

## **Skyrocket Your Game**

It's all very well for the government to pour millions into sport in the hope of buying a few medals at the 2012 London Olympics but unless there is a change of emphasis amongst the coaches and administrators of our sporting bodies it's likely to be a total waste of money because one vital ingredient of success is being woefully neglected. Ostensibly our top sports performers seem to have everything they need in order to compete, two arms, two legs, fitness, ability, a brain each so why is it they come up short so often? The answer is connected with that last item, the brain and what's in it. What they lack is the winning attitude.

Ask any athlete how much of their performance they attribute to their mental state and they will all tell you at least 50% and most will say much more. Indeed, it is widely accepted throughout the sports world that the correct mental approach is crucial to the quality of performance. However, although our sports folk torture themselves with long hours of hard labour at the gym, pool, track, court, training ground etc in order to crank their bodies up to peak performance level, they do little if anything to condition their minds for success. This is the great broken link in British sport that must be fixed without delay if we wish to stay in contention with our more progressive rivals.

It is indeed a paradox because if our top sports folk know that mental attitude is responsible for at least half of their performance why are they not spending as much time preparing their minds for competition as they spend getting physically fit? The answer is that no one told them how to and that's a great shame because they are missing the opportunity to be truly in the zone. When you're in the zone you switch over to auto-pilot and your mind and body click into harmony. Every movement feels right and everything is perfect. Everything flows effortlessly and easily and you feel a surge of purpose and strength. You feel amazing and at that fantastic moment your performance skyrockets and you go further than you have ever gone before. That's what Sports Hypnotherapy does for you.

Hypnosis can improve the performance of any athlete whatever the sport whatever the level. Indeed, I'm quite sure that no athlete can achieve their true potential without it. I realise there's an element of scepticism regarding the subject so let me tell you that, contrary to the old-fashioned attitude of many British coaches, Sports Hypnosis is fantastic. It is not rubbish or mumbo-jumbo or hit and miss. It is perfectly safe, wonderfully enjoyable, highly effective and works every time. And before you write this off as complete nonsense let me tell you that I'm in very good company. Many great stars of world sport happily attest to the part hypnosis has played in their success and among them are Tiger Woods, Roger Federer, Michael Shumacher, Michael Jordan, Nick Faldo and Lewis Hamilton. Champions all.

A few seasons ago it came to light that some of the Wigan Athletic Footballers were using hypnotherapy. Look what happened to them! They started as everyone's favourites for relegation but confounded every pundit's prediction by securing their top-flight status before Easter, reaching the Carling Cup Final and even chasing a place in Europe. Is that a coincidence? Absolutely not. What happened was that hypnotherapy heightened their state of self-belief, motivation, focus and confidence and raised their performance level. But the Wigan footballers are not unique and these

simple techniques will work just as well for everyone. Most of the athletes I work with say it frees them from the restrictions they felt in the past.

The simple fact is (and all the best things in life are simple) that the sub-conscious mind has the power to influence the actions of the body. Try it. Keep your self-talk nice and strong and see how your life improves. Don't say 'I can't do this' or 'It'll never work' Say, 'I can do it, I will do it.' In your mind's eye see yourself winning, achieving your goal. See yourself doing whatever you need to do to be successful and you probably will.

One of the best exponents of the art of positive self-talk was Cassius Clay (later Mohammed Ali) who went around proclaiming 'I'm the greatest'. And what happened to him? He became the heavyweight champion of the world. That's what positive self-talk can do for you.

Visualisation is at least one technique that has been picked up and used by some UK coaches and is a simple, effective exercise. The way it works is that if you imagine as vividly as possible what it feels, looks and sounds like to have a successful outcome to any particular goal, it triggers the same neural pathways as if you were physically carrying out the activity. Consequently, the uncritical sub-conscious mind registers that you have actually achieved whatever you are imagining and of course if you've done it once you can do it again.

Visualisation is immensely valuable when carried out in the waking state but is much better, stronger, more vivid and effective when guided by a facilitator in hypnosis. And by the way, that doesn't mean being zonked out on another planet or turned into a chicken. That's stage hypnosis which is purely for entertainment. Hypnotherapy is merely a state of deep relaxation during which it is possible to communicate with the sub-conscious mind and replace negative ideas with the positive emotions of a winner. It's enjoyable, relaxing, refreshing and you are aware of everything that happens because the Hypnotherapist is talking to you during the whole process. You are never required to do anything embarrassing, reveal any private information or do anything they don't want to do.

Can you get stuck in a trance? It would be wonderful if you could. But if the thought worries you let me say that even if the Hypnotherapist were to leave the room, drive to the airport and catch a flight to South America, you would quite naturally come round in a few minutes all by yourself or perhaps just drop off into a restful sleep. It is perfectly safe and nothing bad can happen to you. Only good things happen with Hypnotherapy.

Sports Hypnotherapy is currently the missing ingredient of British sport. The main ingredient, the talent, has always been available in abundance and that's for sure but developing it has always been a struggle. It's a tragedy for our young sports folk but it doesn't have to be for a moment longer. Hypnosis is the flavour that turns a bland dish into a succulent treat. The extra dimension you get from having the correct mental attitude. The mind-sharpener that gives you that crucial edge over opponents. It is used extensively in many other countries but our inherent scepticism is delaying the chance for us to benefit from this wonderful therapy. However, if coaches can manage to put aside their prejudices and discover the incredible effectiveness of

Sports Hypnotherapy in spicing up performances and getting over that line first then it is bound to be used much more in the future. If not then those Government millions might count for nothing.

If we want to do well at the 2012 London Olympics, or have a Wimbledon Champion, or a football team that wins the World Cup or Champions' League then Sports Hypnotherapy is the best way of providing the quantum leap we need. Hypnosis has opened a whole new world for many top sports people and it will for you too if you take up my challenge and try it. If you are a coach or sports person or connected with one of our sporting bodies and you are interested in raising the bar in terms of sporting prowess I will travel anywhere to demonstrate the effectiveness of this brilliant method either individually or in a group. If you're a football Manager or coach I'll put you at the top of the list because I am a passionate football fan. I dare you to be amazed, to transform your performances, to skyrocket your game.

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