

186 'SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY' A CRUCIAL INGREDIENT FOR ATHLETES SUCCESS: CONCEPTUAL VIEW

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Traditionally sports people have dedicated an enormous amount of preparation to their physical conditioning and technical skills. The importance and attention to psychological preparation can often be over looked. The diversity, unpredictability and intensity of sport places challenges to the athlete both on a physically and psychologically level. The human mind is complex with people learning and developing at different speeds. Psychological skills will be an inherent ability for some to control their state under pressure and maintain focus

during extreme circumstances of uncertainty. Sports psychology is striving hard to investigate athletic performance, to stabilise it and to improve sports performance by seeking an appropriate balance between physiological and psychological dimensions of performance. Sports psychology is a healthy field with a bright future and within physical education, the field continues to grow. Sports psychology offers advancements in the mental aspects of athletic competition and performance. Research shows that mental training, in addition to physical training, can improve results much more than physical training alone. Sports psychology has significantly changed lives of many athletes, coaches and other sports and exercise professionals. Mental Game Coaching is that the segment of sports psychology that concentrates specifically on helping athletes break through the mental barriers that are keeping them from performing up to their peak potential. By focusing on the mental skills needed to be successful in any sporting competition, mental game coaching seeks to achieve the overall goal of performance improvement. Sports psychology encompasses various branches of psychology as they are related to our ability to understand athlete performance, how to make it better, and how to improve exercise programmes.