

## Mental Toughness

**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 and non medal winner. Psychology plays an essential role in the ability of individuals to fulfill their athletic potential.

Navy Seal quote "We win in our mind before we enter the battlefield"

## 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 be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident and in control under pressure

## Unshakeable Self Belief

- A belief that they have qualities and abilities greater than opponents.
- The more the athletes demonstrates their abilities to overcome specific challenges and reach certain targets, the more it raises their self belief and confidence.

## Inner Arrogance

- The mentally tough athlete will be able to fight through any obstacle that may be put in his/her way.
- Knowing that when you set your mind to something you will accomplish it.
- Negative feelings and thoughts will lead to disappointing results

## Getting Over Obstacles

- Mentally tough athletes will be able to fight through any obstacle that may be put in his/her way.
- Having an attitude that you can win it all.
- Ability to cope with disappointments. Learning from the experience and being better the next time.

## Belief that Desire will Ultimately Result in Fulfilled Potential

- What you Believe you can Achieve
- Caution: Be careful they you don't place emphasis on physical conditioning and the athlete become over trained. Rest and Recovery is needed to reach full potential.

### Psychological Skills of Mentally Tough Athletes

- Practice mental imagery
- Set the right goals
- Purpose

### Goal Setting

- Why are you doing the race?
- Realistic and obtainable
- Journal

### Imagery

- Use of imagery at Practice
- See the race
- See the finish
- Imagery with both positive and negative outcomes

### Relaxation

- Race ready
- Relaxing both mentally and physically

### Self Talk

- Positive vs negative
- Arrogant vs. confident
- If your runner is doing a workout and getting tired it presents an opportunity to ask the athlete what they are thinking during the rest period. This is a good opportunity to build positive self talk. Revisit after the workout to affirm the athlete and their ability to complete desired workout.