that requires high level attention.
4. Ask them to identify relevant stimuli (write on green paper) and irrelevant stimuli (write on red paper).
5. Show them a jar, and discuss the concept of cognitive capacity.
6. Then ask for one relevant attention stimuli. Have the participant crumple up the paper and put it in the jar, repeat 2-3 times.
7. Then discuss at this point the person is attending to relevant information and has space available for new information and can process information, encode information and execute smoothly.
8. Then ask for irrelevant information, fill up the remainder of the jar.

9. Then discuss that this individual's cognitive capacity is maxed. Leaving no room for new information, unless he or she let's go of other attention stimuli.

    a. Key point here is to discuss the fact that cognitive space/capacity/attention is fluid in nature and what's relevant at the beginning of the case, may become irrelevant later on in the case. And that the jar example is of a snap-shot in time.

10. At this point (with a full jar) I then ask for one more relevant stimuli to demonstrate that there is no space for this and that I have to work hard to attend to it (i.e. shove it in the jar) or I may miss it all together. If you wanted to dig deeper you could look into response competition and attentional-capture paradigms.

Key Readings:

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The Confidence Cycle: Prepare to be Confident

Taryn K. Morgan, PhD, CC-AASP, IMG Academy

Introduction

Self-confidence is viewed as a very important, yet sometimes elusive skill to master in the performance world. Many athletes are unsure of how to improve their confidence and find that their level of confidence can at times feel like an unstable roller coaster ride. Helping athletes realize that their mental and physical preparation routine, which is something that they control, will aid in increasing their confidence level and help them feel ready to compete consistently.

Purpose

Teach athletes how to control their confidence level by managing their preparation for practice and competition.

Theory

Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory first suggested four sources of self-efficacy, namely performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological states. Vealey's sport-confidence framework (1986, 1988) focused on trait and state sport confidence as well as competitive orientation. Vealey (1998) looked at nine sources of sport confidence: mastery, demonstration of ability, physical/mental preparation, physical self-presentation, social support, vicarious experience, coach's leadership, environmental comfort, and situational favorableness. Vealey (1998) found that physical/mental preparation accounted for the most variance while developing the Sources of Sport Confidence Questionnaire. Using mental strategies such as goal setting, positive self-talk and imagery can aid in preparation, thereby allowing an athlete to enter competition confidently (Mamassis & Doganis, 2004). Process oriented athletes' utilize preparation that was controllable as a determining factor of confidence more than outcome oriented athletes, whereas outcome oriented athletes' confidence was influenced by demonstrating ability or less controllable factors (Vealey, 1998).

Key Readings

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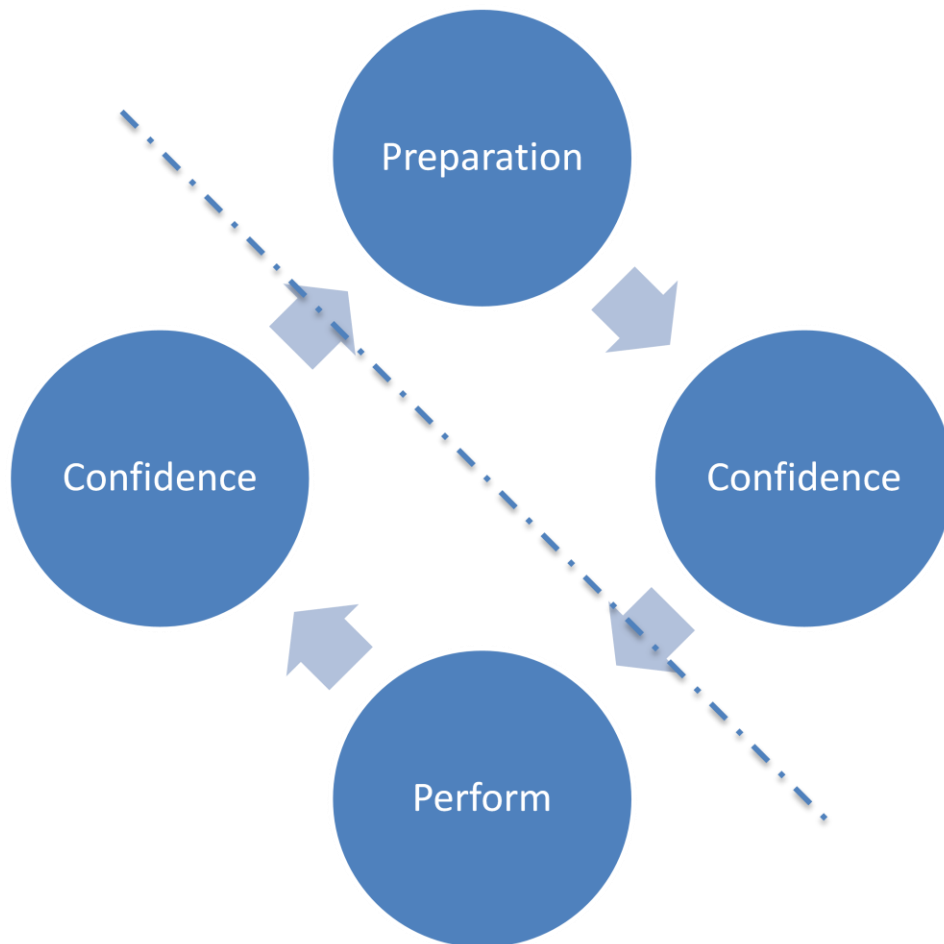
Technique

