

S P O R T S M I N D

Inside this Newsletter

1 DON'T Just Set Goals !

Establish positive achievement routines and love the training.

2 Coaching Excellence

Superb coach development conferences in Sydney & Melbourne.

3 Sportsmind Network News

1 DON'T Just Set Goals !

In sports coaching the concept of goal setting has taken on the status of an immutable 'truth'; something so accepted as to be rarely, if ever, questioned. For many years I also not only personally practised goal 'setting', but also widely preached its virtues.

However, I've recently developed a new approach to high achievement which is more effective, and easier to understand and implement for both players and coaches.

Problems with Goal 'Setting'

You see, the problem with goal 'setting' is two-fold.

Firstly, what happens when, (as often happens), you don't get the goal you set? For example, I'm sure Leyton Hewitt had 'set the goal' of winning Wimbledon this year - yet he was defeated in the first round! Here is an individual who is an accomplished player and highly experienced in elite achievement - yet he didn't get his goal!

Haven't you had the same kind of disappointing experience? Haven't you 'set' yourself goals - whether it was to increase your fitness level; or to change your diet and lose some weight; or to win a particular match; or get a particular job; or attain a certain result in your studies and you didn't do it!

Tell me how did you feel afterwards? What was the end result of your goal setting? Loss of confidence in your abilities? Erosion of your self belief? Perhaps not wanting to try again - giving up?

Yet we're told, "Don't give up!" The answer is simply to try again - to set yet more goals.

Don't worry - the problem isn't you! The fault is with the process. Goal 'setting' is not the answer!

The second fatal flaw with goal setting is that it encourages an unhealthy and unrealistic emphasis on outcomes and results.

Too often an athlete's happiness, self worth, and even identity are dependent on achieving the goal, the result - and when they don't get the goal, win the event, achieve the result, they feel disappointed, cheated, and can lose heart, and even fall prey to depression.

Further, goal 'setting' too often leads the individual to associate all the pleasure and joy with the final attainment - as if life were a result, rather than an on-going process!

This often then consigns the actual 'process' of achieving the goal to the role of a 'sacrifice' - something to be suffered through in order to attain eventual happiness!

What this unhealthy obsession with the end result creates then is an emptiness, even in the athletes who get to the top, after the 'magic moment' of successful attainment is over, as they look around after years of 'sacrifice' and wonder :

"Is this all there is? Is this what I sacrificed so much for?"

The Mental Edge



The Solution

If goal 'setting' isn't the answer, what is? Is it possible to achieve at the highest level with a different kind of process? I believe so, and I believe this new process is both more effective and leads to long term joy and fulfilment - rather than infrequent, fleeting pleasures.

The 'goal' is to happily achieve; rather than achieve to be happy.

This new process - which I term the ***Sportsmind Routine Achievement approach*** - involves two radical changes in thinking. Firstly, the understanding that *achievement is a process, not an end result*. In order to achieve any goal, there must be a process involved; and this process involves specific routines.

The key to successful and satisfying achievement then, lies in identifying the routine, which if followed, will inevitably lead you to the desired 'goal'. This is done by simply asking the question : *"What routine, or set of routines, - if adhered to consistently and conscientiously - would inevitably lead to the successful attainment of goal X"*

The task then is to simply focus on doing, and enjoying, the routines - confident that your training will lead you where you want to go.

Secondly, associate the greatest pleasure with the training - not the end result. *Love your training* - otherwise you're going to be spending most of your time not enjoying your life, and I see so many sportspeople who dislike training, and only do it because they feel they 'have to' in order to get the goals they want! This is the same as the many people working in jobs they hate! Why spend your life doing something you hate? Either change your attitude to training, or go and do something you do like!

The way to do this is to continually ask yourself about your training, *"How can I enjoy this more? What can I do to make this even more fun and enjoyable for me?"*

Remind yourself regularly while you train, *"I LOVE tennis (or golf, or whatever) I LOVE training. I'm so lucky to be doing this - some people have to actually WORK for a living; I get to PLAY!"*.

Achievement as a Personal Management Process

Having made these two important points, let me say it IS important to still have goals! However, achieving significant goals in sport, especially at an elite level, involves more than just the process of *setting* them.

Achieving big goals is a *personal management process* involving establishing a goal, breaking it down into smaller sub-goals, determining a viable action plan, implementing and enjoying this plan, evaluating progress, adjusting the plan, celebrating achievement, and finally choosing a new goal.

Goals are important to success, because without a clearly defined and desired outcome, motivation flags and there can be a loss of direction.

If you don't have a specific destination in mind, you might be a good player, but you'll end up going nowhere in particular - and this is what happens to many talented athletes, simply because they don't have long term goals.

You do want to have a desired outcome and not be afraid of setting it, and going for it - however, you also want to temper this outcome focus by establishing strong achievement routines, and associating great enjoyment to your day-to-day training.

Love Your Training

For instance, consider a journey. At the beginning of the journey you think of your destination - where you want to end up. Then you get in the car and pay attention to the traffic around you; stop at lights and intersections; accelerate, change gears; turn corners; refuel when necessary; and deal with any delays and flat tyres along the way.

