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*The World Swimming Coaches Association*

# **NEWSLETTER**

## **Sports Psych – How To Select A Sports Shrink**

*Doug Hankes, Ph.D., 2003 ASCA World Clinic*

A brief history lesson, we all get bored with history, but just to kind of give you an idea where the sports psychology field has come from: the first research was done way back in the late 1800's. Norman Triplett was actually a social psychologist. He was interested in the idea of social facilitation. He noticed that bike riders seemed to be able to ride faster when they were in a group rather than by themselves. This is true with them on the track at the same time and when they were not. It was not like the Pella tone where you get in and you are drafting. But if you had two cyclists on a track at the same time and they were not drafting they would ride faster than if you just put them on the track by themselves. They rode by themselves so there was something about this idea of people watching or people you know just in the same area with you.

He also did an interesting study with children where he had them reeling in a fishing line as fast as they could, by themselves. I want you to reel this in as fast as you can and also had them with somebody else. They were not competing, but just doing the same activity and gave them both the same instruction to reel it in as fast as you can. And again – surprise – surprise – when you have people around you, you perform faster.

Coleman Griffith is kind of considered the father of modern day sports psychology and he wrote two books that are classics, "The Psychology of Coaching" and "The Psychology of Athletics," one of his claims to fame. He also created the first sports psychology laboratory at the University of Illinois. One of his claims to fame was he worked with the Chicago Cubs way back when. Since he worked with them I do not think they have won a World Series, but I believe, if I am not mistaken, he was the Chicago Cubs sports psychologist when they did win a World Series.

More of a modern day figure in applied sports psychology is Bruce Ogilvie who actually just recently died a couple of weeks ago. He was a longtime Professor at San Jose State and wrote a book, "Problem Athletes and How to Handle them." It was a real loss to the field of sports psychology. Well into his early 80's he was

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**Convención Anual Acuática FMN 2007** (*Mexican Swimming Federation Convention 2007*)  
Hotel Crowne Plaza Acapulco, Acapulco, Mexico - August 23-26, 2007

**City of Derry International Swim Club**  
University of Ulster - Magee College, Londonderry, North Ireland - August 25-26, 2007

**2007 ASCA World Clinic**  
Town & Country Resort, San Diego, California, USA - September 4-9, 2007

**2007 National Coaches Workshop** (*Ontario Swimming Coaches Association / Swimming Canada*)  
Marriot Airport Hotel, Toronto, Canada - September 21-23, 2007

**BSCTA Conference 2007**  
Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Birmingham, UK - September 28-30, 2007

**2007 Swimming New Zealand School of Coaching**  
Auckland, New Zealand - September 28-October 7, 2007

**USA Swimming & ASCA Clinic for the Americas**  
Crowne Plaza Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA - November 15-16, 2007

still attending the big applied sports psychology conferences and mentoring other sports psychologists and was available to them. Again, in his 80's he was completely fit and sharp as a tack. But right there in the mid-60's, we started seeing sports psychology as a field starting to grow. Then in 1980 the United States Olympic Committee developed the first sports psychology advisory board and that is really where we are now at a National/International level. Individuals within the sport are saying this is probably something we need to be doing with our athletes – this mental training – this sports psychology.

There are three broad areas of sports psychology. There are probably more folks in research in academia right now. They are typically housed in kinesiology or physical education departments. Their primary function or role is to teach under graduates and graduate students and do research. The second bigger area, and I think we are seeing much more growth here, is the idea of education and performance enhancement. We are still aware of the research, but these individuals are doing the hands-on stuff with athletes and coaches teaching them the particular psychological skills. The third major area is the clinical or counseling realm. These are the folks who are working with athletes that have psychological difficulties just like the rest – maybe more so.

Athletes get generalized anxiety disorders. They get depressed. They have eating disorders. They have substance abuse problems and because they are athletes sometimes there can be a unique twist to this in terms of how you treat them. Those are the pretty broad areas and especially in two and three you get a lot of overlap. One of the comments I made Thursday was about the Sports Psychologist on staff in Colorado Springs, Kirsten Petersen. I was talking with her recently and I asked her how often she was really doing just straight performance enhancement stuff. And how much of it is more the clinical or counseling stuff. She said really at the training site she would spend about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of her time on the clinical counseling end of it. Meaning, if I have a relationship breakup or if my marriage is going down the tubes, is this going to affect my training? Yeah, it very well might and so there is a lot of overlap in those two areas.

