

*Mental Running Many elite athletes have come to understand how important the mental aspects of running are to their performance. By enlisting the help of a sports psychologist, athletes are able to block out negative emotions and thoughts, which allows them to perform to their potential.*

The Psychological Skills Techniques Credit: Doug Austin Photo I coach a college cross country and track team and I have noticed over the years that there are always a few individuals on the team that have the physical attributes that should make them All-American track athletes. They have all of the physical gifts needed to be a great runner. Many of these athletes never reach their athletic potential. If there is no physical reason why they are not reaching their potential then their lack of success must be attributable to something else. I believe and research supports that their inability to achieve their athletic potential stems from their psychological side. Purpose Psychological characteristics such as mental toughness, goal setting, imagery, realistic performance evaluation and commitment have been shown to be the difference between a medal winner in the Olympics and non medal winners Abbot and Collins Psychology plays an essential role in the ability of individuals to fulfill their athletic potential. This article will focus on mental toughness. Mental toughness is a broad subject that can be researched in many different ways. I will focus on what I believe are the most important components of mental toughness: Definition of Mental Toughness Mental toughness is having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables you to normally cope better than your opponents with the many demands competition, training, lifestyle that sport places on a performer and, specifically, be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident and in control under pressure Jones et al. Mentally tough competitors also have the unique ability to exert control over the varying demands placed upon them in training and their personal life. Review of Research Literature Excelling at sport is difficult. The majority of individuals who participate in a sport never reach the elite level. Athletic talent is multidimensional it combines a combination of anthropometric, physical and psychological factors. Athletes can compensate for disadvantages in one component of talent with strengths in another. Athletic talent moves beyond the physical and having strong psychological skills such as good attitude and mental preparation are extremely important in the conversion of potential to achievement Abbot and Collins The proper mindset, i. All top-level athletes have a mental toughness in them. According to Jones, Hanton and Connaughton there are four attributes that make up the belief system of mentally tough performers. The four beliefs are: Unshakable Self-Belief Mentally tough athletes have developed an unshakable self-belief that they have qualities and abilities greater than opponents. The athlete has a total awareness, a total self-belief, learned from years of deliberate practice. The athlete knows what it took to get to the elite level and knows how to perform at that level Thelwell et al. Research states that it will take a long time for a real belief in an athlete to build. The more the athletes demonstrated their abilities to overcome specific challenges and reach certain targets, the more it raised their self-belief and confidence. The athletes learned that they could achieve their goals. When I lived in Boulder Colorado and was training for the Olympic Games I would come in contact with elite track and field coaches from across the globe. I remember one particular conversation with a South African Olympic coach named Bobby McGee about underperforming in races. The conversation drifted to how beliefs and expectations influence performance. We agreed that most people under-perform in races because of not having that needed unshakable belief in performance. Recently, I came across an article in a marathon journal that quoted McGee on the way runners perform. McGee again emphasized that most people under-perform in races and that he believes only 9 percent of athletes perform up to their potential. As a result, they psych themselves out of a good performance. People become attached to a certain outcome in a race. They run with a brick in their back pocket and end up putting too much stress on themselves. People who have been ill or injured and miss training might get to a race maybe 85 to 90 percent prepared to perform up to their potential. McGee says that in most cases they do exceptionally well. These runners lack the self-belief to be elite. I witness the same phenomenon in my collegiate coaching. Athletes can have the physical talent to perform well, to be an All-American, but they lack the unshakable belief that it