Now just imagine if you didn't have that destination in mind at the start - what would happen?

You'd hop in the car and start driving, and you might drive extremely well, but you'd end up going nowhere in particular.

What is different about the ***Sportsmind Routine Achievement approach*** is that we remember to enjoy the journey, and focus on what you need to do at each step of the way.

Remember that choosing a direction is important, but placing too much emphasis on it leads to problems.

For instance, if on your journey, you think too much about the hot date you're doing to visit, you'll have an accident but if you don't *want* that hot date in the first place, you'll probably never get the car out of the garage!

Likewise, if you think about winning, trophies, fame and fortune during the match, chances are your attention and concentration on the moment by moment play will suffer as you imagine the future, or regret past mistakes, instead of being in the present - and you won't perform to your potential.

Enjoy your training; love the doing of your sport - it is after all the most important part!

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2 Coaching Excellence

SYDNEY

October 21 - 22

Sancta Sophia College,
8 Missenden Rd, Sydney Uni

MELBOURNE

November 25 - 26

Rydges Riverwalk, Richmond

Bookings are coming in quickly for this unique coach development event, so please book your place today - numbers are limited.

An 'early bird' discount price of **\$595.00** is available **if full payment is received by 19th September**

[Normal conference registration is \$645.00 and required to be paid in full by 3rd October]. Full details are in the separate flyer, enclosed.

PRE & POST CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

There will also be pre-conference workshops :

Sports NLP in Sydney on **Mon 20th October**; and repeated in Melbourne **Thur 27th November** as a post conference workshop.

Further, there will be a ***Sportsmind High Achievement*** workshop, on the weekend prior to the conference, in both Sydney and Melbourne. Registration is overleaf, and some scholarship places are available.

Remember also the annual ***Sports Hypnosis*** workshop in Byron Bay in September.

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT WORKSHOPS

October 17 - 19 : Sydney
November 21 - 23 : Melbourne

SPORTS HYPNOSIS

September 19 - 21 : Byron Bay

3 Sportsmind Network News

So far this year *Sportsmind* has assisted

- * **Societe General** financial traders;
- * teachers in Townsville, Brisbane and Ipswich for the **Assn of Independent Schools, Qld**;
- * students and sportspeople at **St. Edmonds College; Griffith Uni**; and **Ipswich Grammar School**;
- * personal trainers at **Filex 2003**;
- * surf coaches for **Surfing Qld**; and
- * **Qld Uni Continuing Education**.

Dave Alred (Rugby coach for the English Lions) and Peter Banfield (Asst Coach for Essendon AFL team) came to pick up some ideas in mental preparation.

Sportsmind continues its association with the **Runaway Bay Sports Centre Sports Medicine Clinic**.

Recent Scholarship Winners

The following people were granted *Sportsmind* scholarships recently :

Miles Downie (Soccer)
Steve Keogh (Golf)
Gabriel Wickert (Soccer)
Kris Hines (Life Coach)
Nicholas Clark (PT)
Jade Casey (Diving)
Peter Banfield (AFL)
Tony Beswick (PT)
Alan Fairbanks (Netball)

Recent comments about Sportsmind including some from workshop and course attendees:

"Teachers' evaluation of the workshops attest to the fact that Jeffrey developed and presented a workshop that not only met their needs for relevant and easy-to-understand information, but provided them with practical tools to apply in their professional settings. I have no hesitation in recommending Jeffrey for conduct of professional development activities"

Ann Kempe, Asst Director, Assn. of Independent Schools, Qld.

*"Very informative, and a great toolbox of strategies for any coach to have, who is committed to improving performance of players."***Dave Alred, English Lions Rugby Coach, U.K.**

LOOK OUT WALLABIES, ALL BLACKS & SPRINGBOKS - THE LIONS ARE USING SPORTSMIND TECHNIQUES !!

"To discover Sportsmind has given me a new pathway in life. The techniques I have learned in this course will give me the edge in my coaching and getting the performances of my players to go up another level."

Peter Banfield, Asst Coach, Essendon AFL Club.

"I've been coaching Netball for over 20 years, and I learned more in the past three days about human behaviour than I thought possible. I recommend Sportsmind to all coaches and performers in all sports. If you do not accept this challenge you could be left behind."

Alan Fairbanks, Netball, Vic.

"I've needed something like this for a while - just did not know how to go about it. I'm two days into the training program, and noticed a change in my enthusiasm already!"

Sandra McCormick, Martial Arts Instructor, N.T.

"Thankyou so much for helping Marvin - he has had wonderful results of late. I was just told he reached a final in Sydney by winning a tough three-setter where his behaviour was perfect!! To think that before we came to see you, a coach said he should give up tennis!! He loves the sport, so you were like finding a diamond in the sand for him."

Cathy Barker, Tennis Mum., Melbourne.

How to Contact Sportsmind

If you'd like more details about *Sportsmind*, please call or write to the address below:

**77 FLAXTON MILL ROAD
FLAXTON QLD 4560
PH / FAX [07] 5445 7994**

We can be contacted by email on :

jhodes@sportsmind.com.au

The website is:

<http://www.sportsmind.com.au>