



ARE YOU MENTALLY TOUGH?

by Noel Callaghan

“Mental toughness” is a phrase that is commonly used in all sports to describe the superior mental qualities of the competitor. Most elite athletes report that at least 50% of superior athletic performance is the result of mental or psychological factors, and a whopping 85% of coaches rate mental toughness as the most critical set of psychological characteristics for determining competitive success. Below are 8 contributing attributes as a key to mental toughness in sport.

1 Unshakeable self-belief in your ability to achieve competition goals.

Mental toughness is about your self-belief and not being shaken from your path. It has the ability in physical and psychological self-belief to produce the goods.

2 Ability to bounce back from performance setbacks as a result of an increased determination to succeed.

We all have them (setbacks), the mentally tough performer doesn't let them affect you, you use them.

3 Insatiable desire and internalized motives to succeed.

You've really got to want it, but you've also got to want to do it for yourself. Once you start doing it for anyone else, you're in trouble. You really need to understand that you are in it for yourself.

4 Remaining entirely focused on the task at hand in the face of competition-specific distractions.

There will be inevitable distractions, but you need to be able to focus on the job in front of you. You do have the ability to switch back into control mode. Your focus will be a competitive advantage.



5 Pushing back the boundaries of physical and emotional pain, while still maintaining technique and effort under distress during training and competition

You have to deal with the physical pain from fatigue, dehydration, and tiredness. You are depleting your body of so many different things. It is a question of pushing yourself.

6 Remaining fully focused in the face of personal life distractions .

Once competing, you cannot let your mind wander to other things, and it doesn't matter what has happened to you, you cannot bring the problem into the performance arena.

7 Accepting that competition anxiety is inevitable and knowing that you can cope with it.

I accept that I'm going to get nervous, particularly when the pressure's on, but keeping the lid on it and being in control is crucial.

8 Thriving on the pressure of competition.

If you are going to achieve anything worthwhile, there is bound to be pressure. Mental toughness is being resilient and using the competition pressure to get the best out of yourself.