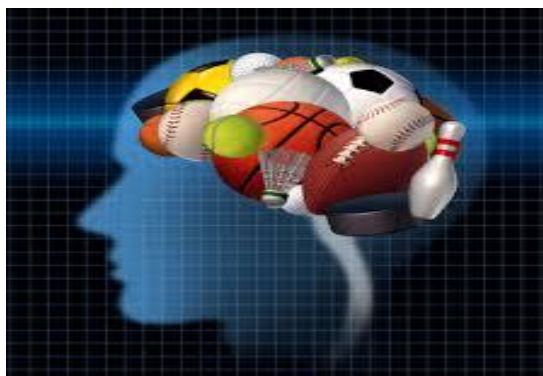


Mental Stamina – The Innovative Game Changer of Every Sport



Sreekala Sunder Rajan*

RBEI/ESA6, Karate, Silver Medalist, Women 59 KGS, Year 2000, Throw ball, Karnataka, 2005

Abstract – The difference between a player and a winning player is most often their state of mind during the match. The crux of the any sport is victory in the game. The sport entirely depends on the sportsman which means it is has a high people dependency. Where people are the core, the mindset of individual or team is not just crucial but is the most impactful. The mind wavers but not the mindset. Thus setting the mind to make it a mindset is the secret of success. Better mindset equals better productivity.

This paper looks at a level based approach to mindset management in sports. At what levels can the mind can be influenced for an individual as well as a team? This paper talks of some simple tricks and techniques that ensures that the sportsman can easily win if he focusses on his/her mindset along with physical education.

THE BENEFITS OF THIS PAPER WOULD BE-

1. Clarity on how to deal with the mind positively in a sportsman such that they are able to play to their best of abilities.
2. Creating a winning mind set in teams.
3. Creating a sports team where the attitude plays an important role.
4. Tips and Tricks on how to train the mind as stamina point in a sportsperson.
5. Innovative mind management techniques- Something that can make or break a team.

The paper is an innovative approach to Physical education. As sportspersons, one puts hours of practice in physical training. A good supplement from the mental training as well makes a wholesome sportsman. This paper discusses this aspect.

A team comprises of individual people, individual minds. It is a continuous project in itself for the coach

to bring in a common line of thinking yet encouraging diversity in a team. This is where creating a mindset is required. The mindset will serve as a boundary framework within which the mind is allowed to explore for every player .To make a successful winner out of a player, one needs to invest in this mind-set of the player and the team.

THE PROBLEM:

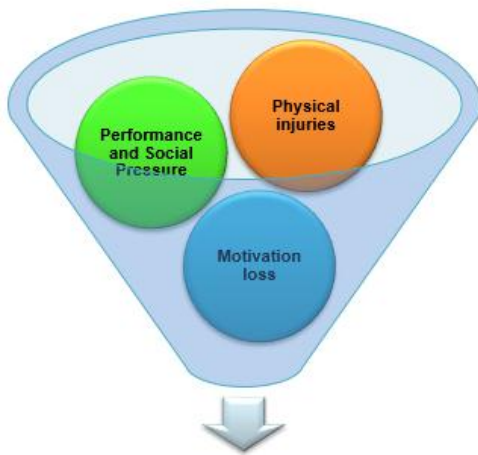
Players of any sport put in hours of physical education to succeed. However, on multiple occasions it has been seen that the matches which have no chance of losing have been lost and vice versa. Such sportsmen /women are under immense pressure that definitely impacts their performance.

This leads to a bigger thought that there IS another factor that stops players from being winners during matches.

Some of the problems once can identify with –

1. Performance pressure

2. Social pressure due to fame and name
3. Societal pressure that discourage youngsters from taking up a sports career path.
4. Physical injuries and loss of training time thus leading to poor confidence



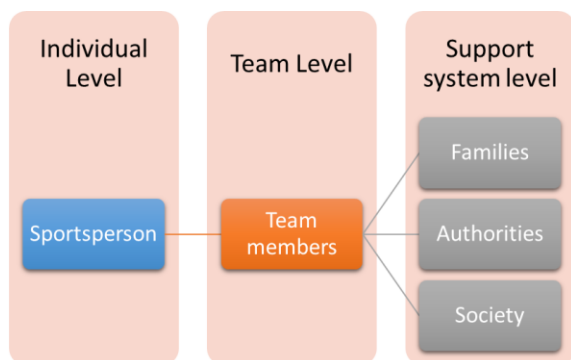
Wasted training effort!