takes to be a champion. Inner Arrogance The mentally tough athlete will have an inner arrogance that helps contribute to the belief that success is achievable. These athletes can look at their talents and truly know that they have what it takes to achieve athletically at the highest levels. They believe that when they set their minds to something they will accomplish it. It is never ever giving up and knowing that if I just persevere I know that I am going to be able to do it. An example of a team that did not have that inner arrogance was the Olympic Wrestling Team, who did not have their best performances at the Olympics. The team was favored to win many medals but it had a lackluster performance at the games. In interviews after the Olympics the wrestlers felt that they experienced negative feelings and irrelevant and irregular patterns of thought which lead to disappointing results Gould et al. They did not have the inner arrogance because of negative feelings to perform up to expectations. It does not matter what the obstacle is the mentally tough athlete will invariably overcome such problems. It is knowing how you are going to punch through it and then learning from that experience. Thelwell, Weston and Greenlees stated in their study on defining and understanding mental toughness in soccer that players claimed that to be mentally tough you should always cope better than your opponents with the specific demands of the game rather than generally cope better. This is similar to the research of Jones et al. In Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, et al. The team embraced the Olympic pressure. The team had an attitude that that they were going to win it all. There was no way they were not going to win the gold medal. The athletes viewed this attribute as having the belief that one can actually be that good, that one can actually achieve their goal and this belief enabled them to truly know what they can realistically achieve. Other teams at the Atlanta Olympics were not as successful because they did not ultimately believe they could win the gold medal. The reason the athletes gave for not getting a medal included ignoring mental preparation. There was too much emphasis placed on physical conditioning and the athletes were over-trained and could not have the desire to mentally prepare to win the competition Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, et al. Section II "Psychological Skills of Mentally Tough Athletes In recent years an increasing number of studies have tried to investigate the effects of mental skills on athletic performance. Researchers have often focused on four mental skills: While mental toughness is a rare attribute in an athlete, it can be developed through practicing these four key psychological techniques, which are all interrelated and, in some cases, difficult to separate. Studies on mental skills have included endurance running, triathlons, soccer and cricket. Psychological characteristics such as goal setting, realistic performance evaluation, imagery, relaxation and commitment have been identified as factors that differentiate medal winners from non-medal winners. According to Abbot and Collins these psychological skills are highly amenable to specialized training as opposed to personality traits, which are, to a greater extent, inherited. Physical factors have been found to discriminate between athletes in different sports, only psychological factors are able to explain the performances of athletes who are looking to maintain their success. Psychological skills are not a genetic gift; they can be taught. Goal setting is a widely used and powerful motivational technique for the enhancement of performance and productivity in sport, business and personal life. Goal setting can improve long-term motivation by eliciting commitment, perseverance, dedication and effort. There is a consensus in goal setting research that goals are the most effective performance enhancement technique available at this time. The motivation of athletes to perform to their potential or to sustain maximum effort in order to complete a task successfully has always been a source of frustration for coaches. Motivation comes from within the individual and cannot be observed directly. Goal setting is an optimal motivational technique that can enhance performance. Individuals with higher self efficacy set higher personal goals. Athletes use imagery in both practice and in competition, though more frequently for competition than for training Munroe et al. Athletes use imagery to help themselves improve performance of a particular skill, for psyching themselves up, and to stay focused on the task at hand. It is important for the imagery to be positive and not negative. Munroe talks about a dart throwing study in which participants in the positive imagery group were asked to imagine the dart landing near the center of the target and those in the negative imagery group to imagine a very poor performance with the dart hitting the edge of the board. Positive imagery is necessary for an elite athlete do well. According to Cumming and Hall mental imagery should be treated similarly to physical practice given that research has suggested a functional equivalence between the two activities. Certain parts of the brain show a pattern of activity during imagery

similar to that during performance. Cumming and Hall also state that there is evidence that respiratory indices such as heart rate, which anticipate muscular activity, are also increased during imagery. They found that a significant and positive relationship existed between the dimensions of relevance and concentration. The higher the level of success by an athlete the more use of imagery that takes place. A national class athlete will spend more time each week on mental imagery than a recreational athlete. A coach could explain the importance of imagery to less skilled athletes. Elite athletes tend to find imagery highly relevant to improving their performance, requiring a great deal of concentration and being enjoyable to perform. Imagery can lead to a more positive interpretation of an upcoming athletic situation. If an athlete is in a positive emotional state then they should perform better and have more positive outcomes. An example given by Jones is about a climber. After using imagery the climber, rather than feeling anxious prior to a difficult ascent, experiences excitement in that he now believes that he has the skill to climb well and he will indeed climb well. An example in running would be using imagery to run through a race in your head. When you go through your strategy a few times then there is a greater chance you will stick to your race plan once the going gets tough. Mentally tough athletes believe imagery as being highly relevant improving performance. Relaxation When an athlete is learning a new task there is typically high level of arousal. There is extensive cortical activity.