All right, who is a qualified sports psychology consultant? We've got about a 50/50 split in terms of the folks that are doing sports psychology. Some are trained primarily in the sports side, some students are coming out of physical education programs and we have about half again that are coming out of psychology programs. But I do want to note the term psychologist. You may have somebody that is presenting himself or herself as a sports psychologist. Psychologist is a restricted legal term. You must have a PhD in psychology in order to call yourself a psychologist. So I can't be coming out of a sport science program and legally call myself a sports psychologist. You can see where this can create some problems for people who are doing sports psychology work, but really aren't supposed to be calling themselves sports psychologists.

One of the things that I am going to emphasize is that there are good folks doing work that come out of both of these academic disciplines. It is really kind of a hybrid field. It's rather unique that you have two very different

types of training and people doing similar sort of things. I don't know if you can see – this old Shoe cartoon and the picture says, "my curve ball is way off." The catcher says, "I see and how does this make you feel?" The pitcher replies, "it makes me feel inadequate – mostly because of a false sense of failure brought on by not getting enough attention from my uncle as a child." The catcher says, "Hey, are you trying to practice catching without a license?" Again, here is the whole idea that you do get a lot of psychology people saying to the kinesiology people, "Hey, you are doing stuff you are not trained to do and so that debate continues."

We are seeing much more people doing what I did, which is to try to get training in both kinesiology and psychology. What it does is it makes you an old man before they call you Dr. Hankes because it takes so long to complete all this sort of stuff. So, euphemism for sports psychology consultants, any of you can go out tomorrow and put your ad in the yellow pages and call yourself this, okay? No particular training necessary. You all can do it and nobody is going to say boo to you.

Now sometimes we will utilize these things in terms of how we describe ourselves to coaches and athletes because of that stigmatizing psychologist part. Something must be wrong if I am working with a psychologist, so you may say I am a mental skills coach or a mental trainer, consultant, etc. But none of these require any special training at all. You would hope that they have special training, but there is no guarantee. I like that peak performance consultant.

This is a slide I threw up Thursday. I think it is the only repeat slide and it is one of the things you will want to think about when you are deciding whether or not you want to work with somebody. This is also the whole idea of sports psychology consultants presenting themselves as "special." They have got something secret to offer that only they have. Guru status is good for the guru. If I have something that you want then you need me. So we have some very entrepreneurial type people working in the field of sports psychology that are kind of charlatans in a sense in that they are wanting to earn money. They want to make a living and so making yourself out to be the guru is good for the guru.

At least in my work, and I think with most sports psychologists, you want athletes to be able to do this on their own eventually. You don't want them to have to keep coming back to you all the time. A lot of my work is done with teaching an athlete or teaching a coach how to teach the athlete particular types of skills and in serving as a consultant. Not necessarily needing to see the athlete on a weekly basis or frequently.

A lot of times the athletes I work with, and this is true with the swimmers and divers at Auburn University, I may present a particular concept and then it is really up to them whether or not they want to come back in and work and individualize and try to sort through whether or not this is something that is going to be useful for them.

Gurus rarely acknowledge failure, but they sure will acknowledge success. I use the example of Davis Love in the first round of the PGA Championship and the sports

psychologist taking credit for that (great performance). Then in the second round when he ballooned up to about a 75, there was no quote from the sports psychologist saying you know that mental stuff just, I really fell down with Davis the second round. It is interesting in the PGA; almost every golfer has as part of their entourage a sports psychologist. And believe me, it is lucrative. When you think about what separates the golfers, it is one stroke, and if you have somebody that you think is helping you get that extra stroke, that is a valuable, valuable person. True too, the farther along we get in terms of "eliteness" – you know there is such little difference between the very best and the not quite so. And that is where that whole mental stuff I think really can help with age groupers.

It is good stuff with age groupers, but in terms of performance the impact that it has really at the highest level you see that. Here is a good guru cartoon. The Centerfielder is going back, way back to a horrible memory that has been repressed for many years so again, I can pull something out of you or give you something that you can utilize that is going to make you special too.

