



Sport Psychology: the winning formula

Tracey Veivers

Sport Psychologist

www.performanceperspectives.com.au



psy·chol·o·gy (s -ko lo -j):
(n)

The science that deals with mental processes and behaviour.

The emotional and behavioural characteristics of an individual, group, or activity

sport:
(n)

An activity involving skill that is governed by a set of rules or customs and often undertaken competitively





THE ROLE OF SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

PROVIDE WORLD CLASS SPORT PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES TO ELITE ATHLETES AND COACHES, INCLUDING:

- DEVELOP, ASSIST AND IMPLEMENT SCREENING AND SELECTION PROCESSES
- GROUP/TEAM CONSULTATIONS
- INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS
- PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT
- PERSONAL WELLBEING MANAGEMENT
- PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (E.G., COACH EDUCATION)
- DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES (E.G., TIP-SHEETS, PRESENTATIONS, EQUIPMENT, ETC...)
- COACH DEVELOPMENT
- MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH



WHY ENGAGE WITH A SPORT PSYCH?

Sport Psychologists can assist to further develop mental skills

With regards to performance enhancement

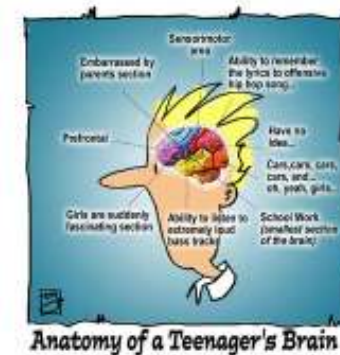
They can additionally help address any challenges outside of sport that may be impacting upon performance





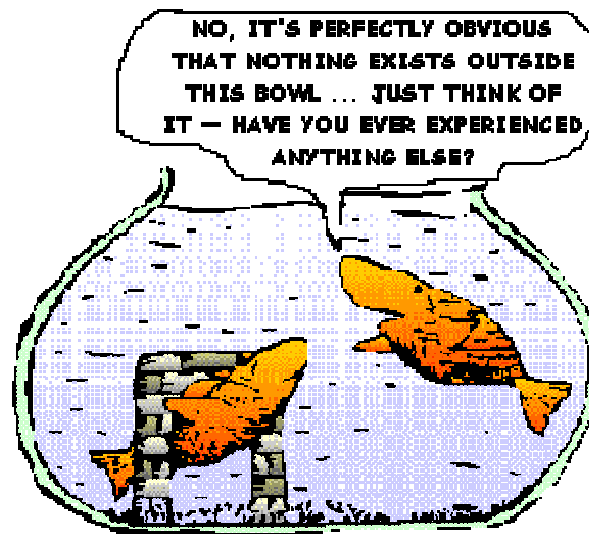
Athlete development

- Psychological changes typically the last to develop
 - The 'engine' is switched on but the 'brakes' are still developing
- Common for difficulties to occur with:
 - Expressing thoughts & feelings
 - Planning ahead
 - Predicting consequences
 - Perspective taking
 - Grounding thinking in reality during times of stress
- Compared to their peers, adolescent athletes are required to manage higher loads of stress while still developing important psychological capacities that help minimise stress

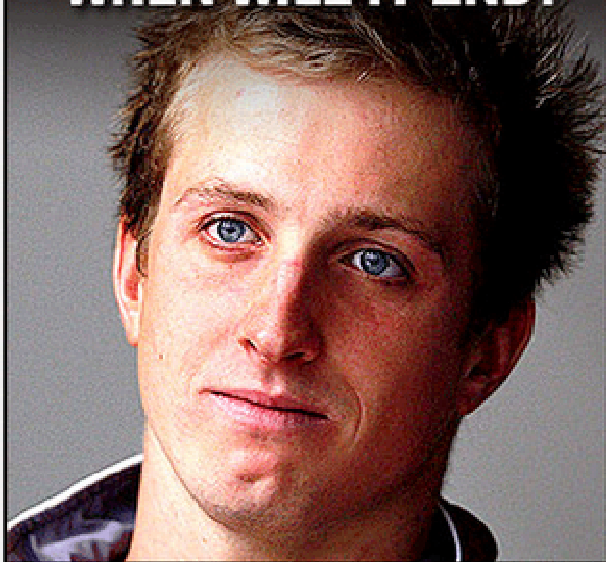




....their environments are unique....
Athletes have a unique mindset...



HE'S BEEN PUNISHED, BUT
WHEN WILL IT END?



D'Arcy defence walks on eggshells
In the land of the second chance, D'Arcy deserves a chance for redemption, writes Miranda Devine.