By teaching athletes to understand that they have control over their preparation, which can in turn help their confidence and performance. Setting up a preparation routine that is consistent and specific for each athlete is the key. Some mental techniques used may include breathing, mental rehearsal, positive affirmations, triggers, focus words, and a well-better-learned review to allow athletes to focus on the process and on what they control.

Step 1 – Show the Confidence Cycle and explain how the preparation part is in their control but how most athletes only focus on the Perform → Confidence half of the cycle.

Step 2 – Be sure they have a base knowledge of some mental training techniques such as breathing, mental rehearsal, positive affirmations, focus words, etc.

Step 3 – Develop their individualize preparation routine that they can do consistently by answering the following key questions:
1. WHEN does it start?
2. WHAT does it entail?
3. HOW does it help me?

Priming the Real Me: Rational Thinking & Strengths-based Techniques in Youth Sport

Chris Harwood, School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University

Introduction:
Humanistic and cognitive-behavioral approaches to sport psychology can be highly synergistic during the adolescent period where self-concept, self-identity and self-regulation are important parameters for the transitions of the talented young person in sport. Technical work as a practitioner includes collaborating with the athlete on strengthening their self-concept (Marsh, 1997), and coping skills by profiling how rational thinking (Ellis, 1999), their performance strengths and their human strengths comprise the 'Winner Within' in any competition situation.

Purpose:
To work with the athlete on identifying four key components of themselves and of competitive situations so that they are better prepared for competition and can engage competition with a more approach-oriented mindset.

Technique:
  i)   Collaborate with the athlete to draw out the 'rational' **rules of engagement** (e.g., what rights do you and your opponent have in this competition? what challenges and adversities are you going to be ready for and accept? What will you learn and take away from competition every time regardless of the outcome?
  ii)   Draw out the athlete's perceived **strengths** – technical, tactical, physical, psychological, social (in the context of team sports)
  iii) Discuss the specific **mental tools** that the athlete will use in competition (pre and during performance)
  iv)   Indulge the athlete to talk about their 'real self' and their positive identity away from sport (e.g., what qualities/ values/experiences make up the strengths of the REAL YOU away from sport? What would you **like other people** to say about you behind your back!?

Draw together the poster overleaf, refining the lists and agreeing upon what **the Winner Within** really comprises every time they step out into competition. Finally, the athlete has to come up with the **CodeName** that reflects their Identity as a person and athlete

*Imagery Exercises: This poster can subsequently be used to guide imagery work with the athlete, as well as review and debriefing work. Revisions and evolutions are also important.

My Winner Within Poster

My Strengths	The Rules of Engagement

The Winner Within:
Codename
_____

Mental Tools for the Job	The Real Me