Just a little bit more history. In 1986 AAASP (Association for the Advancement of Applied Sports Psychology) was created. I don't know in the coaching field, I guess ASCA. There probably are some other coaching organizations that are big. I am not as familiar with your field, but in sports psychology if you are in the mainstream you belong to AAASP. It is the organization to be associated with. It is about the same size as this. It is about 750 to 1000 conference and yesterday too, some of the best-attended speakers that we have are typically the coaches. The coaches and the athletes come and talk. In fact, Doc Councilman spoke at AAASP. It has been at least ten years ago, but it was one of the best presentations I ever heard was the coach.

The other big organization APA Division 47 (American Psychology Association Division 47) was established right after AAASP. A lot of people will be members of both of these organizations. Division 47 which implies that within the American Psychological Association there are 50 some odd divisions and so Division 47 is a small little piece in the big world of APA, but that is an important association when you are assessing if somebody is legitimate or not.

In 1991 APA created a certification on designations. Now in 2003 do we see a problem here? Anybody see a problem? Okay, we have had this certification status for 12-13 years and there are less than 200 of us. That is bad. If you hire an athletic trainer you are going to want to see ATC at the end, you are not going to hire them unless they have that. Unfortunately, we have done a terrible job of marketing and getting the message across to coaches and athletes what type of training they need to have.

The reason why there are less than 200 consultants is – let's see the next slide – basically this is just the list of what you have to do in order to get certified. You literally almost have to have two PhD's. Within the last six months we have created a master certification so we are going to see an increased number of people who are going to be certified with a Master's degree. But up until six months ago you had to have a PhD – a Doctorate degree, EDD of some sort. That was a minimum requirement and

you had to have graduate work – not only in psychology, but also the sports sciences and so it was just a bear.

Now the really nice piece about this is that if you get to work with an AAASP certified consultant is this individual has been supervised with at least 400 hours of somebody either directly watching you or indirectly working with you who is already a consultant or somebody in the sports psychology field who has actually watched you do your work. They go and hear you do presentations. They see you work with teams. They look at the individual work that you do one on one and that is done through video taping or audio taping but you can know that this person has gone through a lot of hoops to get to this point; that supervised experience, that is a biggie.

So, assessing legitimacy, one of the first things you want to do, if somebody approaches you, is ask about their credentials. You would want to hear some of these acronyms, I am a member of AAASP, and I am a member of APA Division 47. Here is another one: I am working towards certification. That is huge. They may not be there but at least they are working towards this.

Another organization is NASFTA, North American Society for the psychology of sport and physical Activity that is a mouthful. NASTFA was probably the first North American sports psychology organization, but it has much more of a research emphasis and actually we have splintered off from that with people more interested in doing applied work. In the end you really have more of the applied folks. That means nothing to anybody and the reason why they came up with this title again is because we have a 50/50 split between physical education and psychology folks.

The psychologists are saying you cannot call yourselves sports psychologists. You do not have a PhD in psychology so we had to come up with this, Certified Consultant. Which nobody knows what it is because we want to include kinesiology. Somebody listed in the USOC sports psychology registry, that is also somebody who has been approved to work with Olympic and PAN AM teams. To be on the USOC registry one of the things you have to do is have this certification so even the USOC is acknowledging this is the route you need to go. Ask about their clientele and experience. Generally, academic credentials or reputation does not impress coaches. They want results, whether or not you have PhD at the end of your name or not. But the degree and certification does imply training. It does not guarantee competency. There are certified consultants I would never refer an athlete to. I mean they went through the hoops, but in terms of their interpersonal skills, how they work, just wouldn't want your athletes working with them. But it does help you know that you have got somebody who has put a lot of time and effort into their training.

Some other considerations: delineating who the client is. I will use Auburn for an example. I am employed by Auburn University, more specifically Student Counseling Services; the Athletic department does not employ me. If employed by the athletic department who would my client be? Is it the AD, is it an associate AD, is it the coaches I work with or is it the athlete? One of the things as a psychologist in dealing with the idea of confidentiality is

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I cannot share information without the consent of the client. Whether it's an athlete or a student. You can understand as coaches; sometimes you would want to know what the hell are they talking to that sports psychology consultant about. That might be information you would want as a coach so you need to delineate who the client is. The consultant, the sports psychologist, will work with how that is communicated to the athlete.