## Chapter 2 : Mental Toughness: The Psychological Skills (Techniques) USTFCCCA

*Sports Psychology For Runners [Gary Barber] on calendrierdelascience.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Whether you are a fun runner or an Olympic athlete, discover how you can incorporate mental training into your athletic program with Sports Psychology for Runners.*

Jerry Lynch We recently talked to Dr. Jerry Lynch, author and one of the pioneers in the field of applied sports psychology about his latest work in sports psychology using relaxation, visualization and mental toughness for success in sports and in life, particularly for runners. A life long runner, Dr. Lynch is considered by many elite coaches and athletes to be the leading authority in the field of sports psychology. Besides his books, Dr. Lynch has been published in a number of running magazines. I started reading Dr. Since the Gloucester Catholic cross country program shares much of the same philosophy and principles he writes so clearly about I was grateful for the opportunity to talk to Dr. Lynch, a father of four, about his views on sports psychology and youth sports. Doctor Lynch, where is your office located? In Santa Cruz California. In the summer we go to Boulder Colorado at altitude -- two great places to work! How long have you been working with Sports Psychology? What is your definition of mental toughness? Mental Toughness is having courage to take a chance to risk failure. Integrity is doing what you say you will do. Courage means the willingness to take a chance to risk failure. Through mental toughness you take a chance to be something more than you were. Through mental toughness you can be tenacious and fearless in that moment when others are tensing. What are the steps of Visualization or Guided Imagery? First, relaxation and meditation. Once you have cleared your mind through meditation, you begin to feel images. Then you finish with positive affirmations. I love to run. I feel like a champion. You can only control what you know. Through these mental mechanics you can control the little things. You will be prepared and with preparation comes less unknown. Just like the difference between preparing for a test being prepared for the questions on a test is a lot less stressful than being unprepared. You minimize the nervousness before your race by being positive and controlling what you know. Some coaches and well meaning parents damage the self-esteem of the children they are supervising by putting too much pressure on them to win. Their obsession with winning is burning kids out and turning them off when they should just be getting started. There are over 35 million kids age participating in sports in the US. Now some of them may have been selected for a higher level team because of ability, but most of them have just stopped competing because it is no longer fun. Coaches or parents who are obsessed with winning or who have unrealistic expectations that create pressure turn competition into a negative revenge on your opponents, constant criticism etc. On the other hand, a positive attitude from a coach or parent is infectious it can help create an environment of champions. I know there are some high school coaches and athletic directors who believe in trying to make elite programs by focusing only on the top kids on the team and ignoring everyone else. Do you think this is a contributing factor to the number of people getting turned off to what should be a lifetime sport? Coaches who are concerned about "their program" and their coaching record but are not concerned with the future development of the kids and whether or not they continue to run after high school. Every runner on the team has a contribution to make to the team. The slower runners make contributions that benefit everyone on the team including the top runners. What has your own running taught you? Running is a metaphor for life. Running teaches you to see your competitors as partners helping you to achieve. Competitors help you to become something more than you were to go further than you would have without them. Does Eastern Philosophy compliment this mental toughness and way of thinking? You go through the pain, you change and because of this you then have the ability to be something more than you were. The Chinese do not have a character for Warrior but do have one for Hero Warrior. The warrior is a hero because of what he has overcome. Also, the idea of our competitors being partners who help us to bring out the change best in ourselves through competition. What makes a Champion? To do the best you can today to be the best you can be to position yourself for personal and collective victory. Do the right thing. A guide to know if you are doing the right thing is to do things that start with Thou shall. So the sports psychology and peak performance strategies we are discussing will help you win in sport and in life. By taking a chance you

are able to move on to something other than ordinary. Ray Bradbury wrote about this, about being on the edge of a cliff and having to decide whether to walk away or to jump. If you back up and walk away you get nothing. But if you take the risk and jump you are able to fly to something great. Each time you jump you are able to develop your wings a little more and flying gets a little easier and it all starts by taking a chance. How do you measure success? The success of my work will be measured 15 to 20 years down the road in the hearts and lives of the people I have worked with. We are lucky to have the opportunity to help people get in touch with their own greatness as they develop their spiritual values of courage and heart. For more information, his website is:

