

COACHING the MENTAL GAME

A WORKSHOP FOR COACHES

Research-informed strategies for teaching, reinforcing, and tracking the psychological skills that support athletic performance and development.



Coaching the Mental Game: A Workshop for Coaches

Coach's sideline read: You can teach an athlete to shoot, pass, defend, and compete. But have you taught them how to recover when things go wrong?

Every coach knows the athlete who looks unstoppable in practice but freezes during competition.

Or the player who makes one mistake and spends the next ten minutes mentally replaying it.

Or the team that plays beautifully until they're down by two points, and suddenly everyone looks like they've forgotten why they're there.

We tell athletes to focus, be confident, stay positive, and shake it off.

But those are outcomes, not instructions.

Our Coaching the Mental Game workshop gives coaches research-informed strategies for teaching, reinforcing, and tracking the psychological skills that support athletic performance and development.

Rather than treating mental toughness as something athletes either have or don't have, we help coaches understand how these skills develop and how to incorporate them into everyday training.

What Coaches Learn: Seven Coaching Plays

Play 1 · Build it

Building confidence: How to reinforce preparation, effort, progress, and effective self-talk rather than relying exclusively on outcomes.

Play 2 · Regulate it

Teaching emotional regulation: Helping athletes manage frustration, pressure, disappointment, and the emotional roller coaster of competition.

Play 3 · Reset it

Developing resilience: Teaching athletes to recover after mistakes instead of allowing one bad play to become five more.

Play 4 · Focus cue

Improving focus: Incorporating simple attentional cues, reset strategies, and routines into practices and games.

Play 5 · Team culture

Creating a productive team culture: Balancing accountability with psychological safety, constructive feedback, and healthy communication.

Play 6 · Motivation

Motivating athletes effectively: Understanding why athletes respond differently to pressure, praise, criticism, and expectations.

Play 7 · Train it

Making mental skills part of training: Building psychological skills into drills, practices, and team discussions rather than saving them for the occasional inspirational speech.

How Do You Actually Track Mental Skills?

Here's where things get interesting.

Coaches spend an enormous amount of time tracking athletic performance. Speed. Accuracy. Strength. Statistics. Playing time.

But what about the psychological skills that help athletes use those physical abilities?

It's difficult to improve something when nobody has defined what improvement actually looks like.

Our workshop teaches coaches how to translate abstract concepts like confidence, focus, and resilience into observable behaviors that can be practiced, reinforced, and monitored throughout the season.



For example:

Mental Skill	What Progress Might Look Like
✓ Resilience	An athlete refocuses more quickly after making a mistake.
✓ Confidence	An athlete attempts challenging skills without excessive hesitation or avoidance.
✓ Focus	An athlete uses a practiced cue to redirect attention after a distraction.
✓ Emotional regulation	An athlete recognizes frustration and uses an effective reset strategy.
✓ Teamwork	An athlete responds constructively when a teammate makes a mistake.

✓ Accountability	An athlete accepts feedback and identifies an actionable next step.
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Coaches learn practical ways to integrate brief check-ins, athlete self-reflection, individualized mental skills goals, and behavioral observations into their existing routines.

We're not turning coaches into therapists or giving athletes one more thing to be graded on.

We're helping coaches recognize and reinforce the mental skills that athletes are already being asked to demonstrate.

"Because 'be more confident' isn't a coaching strategy until you've taught an athlete what that looks like and how to practice it."

Our goal is for coaches to leave with tools they can use immediately and a better understanding of how to help athletes build mental skills that extend beyond their sport.

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