This paper discusses a level based Mind-set Management that I provide as a solution.

Level L1- Individual Player Mind-set.

Level L2 – Team Mind-set.

Level 3- Societal Mind-set.



LEVEL 1: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL MIND SET MANTRA



Problem Statement addressed:

- How can I be a mentally strong sportsman?
- How can I compete to win?
- How can I be a game changer when the pressure of a game is high?

TECHNIQUES AND METHODS:

• **Mantra #1: Practice being calm:**

Anyone who has played even a single match of any sport knows the importance of practice. The old saying goes “Practice makes a man perfect”. In the sports world, “Practice makes a sportsman become beyond perfect”. Multiple studies have revealed that anyone who practices a skill starts performing subconsciously. In a book written by eminent mind manager Khurshed Batliwala called “Ready,study,go”, he explains how the wiring in the brains adapts to practice thereby making the act a natural action in the subconscious level.

This is medical science.

Similarly, the sportsman also needs to practice to stay calm and composed in a match. We have seen so many career bans simply because the player couldn’t maintain his composure on the court.

This is a pure practice. I strongly recommend professional patience management sessions for every sport played anywhere in the world.

Our Indian Cricket captain MS Dhoni is by far one the best examples of being calm and composed on the ground even under immense pressure. This has surely been a game changer.

• **Mantra #2: Mental stamina coaching:**

In the sports world, one needs to say “This is my game” as against “Our game”. Encourage the team members to say “My match”, My responsibility is...”, verbally .Get the team to mention their respective name against their commitment to the game. I remember one Karate teacher who used to make us announce our name along with the number of push-ups we would do in class that day. No anonymous slips. This will ensure a mental stamina preparation to achieve it. *The Critical Success factor* here is to ensure that the “I “game doesn’t get selfish. The coach can ensure this with a mindset- Don’t penalize or overly praise a team member

• **Mantra #3: Relaxation techniques:**

Tough medals require tough games. Tough games require tough sportsmen. Tough sportsmen require a tough mind. A mind that doesn’t give up. A mind that

makes you fight o the finish. In a match, as much as the coaching is done, finally it is the player in the ring. At that time, only a relaxed mind can make the winning move. As our Olympic medalist star Coach Pullela Gopichand acknowledges that meditation made his game mature and victorious. Meditation and yoga have now become an integral part of body builders, marathon runners and any serious sportsperson's coaching in the game.



A Meditation session at the P. Gopichand Academy, Hyderabad

LEVEL 2: TEAM LEVEL MINDSET MANTRA



Problem Statement addressed:

- How can a team of good sportsmen become good players?
- How do make the team play and win with each other's strengths and weaknesses?

TECHNIQUES AND METHODS:

- **Mantra #4: Rewards as a culture**

Rewards always please some and disappoint others. In the sports world where every team member is considered equally responsible, the use of rewards is always a challenge and controversial. The

methodology of "Democratic rewards" solves this issue. A good way would be to reward the Team as a whole yet by being specific. A set of awards is planned where every member is rewarded but for a different reason. For e.g., A team of 4 should have 4 awards but on 4 different areas. Say one for best defense, best smasher, best defender etc. This recognizes the team's strengths in each person and makes it open and transparent. It also encourages others to develop that particular strength AND have it measured with an award. *The Critical Success Factor* here is to identify award categories that are crucial for the sport/game as a coach as well as encourage players to work for it.

- **Mantra #5: Team building exercises apart from the sport.**



Statistics have proved that team building is an important aspect to succeed. When people of different mindsets do constructive activities together, they automatically bond. Without any additional training, they learn to balance each other's strengths and weaknesses with the focus on a common result. This is true for every game as well. In any match, the victory or defeat is decided by how well the players support each other's strengths and weaknesses. These team building exercises remove barriers, focus on result and above all remove the ego in players that stops them from performing as a team. As one of my roles as a coach, I ensure that teams do some games and activities that eliminates such barriers. It could as simply as eating lunch together.