### Chapter 3 : Sports Psychology for Runners Podcast - MindBodyHealth

*Sports Psychology for Runners provides a practical discussion and application of sports psychology techniques for athletes who want to improve their performances. This book avoids jargon and dry theories, and instead draws on the lives and experiences of successful athletes who have used sports.*

Here are my top 10 mindset tips to help you build new motivation, confidence and major breakthroughs in your fitness and in your life. Want to know how you can use sports psychology and mental training to reach your health, fitness and sports goals faster, easier, and get the results you want? Here are my top 10 mindset tips to help you build new motivation, confidence and major breakthroughs in your fitness, your training and in your life. When you are exercising, use your positive mental images throughout your workout to create feelings of speed and power. Use visualization before, during and after your training to build confidence and new motivation. Make positive self-statements continually. Negative thinking is common; everyone has an inner critic. Become aware of these thoughts early on. Practice being in the present moment. Remind yourself to stay in the here and now. Instead of replaying past mistakes, or worrying about the future, let past and future events fade into the background. Be right on, right here, right now. Use everything in your workout to your advantage. For example, if another person passes you, tuck in behind and go with his or her energy for as long as possible. You may catch a "second wind" and be carried on to a personal record. Focus on your immediate target. Break your training goals down into small, manageable pieces and begin to focus only on the first portion, not the entire workout. Pay close attention to your tension level and training form. Do a body scan while working out and relax your tight muscles frequently. If you have "good pain," the pain of effort, that is not seriously damaging your body, just shift attention to your breathing or cadence of movement, and let the discomfort fade into the background. You can also use the pain as feedback. Register it not as pain but as effort level. I know how this pace feels. My body is doing what it should be doing. Look only at what you need to do right now. Be aware of distractions. Breathe out unwanted thoughts with your next exhale and re-focus your attention instantly on what is important right now, at this moment. Enjoy and appreciate your fitness and strength. Remember that your goals are realistic. All you need to do is perform up to your capabilities.

## Chapter 4 : Sports Psychology - Be A Marathon Mentalist

*running beside you as you move quickly across the ground. Each stride you begin to feel stronger and stronger moving at a fast but comfortable pace You notice.*

It was an experiment. So armed only with the notes section on my running app, and a half arsed understanding of psychology I set out to do a vague qualitative analysis. However the deadline was extended to February 14th as I approached the end of the streak. The mileage limit was put in place to reduce my chance of injuries. My previous training regime extremely flexible but normally consisted of 3 runs a week, a 3 mile speed , a mile usually trail and a 10 mile plus. Textbook, Now running is normally a lovely sport which decreases your risk of lots of nasties. The other factor according to this quote is lack of control. The original streak was supposed to run from November to Jan, but I added another month. His theories would no doubt stay that grouping a bunch of people together with similar interests in place where we can do what we want, enviably encourage us to encourage each other to greater extremes. Will I gain weight? Will I go back to my normal routine or will the effort of the streak be too much and cause me to lose momentum? These are all questions which are causing me to consider extending the streak again, even though its not the best thing for my training. I know that other streakers suffer these anxieties as well. For me this is the biggest sign that the run streak causes psychological dependency. But lets look closerâ€”â€”!. The Six Criteria Mark Griffith; some psychologist who spent a lot of time with gamblers, gamers and exercise addicts sounds like a party came up with six criteria, so see if you can see yourself. The behaviour becomes the most important thing to the person and they have it on their minds for much of the time. The first thing in my head when I get asked to a social activity especially during the week when I work as well is how does this affect the daily run? Mood modification The addict gets a rush or buzz when engaged in the behaviour. The addict is also able to use their behaviour to bring about a mood change. Interestingly, the same chemical or behaviour can alter mood in different directions depending on time or setting. Running brings about a buzz in two ways, the short term adrenaline buzz from the run itself. I can get these HARD. I mean actually bouncing off the pavement, seriously if only cool kids knew that instead of taking drugs and dying they could just take up running. It also gives a long term serotonin boost that improves mood and fights depression. Tolerance Basically the addict needs bigger and bigger hits to get the same effect as they did initially with smaller amounts. Risk-taking behaviour, for example, tends to get more extreme over time. As a streak runner I definitely became focused on increasing my monthly mileage. Withdrawal symptoms Changes in mood, shakes, irritability etc. Applies to behavioural as well as chemical addiction. Will I crave that boost? Will I slump mentally? But I can imagine this could hit couples with non-runners or with kids pretty hard. The sheer time commitment alone could cause tensions. Will I be able to stop or will I find some crappy excuse to return to the pattern? The Behaviourists give addiction the best go at an explanation. Ring a bell, make a dog drool. Behaviour is acquired, usually this is through an association. This is known as classical conditioning, for example an association between a getting a pb and wearing your lucky pants. You learn to associate two unrelated things so that one does not occur without the other. Social learning theory encourage the behaviour, such as being egged on by your running mates. This acts as vicarious reinforcement. An initial win or buzz acts as a powerful reward that makes the behaviour more likely in future. Also the punishment of withdrawal symptoms will also act to maintain future repetition. Such as fear of weight gain if you stop streaking, and the reward of being able to boast that you run everyday. OR changing your training goals to fit your streak pattern, ie going from a marathon runner to a 5K runner because that is about all its useful for. The First Month I twisted my ankle early on not running related so my mileage for this month was pretty poor whilst it healed. I went from doing around 18 miles a week to around 9. Some quotes from the notes section of my app which I think sum up this month â€” These are real guys. Need to remotivate myself. I was no longer bouncing along trails looking at squirrels, but going out just to get the miles done. The smiley faces were all at the lower end of the scale. My mileage increased to 15 miles per week however I was not doing any long runs because of fear of injury. I did get more concerned with times and monthly milage and I became more focused about planing run.

