



*The Importance of Sport
Psychology in Sports Medicine*
by
Laura Miele-Conlon Ph D



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- *Treat the athlete both physically and mentally.*
- *Having a positive mental process breeds success.*
- *Anxiety/Stress increases the chance of injury.*
- *Most professional athletes work or will work with Sport Psychology consultants some time in their career.*
- *Visualization/Imagery can expedite the recovery time of an injury.*
- *Mental imagery and rehearsal can enhance sport performance.*
- *It is important to empower the athlete.*

What is Sport Psychology?

Sport psychology is the study of emotional and psychological factors that effect sport performance in individual and group dynamics. Sport psychology is centralized on performance enhancement and personal growth. The primary goal of sport psychology is to help athletes work through periods of difficulty with the use of various interventions. Athletes will be educated on the mental components of sport psychology as well as the physical fundamentals that may have been broken down some where in competition.

Sport psychology is a growing field and in the last decade the need for what sport psychology can offer athletes and teams has been realized. The academic, social and personal well being with

respect to growth and development of an athlete is a growing concern for coaches, athletic support staff and the sports medicine team. There is a need for the implementation of sports psychology consultants as part of the sports medicine team. The utilization of interventions to assist athletes in performance enhancement, anxiety reduction, and injury has proven to be effective with the assistance of sport psychology consultants. Interventions are necessary because they provide the athlete with tools affording them an opportunity for success. The most common cognitive behavioral interventions used are mental imagery, self-talk, and relaxation.

Why is mental preparation in sport important?

Preparation is the key to any successful performance. In order to be fully prepared, athletes must find a mental regimen that works for them. Learning to be disciplined takes time, maturity, and experience. If you were to ask any elite athlete if they have something specific they do prior to a competition, you would hear a number of responses.

Athletes are different in their approach to sport participation, in their desires, emotions, and passion. While sport allows athletes to learn about others, it also provides them with experiences to better understand themselves and establish their identity, thereby, playing a critical role in the individual's personal growth and development. Confident athletes have the ability to maintain a positive attitude during competition and compete at a higher level, sometimes; however, there is a breach in their confidence due to a slump (underlying situational factors/stressors causing anxiety) and/or an injury. So, what happens when injury occurs or if there is a sudden loss of momentum or concentration? More often, than not,

athletes incur anxieties that they have not yet experienced which can affect their performance.

The elements of consulting injured athletes through psychological rehabilitation are to assist with goal setting, provide social support, to assist in motivation and an assessment to see if they may have more underlying problems that need to be addressed. Most rehabilitation programs do not provide adequate psychological resources for their injured athletes. Physical therapists and certified athletic trainers are trained to assist athletes with their injury and due to time restrictions, however it is best that the mental and emotional healing process are left to the sport psychology consultants. All athletes are impacted by injury differently and when that happens an athlete suffers through a variety of anxieties causing a series of emotional and psychological turbulence. Subsequently, when treating injured athletes, treat the entire athlete; heal the body as well as the mind.

**Here at Elite Sports Medicine we offer an opportunity to treat the “entire” athlete.
We have a sport psychology consultant on staff who adapts sport psychology
principles to assist with the extensive knowledge which assures;**

- Confidence building
- Concentration Enhancement
 - Anxiety reduction