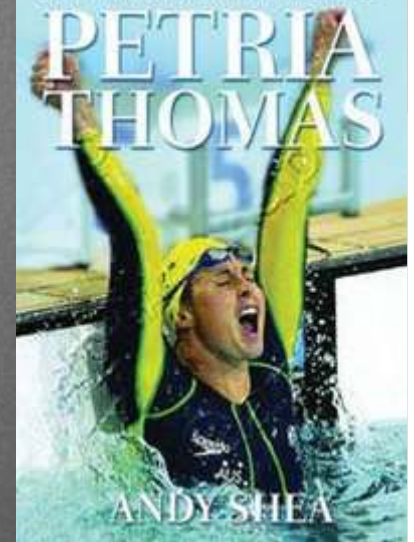
SUCH IS LIFE

THE TROUBLED LIFE OF BEN COUSINS



SWIMMING AGAINST THE TIDE

PETRIA THOMAS



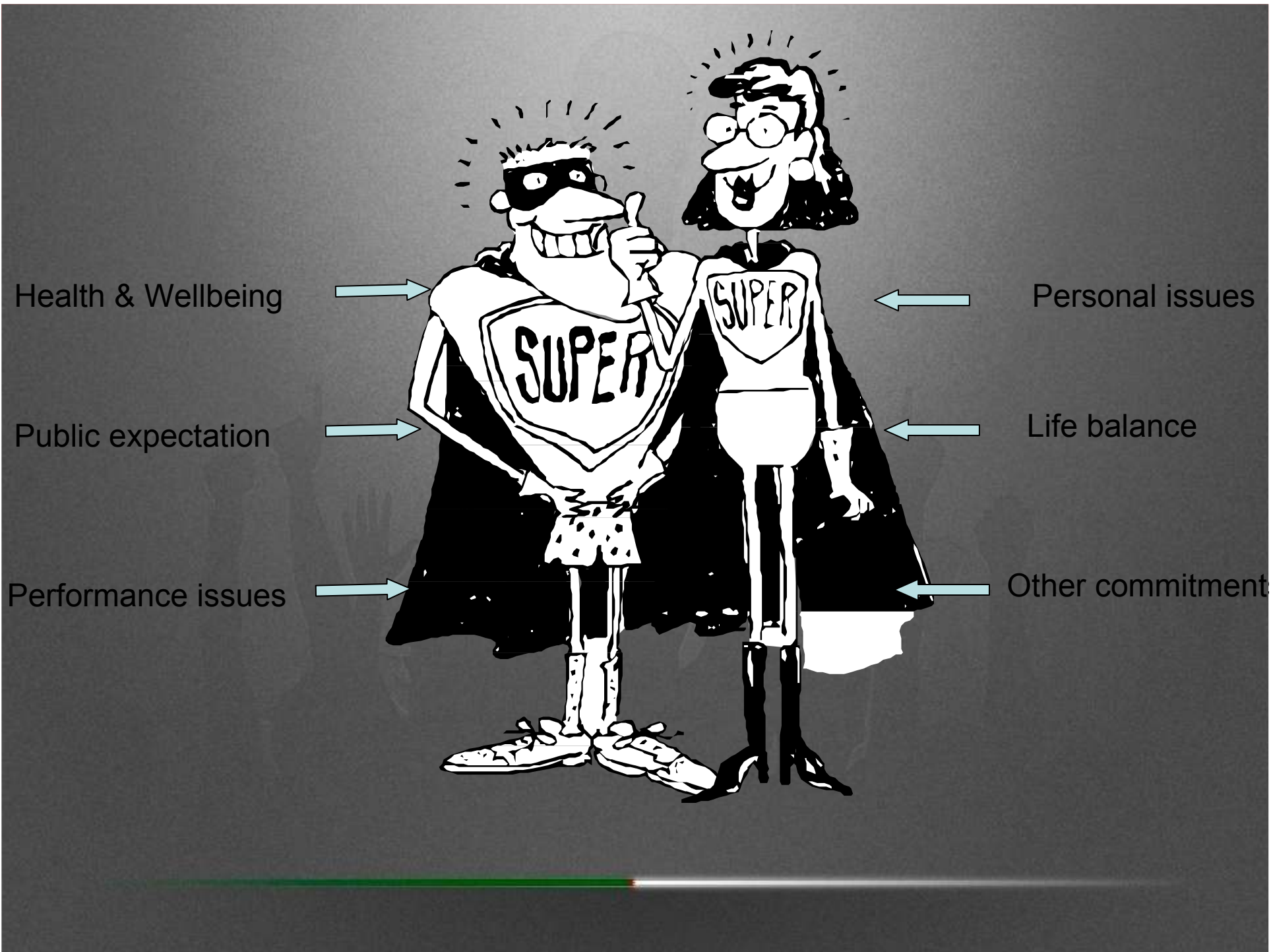


Pressures:

- **Expectations – Peers/coaches/parents/self**
- **Workload – School/Training/Work**
- **Poor Performances**
- **Big decisions**
- **Injuries**
- **Making mistakes**
- **Big competitions/intimidating opponents**
- **Exams**
- **Lack of Balance life/sport/friends**
- **Relationships with coaches, team-mates**
- **Romantic relationships**
- **Moving interstate**
- **Guilt over financial burden of sport**
- **Unfavourable conditions/poor preparation/gear failure**
- **Substance misuse**
- **Identity issues**
- **Travel**
- **Media harassment**
- **Deselection**