The crazy runner behaviour started to kick in here. No matter what I ate over Christmas I was losing weight. However I was feeling like each run was a training montage from a 80s movie. I nearly doubled my monthly mileage on the month before, and in a quicker average miles per min. I getting some seriously major adrenaline rushes from my runs and flying high as a kite during my cool downs. I also found myself becoming that smug running idiot that everybody hates. I think you get this a little bit the first time you run a marathon as well. A couple of members of my online running group also were extremely into it, so we agreed to go on until Valentines Day. For the three weeks I was still starring in my own celebrity reality running TV showâ€¦. Hurts like hell if someone makes you laugh, or sneeze or heyâ€¦. By now, however the daily runs had become routine and I was going out without even thinking out it. And yeah, I was still talking like a smug git. If you need proof of that, check the twitter account. In week two the smiley faces began to drop again and by week 3 so had my mileage. Cumulative fatigue had set in and for the for the first time I was feeling bone tired. Finishing month 3 was really tough. The last week I was miserable, tired and I wanted to stop. However despite this I pushed through to achieve an over all mileage greater than last month. I used my on-line running group to help me get out the door on the last couple of days of when I really wanted it to be over. Over the last week my mileage had dropped quicker than One Direction in a rugby match. I managed 93 days of streaking and covered miles.

### Chapter 5 : 10 Sports Psychology Mental Training Tips | HuffPost

*We recently talked to Dr. Jerry Lynch, author and one of the pioneers in the field of applied sports psychology about his latest work in sports psychology “using relaxation, visualization and mental toughness for success in sports and in life, particularly for runners.*

Sport Psychology and Training advice for runners and athletes. The next few entries to this blog will explore this position in more depth. If you are taking part in a distance race it is hoped this advice can help you and you can try some of the tips in training. During a marathon all runners at some point will experience physical and mental strain and pain. By accepting this and having effective strategies with which to cope can help an athlete achieve their goals for the race. Evidence across a range of sports has shown effective goal setting can have a positive impact come race day. However, that is only one type of goal that you can use to help you. Such a goal is described as outcome oriented. In sport, there are 3 kinds of goal that can be set. These are outcome, performance and process goals. An outcome goal is a comparison against another, e. However, for the majority of runners in a marathon, aiming to beat a particular foe or friend! Research has shown outcome goals provoke greater anxiety, as they are both uncontrollable and potentially unrealistic - as my example about beating Gebrselassie shows! What has been shown as healthier to concentrate on are performance and process goals. These are both in the control of the individual. A performance goal is a comparison to an absolute measure. In marathon most often this will be a time an athlete is aiming to achieve. The best way to use these goals is to use different measures of performance to motivate you for a race situation. So rather than aiming for a 4 hour finish, Tim recommended: When a time comes together e. My should goal is: If I finish with 3: Beyond that, my satisfaction will increase with every minute I take off that finish time. To reach these performance goals, an athlete can enhance their running with process goals. Your posture, cadence, strategies for dealing with fatigue e. Given the 3 months required to train, not only should you try and work at your speed, distance and physical conditioning, training runs should be used to sharpen up mental strategies in preparation for race day. In my entry tomorrow, I will outline specific mental strategies you can implement as your weekly mileage goes up , to help you get to an optimal level of performance come race day.

