

Effective Self Regulation



Preamble

The following psychological resource for participants and athletes, has been developed by sport psychologist Fiona McCarthy on behalf of the NSW Office of Sport, as a key initiative of the NSW Government's Future Champions strategy.

For more information on Future Champions, please visit www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development

Getting to know the author

Fiona McCarthy is a registered psychologist, specialising in sport psychology and is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the Australian College of Sport and Exercise Psychologists. Fiona owns and operates Mind and Body Balance, a business she established 25 years ago.

Fiona is the Hunter Academy of Sport, Sport Psychology Consultant and a New South Wales Institute of Sport, Sport Psychology Service Provider. Over the last twenty-

five years, Fiona has assisted many teams, athletes, parents and coaches in the areas of confidence, concentration, handling pressure, motivation, goal setting, time management, performance preparation and general well-being. Fiona has worked with numerous sports, assisting recreational level athletes to professional, international, Olympic and Paralympic level athletes, reach their full potential.



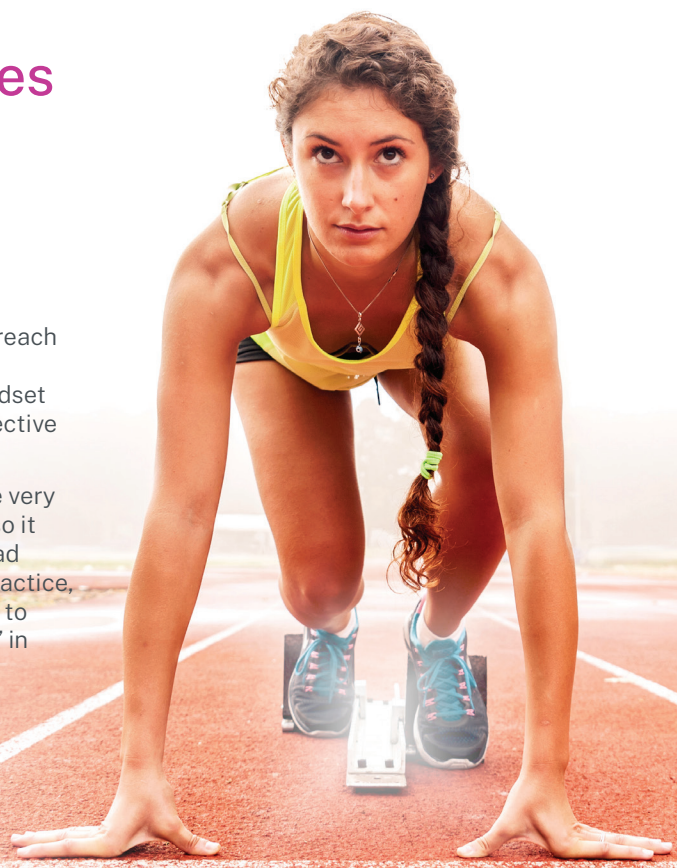
Background to these resources

The importance of having a mental 'tool kit' to support your learning, performance and engagement on and off the sporting field.

The following resources have been developed by Fiona McCarthy to assist athletes at all levels, in understanding the importance of having a suite of mental 'tools' at their disposal. These 'tools' are practical and multidimensional and will help athletes learn and develop the necessary mental skills they require to help them navigate their way through their sporting journey with a positive mindset and achieve success on and off the field.

It is well recognised that to reach the pinnacle within sport, an athlete needs a superior mindset consisting of strong and effective mental skills and strategies.

Importantly, mental skills are very intertwined and integrated, so it is recommended that you read about and put into regular practice, a number of these resources to strengthen the 'mental tools' in your kit bag!



Effective Self-Regulation

Part of being an athlete is knowing how to perform, train, learn and improve. Having a routine of evaluating your training and how you go in competition, allows learning, improvement and progress to happen.

Athletes also need to understand how to monitor their thoughts, feelings and behaviours under various situations. They need to be able to **self-regulate**, by having awareness of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

These could change depending on circumstances. For example, you may have many rushing thoughts in your mind, a swirling tummy and constantly fidget when you're anxious before a Grand final but have few thoughts and feel happy when you are laughing and enjoying your time with family and friends at home.

Having awareness of these signals or changes can help you adjust the negative ones and try to turn them into positive ones so you can feel and perform better.

Being honest when self-regulating is important, as it allows for an accurate indication of where you are with your thoughts, feelings and behaviours and gives you and your coach an insight as to the optimal state of physical and mental well-being that you need to be in to perform at your best.

Sometimes having a group of your trusted support network to help

you with a problem or concern or a performance slump, is of great value, so share your thoughts with people you trust and feel safe with.

Honest self-reflection, regulation and awareness allows you to start to create your very own recipe for success.

By evaluating positive and not so positive performances, it allows you to start to compile the key ingredients and things that work for you in order to perform at your best with the best mindset.



Some 'ingredients' or aspects you may discover that work for you are things like –

- making sure you get optimal hours of sleep the week leading up to a big competition
- eating patterns and types of food that assist you with peak performance
- how long before your event you arrive at the venue
- your mindset and understanding what are the best things for you to focus on and what is the best environment for you to do that.

For example, you may like it when you are engaging in conversation with positive people as opposed to people that zap your energy with their negative talk.

Remember, you can choose the best approach, both mentally and physically that's specific to you so that you can give yourself the best chance at performing at your best!

We hope you liked our tips on self-regulation!

Have FUN building your psychological skills and strategies and put them into practice in and out of sport!

Remember importantly, if you are unsure of any of these tips or require further advice, please talk to your Coach, Parent or consult a Sport Psychologist.

You might like to check out our NEW animated YouTube video, Developing your mental 'tool kit' to support you in and out of sport featured within the NSW Office of Sport's Pathways and Development webpages @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development>.

Check out more tips for Participants @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/social-and-recreational-sport-participants>

And or tips for Emerging and High-Performance Athletes @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/emerging-athletes>



**Future Champions -
Developing your
mental 'tool kit' to
support you in and out
of sport.**

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