Common Responses:

- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Difficulty sleeping**
- **Lacking initiative or interest - procrastinating**
- **Difficulty communicating (or no communication/ withdrawal) with people – coach, family, friends**
- **Easily angry/frustrated with self and others**
- **Over-thinking things they have done or need to do**
- **Analysing self and abilities negatively**
- **Angry at TIME – there is never enough**
- **Feels scared about what will happen if can't meet everyone's expectations**
- **Worried/pre-occupied with what others think of them**





What can coaches & others do

- You are a model for your athlete's thinking and behaviour
 - Work hard to ground your own thinking in reality
 - Consider how do you respond if your athlete doesn't achieve?
 - Are you using evidence to guide your thinking?
 - Is your thinking based on the 'big picture'?
 - Promote flexibility in thinking (e.g., evaluating performances)
 - Reinforce and validate things done well (regardless of desired outcome)
 - Promoting the image of an 'imperfect self'
 - What does it mean if you make a mistake?
 - Michael Jordan shooting percentage = 30% approx.

Responding to these issues



- ✓ Take a whole-person approach
- ✓ Ensure support
- ✓ Teach coping strategies
- ✓ Grief and loss counselling
- ✓ Cognitive restructuring
- ✓ Goal setting/planning
- ✓ Relaxation
- ✓ Resources/referral options



What can parents & others do

When asked what it is that they would most like from their parents in terms of support, most young athletes suggest encouragement and acceptance of their choices.

Australian Sports Commission





Sports Psychologists can help you understand your role in the athlete-coach-parent team.

Sports Psychologists can help you avoid the self-esteem-damaging mistakes made by well-meaning parents.

Sports Psychologists are there to support the family networks as well as the athlete.



Table 1 Mental-Toughness Framework

Dimension	Subcategory	Rank and Description
1. Attitude/mindset	Belief	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having an unshakable self-belief as a result of total awareness of how you got to where you are now 2. Having an inner arrogance that makes you believe that you can achieve anything you set your mind to 3. Having the belief that you can punch through any obstacle people put in your way 4. Believing that your desire or hunger will ultimately result in your fulfilling your potential
	Focus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Refusing to be swayed by short-term gains (financial, performance) that will jeopardize the achievement of long-term goals 6. Ensuring that achievement of your sport's goal is the number-one priority in your life 7. Recognizing the importance of knowing when to switch on and off from your sport
2. Training	Using long-term goals as the source of motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When training gets tough (physically and mentally) because things are not going your way, keeping yourself going by reminding yourself of your goals and aspirations and why you're putting yourself through it 2. Having the patience, discipline, and self-control with the required training for each specific developmental stage to allow you to reach your full potential
	Controlling the environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Remaining in control and not controlled 4. Using all aspects of a very difficult training environment to your advantage
	Pushing yourself to the limit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Loving the bits of training that hurt 6. Thriving on opportunities to beat other people in training



3. Competition	Handling pressure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loving the pressure of competition 3. Adapting to and coping with any change/distraction/threat under pressure 5. Making the correct decisions and choosing the right options that secure optimal performance under conditions of extreme pressure and ambiguity 8. Coping with and channeling anxiety in pressure situations
	Belief	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Total commitment to your performance goal until every possible opportunity of success has passed 4. Not being fazed by making mistakes and then coming back from them
	Regulating performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Having a killer instinct to capitalize on the moment when you know you can win 7. Raising your performance "up a gear" when it matters most
	Staying focused	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Totally focusing on the job at hand in the face of distraction 11. Remaining committed to a self-absorbed focus despite external distractions 12. In certain performances, remaining focused on processes and not solely outcomes
	Awareness and control of thoughts and feelings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Being acutely aware of any inappropriate thoughts and feelings and changing them to help perform optimally
	Controlling the environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Using all aspects of a very difficult competition environment to your advantage
4. Postcompetition	Handling failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognizing and rationalizing failure and picking out the learning points to take forward 2. Using failure to drive yourself to further success
	Handling success	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Knowing when to celebrate success and then stop and focus on the next challenge 4. Knowing how to rationally handle success

Note. The numbers = rank order for attributes in each dimension.



Mental Toughness = Success

The five C's to Success :

Commitment
Concentration
Communication
Control
Confidence



Commitment - dedication and perseverance

Ability Is What You Are Capable Of Doing

Motivation Determines What You Do

Attitude Determines How Well You Do It!



**Queensland
Government**
Sport and Recreation
Queensland



Communication

Verbal and non-verbal; listening; reading others



*Control – focus on executing
(which is controllable) and not the
outcome (which is uncontrollable)*



Attention Choices



Concentration – on the right thing at the right time





*Confidence – your self-belief;
more than just your ability*

Queensland Academy of Sport



thank you!

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