### Chapter 6 : Sports Psychology For Runners by Gary Barber

*That doesn't mean that a little sports psychology can't benefit the average runner, though. Elites have run scores of races, so their mental skills are likely to be as honed as their physical.*

Some of you are in the middle of a training cycle and may have already raced. Others are dusting off the winter and preparing to embark on this seasons training. Sports psychology can be a vital element of a successful season, regardless of where you find yourself in the training cycle. Running is all about Flow state. The beautiful thing about running is that it provides the perfect movement for achieving flow; the rhythmic connection between mind, body, and environment. Reaching flow requires a proper focus on relaxed form, breathing technique, proper attentional focus more on this in an upcoming post , and mindset more on this below. There can be a lot of distractions for flow, and they mainly come in our own approach. For those of you listening to music or audiobooks on the bulk of your runs, I recommend taking at least one run per week without any audio so that you can work on feeling the flow state of your body aligning with breathing, heart rate and movement. Relaxed Runners are Flow runners. Balancing the nervous system of the body in a proactive way, by incorporating daily mindfulness training or breathing exercise can help provide stabilization in your system. Working on rhythmic, paced breathing during runs can prove very effective. Noticing posture when getting tense during a run and focusing on proper form can help too. Running is all about Mindset, Mindset, Mindset. The late baseball legend Yogi Berra is known for a lot of great quotes. Understanding your own mental game as it relates to your training and performance is the starting point. What goes through your mind when training is difficult? Or if you happen to feel sluggish that day? How do you appraise your performance? What judgments are you prone to making? Notice the connection between the mental appraisals in your mind and the subsequent posture, running form, or impact on pace that you experience. Notice how these judgments can impact your enjoyment for the sport in general. Learning the proper form of cognitive appraisal as it relates to your running is key, as is keeping your mindset positive. Understand the importance and detriment of goal setting. Runners are a numbers chasing bunch. We can find ourselves crushed if we missed a self-defined mark. Be reminded that progress is measured across time. A single performance on any given day does not define you. Get comfortable being uncomfortable. Growth occurs outside of your comfort zone. Pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone requires a desire to do so and plan of action once there. Find a simple phrase that you connect to and use it during these moments. Addressing your attention focus more on this in an upcoming post is also critical.

### Chapter 7 : Coach "Whisper Running | Sport Psychology | Running Coach

*Those years of research and experimentation culminated with the publication of my book 'Hypnosis for Running' which marked the fusion of my love for the field of self-hypnosis, cognitive sports psychology, evidence-based practice and the simple joy of running.*