- **Mantra #6: Sharing and caring to the outside world as a team.**



The American Corporation for National and Community Services enlists that Problem solving and connecting to others is a strong benefit of volunteering. It says that when one is involved in community service, they automatically learn to solve problems and reach out to bigger goals. In fact the National Service Scheme (NSS, India) is entirely based on that. Now let us map it to the sport. The biggest aim of a sport is to ensure that problems are solved in any match as a team. Some players could be out of form for a particular match or season. This is where the others in the team help. The team itself becomes a big source of motivation. This leads to players coming back to form very soon. One such case study is when a particular sports team in Bangalore used to make it a point to do community service together. It would be a day out where they would spend a day in the orphanages, clean up roads etc. The outcome was amazing. The team performed beyond what was expected in the game! The secret was revealed that they felt more contented, grateful in life and were therefore able to go all out and crack the games!

A seemingly unrelated powerful mantra!

LEVEL 3: SUPPORT SYSTEM MIND SET MANTRA

Problem Statement addressed:

- How can we as a society have a positive mindset in supporting sports?

Techniques and Methods:

- **Mantra #7: Sports as a community activity**



The movie “Lagaan” broke all barriers in movie making. It gave us goose bumps to watch an entire village come together in a sport. Similarly watching an India- Pakistan match together in one TV has always made every father dream that his son will play Sachin Tendulkar one day.

Sports as an activity is extremely energetic when played with people of no expectations. Especially in a country like India where facilities are minimal but expectations are high, the family and social circle is one of the biggest support systems to the players of all levels.

Just conducting sports activities as a community activity it brings in a positive acceptance of sports as an integral part of one’s life. If every society embraces tshi culture, it is automatically creating a very positive mental support system for the players.

The traditional game like “Handi tod” during Krishna Janmashtami, jallikattu, kho kho and more are aimed at this.

Well, it has proven to build a strong society with positive outlook!

The success cycle in sports due to a positive mind



The paper recognises that success as a player is a vicious cycle. Success leads to success. This is one of the main reasons why coaches always believe that a player is in form for a while and not just one match. Psychologists say that the adrenaline rush of a good match for a sportsman releases positive chemicals in the brain making them become more successful in the sports. This leads to better performance which leads to the team itself performing better. This success again leads to the individual team members feeling successful leading to much better individual performance. Of course, the team chemistry and the integral part of the coach to manage this success plays a very crucial part.

CONCLUSION:

The positive sportsman mind set is an attitude. One that is fuelled by the will to take challenges with minimal resources yet deliver high winning results. A happy mindset is a motivated mindset. A motivated mindset is a productive mindset. This is the very

essence of any sportsman. Hence the mental stamina in any sport is a game changer

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Sreekala Sunderrajan is an Engineer who holds a variety of experience across sports and has been an active player at multiple levels. She started young with a family of sport where her father Sunder Rajan played hockey for Karanataka. She has represented the state of Karnataka in Throw ball and continues to play the sport representing her organization Robert Bosch as a captain.

Sreekala is also a trained 1st dan Black Belt in Karate and has been a national level champion in the womens 59 kg category. She has been a star player in sparring and has trained over 100 students as a trainer as well. With a passion towards all sports, she has also been a regular with games like Shotput and running.

An explorative individual, she now trains as professional Yoga and Mediation teachers for the last 9 years. She conducts workshops for the youth, children, women and anyone who loves to learn. She has been teaching the Art of Living Foundation programmes as a stress management coach empowering youth with tricks to handle the mind. She has been teaching Yoga to sportsmen alike and has been personally using in her games as well.

Her biggest platforms for performance and growth have been in her alma mater, the BMS College of

Engineering under the able guidance of Dr. Shivaram Reddy and school The Frank Anthony Public School under Mr. Napoleon.

She is also the awardee of the prestigious Goldman Sachs and Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, a recognition given to the top 120 women potential entrepreneurs in a country, in a year in the field of education.

A professional Orator for over 17 years, she has also conducted numerous public speaking workshops. Winning over 300 awards, she was awarded the crowning "Governor's award for Excellence" in Karnataka, India by Her Highness Smt. Rama Devi in the year 2000. A theatre hobbyist, Radio Voice over artist and a sportsperson who represented the state to victory in Throw ball and Karate, Sreekala holds a variety that is always used to bring teams together. She also volunteers as a Youth Faculty for the "Art of Living Foundation" and uses her skills to give back to society.

Sreekala is married to Raghudeep and is mother to 2 lovely children who are also introduced to playing as a way of life.

THANK YOU!

Corresponding Author

Sreekala Sunder Rajan*

RBEI/ESA6, Karate, Silver Medalist, Women 59 KGS, Year 2000, Throw ball, Karnataka, 2005

E-Mail – venkatachalapathi22@yahoo.co.in