I primarily work for more than athlete-centered models. Meaning, because the athletic department – sometimes some of the things I tell athletes the coach would not want me to be saying because it negatively affects them – does not employ me. But athletes that come to work with me, those are the folks I am most worried about, their welfare and their performance. Now this is an interesting concept to me and actually this is what my dissertation was on. Is it important for the sports psychology person that is working with you – their athletic background?

Okay. Is it important that I am a former swimmer? Is that going to be helpful? It could be. You know I have never been a diver. I spent a lot of time with the divers at Auburn University and I have never gone off that 10-meter platform – yes? (a question from the room – cannot understand) I will talk a little bit about the research that I did and I was looking at Division I athletes and we were looking at the importance of credentials for the athletes. Does it make any difference whether they had a PhD or a Bachelor's degree?

Did it make any difference whether or not they had an elite athletic background versus just a recreational athletic background, and we also looked at interpersonal skills and what we found is that with Division I athletes that their degree didn't really matter and it didn't matter either whether or not they had been an elite athlete (Olympic caliber athlete) to them in terms of their work with the consultant. It didn't make any difference to them, except if their elite background experience was in the sport of the person they work with.

So for swimmers, if I was a former world champion in the 50-meter freestyle and I come in to work with your team, at least initially, my legitimacy is raised. I mean, I have been there and I have done it. But that if it is not within your own sport no, it doesn't. I think that what is most important is the idea that – I mean as a sports psychology person I can't be – nobody can be an expert in every sport. And I have worked with some really strange sports. I have a friend who is a sports psychology consultant and works with a competitive bagpipe team. I didn't even know that this competition existed, but he is working with bagpipers and then I have worked with a bull rider. I have never been on a bull and I am never going to be on a bull. I think what is of most use for the coaches, you want a sports psychology consultant who is going to be interested in that sport and shows a willingness to learn it. Now they may not be able to grasp every type of technique or everything having to do with it, but you've got to be able to speak some of the language. If I come in and talk to the swimmers and I do not know what a taper is – I mean – you've got to know a few things. My previous swimming experience way back when – when I was still doing some

triathlons – that was my experience with swimming so I am not an elite swimmer by any stretch.

Question from the floor – a lot of times it is just a matter of listening. If it is a sport I know some of the language of and the same with the divers but the more you are around the more you pick up on it. I think the athletes know that too. That you are in there trying to learn this with them and that is something that you get past fairly easily, but you might have somebody who is not showing any interest in the sport and that happens sometimes.

Yes, (question) what it indicated – it all came down to interpersonal skills. The athletes had to feel like this was someone they could connect with. This was the one factor overall that just came out clearly. It didn't make any difference to their training. It didn't make any difference their elite status. You know, if athletes didn't feel like they had a connection with the consultant then it wasn't going to work. And the techniques – they (the athletes) wouldn't even listen; they would just push you away automatically. I mean they want that genuineness – they want that empathy. You really need to have the training. You just can't have good people because we know – (from the floor – in other words it doesn't matter whether you were a psychologist and you were an excellent swimmer or an excellent football player or whatever – if you are a good psychologist and you are trained and you do this well – that is all you are going to use).

That is very important. Yes, I would love to be able to walk in with whatever athlete or team I am working with and say you know I am an expert in your sport. It would be a plus. One of the ways that does get in the way too that I mentioned Thursday is that my past athletic background might get in the way of the way I perceive you. Meaning my experiences are the same as your experiences and we know that is not the case. Good question.

Another question from the floor – well I could probably answer that my time spent with the team, as I said Thursday, they are one of the more psychologically sophisticated coaching staffs I have worked with. I have spent more time with the divers; in terms of doing any team-wide interventions, I haven't. More from the floor – with the divers I work with the entire team. With the swimmers it has been much more on an individual basis. I was talking to Kathy and Jeff earlier, there are some swimmers I have worked with that they do not even know I have worked with them. I mean, Dave doesn't even know. They have come to me themselves without a referral from the coach just kind of word of mouth from talking with the divers. Those that are specifically referred to me I will try to get the athlete's consent and talk with Dave or Kim or whoever it might be.