Contact Coach Dave Caldwell I am forever in-debt to Ethan for his belief in my system of training, and more importantly, enduring the process. My coaching career began in at the Community Colleges of Spokane, where I gained six-years of experience working with the multi-event athletes heptathletes and decathletes , jumpers, distance runners, and sprinters. Hood Community College and Clark College, all the while coaching countless All-Americans and Conference Championships in events ranging from the m to the 10k in track, as well as the Cross-Country 5k women and 8k men. My commitment to all of my runners is unwavering. It is my objective to study their kinetics, understand and enhance their psychology and motives for running, enhance their physical and psychological skillsets as a runner, and help each of them reach their potential in events ranging from the m through the 5k. This means every runner, whether a sprinter or a distance runner, should be able to see improvements and run respectable times following each training cycle. I understand runners will want to focus on specific events, however it is important to be able to have both top-end speed, as well as the physical and emotional endurance to sustain high levels of speed-endurance. Though my degrees have landed me a nice career at Clark College where I teach adult health and physical education classes, Whisper Running has enabled me to implement my degrees further into each training session. Whether an athlete needs general conditioning, speed-endurance training, anxiety management, or simply to learn how to run and race, it is my objective to help runners reach their running goals. To remain sharp in the field of Sport Psychology, I speak at annual coaching clinics on topics such as Goal Setting, Visualization, Anxiety Management, and more, providing tangible strategies coaches can implement the next day at their practice. Teaching about communication, self-talk and developing self-confidence is paramount in a positive, healthy, and sustainable working relationship with a middle school and high school runner. I recognize that in addition to developing a runner, I am also developing person who will learn to set goals in many facets of their lives, become a better peer and citizen, and live a healthy lifestyle. Sport Psychology and Exercise Science are fields of study I implement in my own life on a daily basis. I am driven to remain in peak condition so that I can run with the groups of runners that I train during each practice, ensuring that they are running their prescribed pace during each workout. I have had the blessing of qualifying numerous times for both the New York City Marathon and the Boston Marathon, having run Boston twice so far. When my daughter entered middle school cross-country, I was impressed by her head coaches knowledge and enthusiasm, as well as his ability to juggle over middle school runners all girls. However, as I began to look around the conference, I noticed a severe need for off-season training. Running training is a real science, both psychologically and physically. Like any other sport, running needs off-season training in order to maximize ones potential during season. As I looked around the middle school conference, I saw this need for off-season training and in October , after coaching for over years, Whisper Running was formed. If you are still reading this, then I want to thank you for your time thus far. Please send me an email using the contact link above right so we can get your child started in training for the up-coming season!

## Chapter 8 : Sport Psychology and Coaching: Mental strategies for marathon running

*Is Running a Mental Game or a Physical Game? Running is based on strength and endurance. It requires a lot of training and commitment to perform at your best.*

We need your help please. Running expert Dean Hebert Running Rx and I are collaborating on mental training materials specifically designed for endurance athletes! But, our first step is to get your input on what aspects of the mental game of running YOU want to learn more about and HOW we can help you. I like to check in with you and other readers to ask a few questions about your mental game. This way, I can help you better with your top mental game challenges in track and field, running, or racing. But to help you better, I need your input! I need you to complete a short survey about the mental game challenges you or your athletes face in track and field. Your answers will give me the input needed to bring you the most relevant and practical information about how to improve your or your athletes mental toughness. The survey should only take two minutes of your time to complete. Runner and Triathlete Mental Toughness Survey For giving Dean and myself two minutes of your time to tell us your mental training needs for running, we have a special bonus for you after you complete the survey. Running expert Dean Hebert and myself have recorded a special audio program for track and triathlete competitors titled: Thanks for Your Help, Dr. Please forward this link to your fellow athletes or coaches so they can take the survey too! Master mental game coach, Dr. Patrick Cohn, can help you or your athlete s , ages 12 and up, overcome mental game issues with personal coaching. You can work with Dr. Call us toll free at or contact us for more information about the different coaching programs we offer! What are our students saying? What a week I had. I stopped evaluating myself while I was performing, and I actually left the arena after my patterns feeling like I had experienced a lot of fun. Thank you so much. D you have a negative self-image of yourself as an athlete that stifles confidence? No matter ow positive you try to be, are you unable to shake the doubt that rushes into your head when you size up your competition? Have you labeled yourself as a loser, poor closer, or mediocre athlete and these labels keep you stuck in a rut of self-pity and indecision? The Confident Athlete CD and workbook program is a day plan for ultimate self-confidence. This program is ideal for any athlete or coach that wants to discover proven confidence-boosting techniques guaranteed to drastically build self-confidence and improve sports performance. What are customers saying? I then purchased the rest of the confident athlete series and have noticed a dramatic improvement in my level of play or should I say consistency. My attitude and confidence at the plate. By using the Confident Athlete strategies, my confidence has done a complete degrees. It is my secret weapon! The Confident Sports Kid is two programs in one. Packed with mental strategies that you and your kids can start using immediately, this program teaches your athletes how to identify confidence busters, proactively deal with them, manage expectations that undermine confidence, and mentally prepare to stay confident when faced with adversity. What are parents and coaches saying about our program? The specific advice and scenarios are extremely helpful for any child on a team and very helpful in guiding parents, coaches and administrators in how to deal with bullying in sports. I cannot thank you enough for your input, and I am so reassured to know that there are people like you who are writing articles and doing interviews on such timely and important matters. Patrick Cohn and Lisa Cohn are to be congratulated! This workbook series was designed for coaches and mental coaches to use with their athletes. For mental coaches, this system is ideal for between session education. I find they offer a great framework for doing workshop sessions. I have also used the workbooks with a few individual athletes â€” for the younger ones 12 and under. They are giving a good structure and framework to our sessions. The workbooks have worked well with all of them! Cohn to share all of his assets intellectual, products, etc. Even though we are paying for your service, you are passing on a legacy built on your contribution to the world of sports. Thank you for that. Cohn via phone, Skype, FaceTime.