Those that come in for a straight performance enhancement on an individual basis and they have not told anybody. They don't communicate that back to them but that is one of the things too I think, I have been around long enough too where you develop this trust and I think the coaching staff knows I am not going to do anything. I am going to be thinking about the athlete's welfare first, but I am also going to be trying my damndest not to hurt any-

thing that the coaches are trying to do with the athletes. I mean Ralph would not be surprised to hear that some of his swimmers come in and bitch about him sometimes, they do. That is what athletes do; I guarantee it. At some point when I am working with athletes that is going to happen and you know and Jeff Shaffer for the diving coach I know he wouldn't mind me saying this, he knows that his divers come in and bitch about him all the time. I mean that is part of it. Again, one of the things when I started working with Jeff and the divers, was Jeff specifically requested that. You know I want you to communicate to me the types of things that you see me doing on the deck and how I talk to my athletes – how that might be improved. Now a couple of folks on the staff do have sports psychology backgrounds with the swim team and so you know why they are good at it.

I think some of them are just naturally good at it. They just got good people skills and some have a bit of formal training in that, but that is not uncommon for me to work with coaches too. That is not unusual. You know it takes coaches who are really pretty secure about themselves to make that request. We have kind of talked on some of these concepts already but you know developing collaborative relationships – very important and that is with both athletes and coaches. This is the whole idea too of seeking to understand first without imposing.

I think if you do have the opportunity to have somebody come in, sometimes the consultant feels like they have to make a big splash or big bang and they maybe try to do more than what is necessary. You know I think really coming in and just watching and again with the diving team that is a lot of what I did initially was just kind of watch – watch and listen.

The pool deck can get crowded, so for sports psychologists the idea is being accessible but not being in the way. This is true of folks working at the Olympic level with elite athletes too. Let the coaches do what the coaches do best, let the athletes do what they do best and your being available without getting in the way. The pressure is pretty great especially at a D1 (NCAA Division I) school where their jobs are dependent upon the success of their athletes. I don't know if there is this type of pressure for club coaching, too. I guess there probably would be. I mean their jobs are dependent on the success of their athletes too. The bottom line is that I am an athlete-centered person and I want to do best for the athlete you need to be very sensitive to what you know the pressures from the coaches that are imposed on them.

This is a hypothetical. What if Auburn's best swimmer comes in and says I am sick and tired of this, I don't want to do it anymore. And we spend a couple of sessions just focused on that they want to give up their sport and this is the team's biggest point scorer. Yes, I am going to try to be sensitive to the coach and how this is going to impact them and sometimes that happens too. The athlete decides to drop out but only after we study it for a very long time. We should talk about the guru. If you have got somebody whom you are working with that is taking credit, that is a problem. A good sports psychology consultant in my mind is somebody who is in the background – he is in the background. Nobody has the answer. Nobody has the secret magic.

Motivational speakers – I want to clarify that a little bit too. There is nothing wrong with motivational speakers. Having people come in on a one-time basis. That is fine, but know that those one time shots that when people come in, they are not necessarily going to have that impact. What the athletes want, generally they want to have some relationship and that develops over time and you don't get that with a motivational speaker. It is helpful, but not necessarily for long term and we don't have any accurate assessments in predicting athlete talent. I mean we are working on that. There are some talent identification programs. I know the national diving – they are working a lot on this right now and there is some psychological assessment and we are finding characteristics and traits that identify athletes, but nobody right now has a paper and pencil test or I can't hold up the Rorschach ink blots and have the athlete go yeah it looks like a butterfly and that means they are going to be world caliber – it doesn't exist at this point.

The sports psychology certified consultant registry is a good place to find somebody who is qualified. Those of you who are age group coaches or club coaches, if you have a physical education department near you, they will have a physical education program and a psychology program. More than likely there will be somebody in there that has an interest in sport.

Now they may not have all of this training, but that doesn't necessarily mean this wouldn't be somebody that might be useful, particularly graduate students. Graduate students are oftentimes very expert. They just happen to still be a student and they are more than willing to donate their time. They want access to athletes. That is one of the big issues for sports psychology consultants is how do you get your foot in the door.

Question from the floor: Do they need hours too? Answer: Yes, ideally when they are working toward certification status they want to be doing it during graduate school. Now the question you want to ask is, who is supervising you? You wouldn't necessarily want a masters level student who is just winging it. You know, they have read a couple of books on sports psychology and they go, yeah, this looks pretty simple.

I can do this because some of the stuff is relatively simple, but they need to be supervised when they are doing it so you just want to ask – have you got a professor or somebody that is supervising you and if they say yes, then you can go check and just make sure that is happening. You get some energetic graduate students they can do incredible work and they will work with your youth swimmers I mean they – it is really seductive to, you know, want to work with the Olympic world championship elite folks because, you know, we get – I talk about this with the swim team. My connection to them is small. I help out.