### Chapter 9 : The Mental Game of Running | Sports Psychology Today - Sports Psychology

*Sports psychology can be a vital element of a successful season, regardless of where you find yourself in the training cycle. Here are Dr Ross' top 5 sports psychology tips for runners. 1.*

Books Mental Running Many elite athletes have come to understand how important the mental aspects of running are to their performance. By enlisting the help of a sports psychologist, athletes are able to block out negative emotions and thoughts, which allows them to perform to their potential. It is so important for runners to understand how to understand and strengthen their mental running. I came to understand the importance of mental running on October 31, The event was the League Cross-Country Championships. My team was heavily favored to win, and I was expected to be one of the top ten runners in the league. My training had gone flawlessly over the last six months, and I was ready to roll. However, things went horribly wrong. When the gun went off I was partially tripped by another runner, and, as a result, I got off to a terrible start and was running around 40th at the first half mile mark. Stupidly, I tried to make a desperate move to claim my rightful top 10 spot in the race. Sensing disaster, I allowed my breathing to get out of control, and allowed my face and upper body muscles to get tight. Soon, I was in oxygen debt and, after what seemed like an eternity, I staggered home in 30th place. My team lost the meet by three points. It forced me to realize that racing well was not only about doing high mileage and running fast workouts. In addition to training my body, I began to understand that I had to training my mental running as well. A runner can be in the best shape of his or her life, but if he can not keep his emotions under control in a race, he will not run to his potential. Whether it be falling down, getting beat by a runner who you thought was worse than you, or not feeling as good as you thought you would, a successful racer must be mentally strong and able to adapt to unforeseen situations in a race without losing his focus. If you are unable to maintain concentration during a race, your breathing will become shallow, your muscles will constrict, and, soon, you will be running the worst race of your life. Here are some things I have learned about how prevent yourself from panicking in a race: All of a sudden, my plans were out the window and goal of staying relaxed vanished. What is important to realize is that most runners go out too fast. It is important that you stick to your own race plan and not get caught up trying to win the first 2 miles of a 5k race. Falling, feeling lethargic, and being farther back than you thought you would be can all make you go into panic mode. If you feel yourself start to freak out a bit from something, and sense your breathing become shallow and your head tilt backâ€STOP. Thinking in this way is a good method to essentially reset your state of mind, and get your breathing and concentration back under control. To prove this to you, think about this idea during your next hard workout. Often, the first repeats of a workout are harder than the last few. However, if you are not relaxed before a race, you have almost no chance of settling down once the gun goes off. Therefore, about minutes before the race, take a few minutes to do some deep breathing. Lay on your back and breathe in and out very slowly. Visualize yourself running well without any stress. Prepare yourself for any possible unforeseen situations and affirm that they will not take you out of your cool and collected state of mind. Remind yourself that you can not control any of the other racers or situations that you may encounter, but you can control your response to those things. This process should get you loose and relaxed. Through years of study, sports psychologists have discovered the very best methods that allow runners to use their mental running to reach their potential. I hope these tips help you. If you can control your emotions during a race, and stay relaxed, you will have an advantage over so many other runners who can not.