There are a lot of resources that the swimming team uses, but you do kind of bask in that reflected glory. Gosh, I helped with the national champions – men's and women's and you feel good about that. But I have worked with some of the swimmers who are not even going to qualify for NCAA's but I was able to help them swim as best they could and that feels great too.

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So working with sports psychologists you are going to find plenty of people who are going to be happy to work with your youth and wanting to get that experience. So your college or university is a good resource. And the best probably is word of mouth. You do want to see the training, but you know that is how you are assessing whom to work with. Let's see, I can't remember if I have another slide or not – no – that is it.

I didn't even have some summing up remarks or anything. Yes – question from the floor – that's a good point – I would imagine that most of the sports psychology folks in there are probably AAASP certified would be my guess, I could be wrong but that is an excellent resource.

Q. When does an athlete really need a sports psychologist? When? Well, I am biased. I think they all need a sports psychologist. I mentioned Thursday what sports psychology consultants talk about – the thirds rule. That is you are going to have about 1/3 of your athletes who when they start hearing some of this stuff get really juiced and excited about it and they want to learn this part of the mental side of their sport and those are the easiest to work with. You just can't give them enough information and show them enough things.

Then you have about a third that you know this may be helpful. They will have a kind of wait-and-see attitude and then you have a third that are mentally tough. They have got good mental skills and they have developed them on their own. I think you can particularly help with athletes who have reached a plateau. Those I think, when they are not seeing any more improvement that that can be a good time to intervene and they are usually ripe for wanting to do something different too.

Athletes and coaches a lot of times fall into the trap when performance gets stuck by adding more physical stuff where you know you are just breaking down the athlete. They are getting more and more frustrated when let's try something different here. Let's do something on the mental side so that would be one particular time.

Some of the research I had gone over on Thursday too, as world champions and Olympians look back. One of the things that they are very clear about is they wished they had learned the psychological, mental side of their sport much earlier as a youth, as an age grouper. They wish they had started getting some of this stuff earlier rather than later. Kids get a big kick out of this too, so I think the younger you can start the better. But it's not always performance enhancement. It is not always trying to fix something that is wrong.

Let's add this in: sports hypnosis. Yes, well, I will do the hypnosis part first. It can be helpful. Hypnosis – it really is so similar. I mean a lot of what I would do is you watch; they would say it is hypnosis. It is a guided imagery and they are so similar to the hypnosis piece. I do not present it as hypnosis. I talk about guided imagery. And it can be useful but it is not a magical type (I am going to hypnotize

you and you are going to swim faster). It obviously does not work that way but it is one tool that can be useful. I don't know that there is necessarily – actually that is a good question.

One of the things that you also do not want to see in a consultant is that they have a cookie-cutter approach to what it is. That they are going to do the same thing with every athlete. You know, they got there – I showed the tower of 10 thing but they are a piece of that. Pieces of that that I am going to emphasize with some athletes and not with other athletes and so I don't know that there is one technique that I would say is above and beyond this is the most useful.

I think that imagery and visualization teaching is pretty powerful stuff. I do a lot of cognitive behavioral type things like self-talk. I like to spend a lot of time on self-talk, how the athletes talk to themselves. So probably of the two I utilize most would be something to do with self-talk, coping affirmations, just the things that you say to yourself in the course of practicing or competing. They have a big impact and help athletes utilize imagery. Part of learning to visualize an image is the foundation skill right there is you have to teach them how to relax first. The relaxation piece makes the imagery or the visualization that much more powerful. There is a lot of overlap too. It is not just one thing.

Question: Is there one book that you think would be most helpful to some of the coaches, who may not have the resources monetarily or geographically to engage some of these psychology folks. What would be a book that covers some of these techniques that you use? What would be the best book to have? I realize that it is not going to begin to do necessarily what you do but it would take the person down that road as a student?.

Answer: Terri Orlick has several books that are excellent. They are not swimming specific. I am not aware of swimming specific one. Terry Orlick is a Canadian sports psychologist. Human Kinetics has a booth here and I saw several of their books. Some them are specific. They speak to the coaches and some of them speak to the athlete and so either one of those. It would still be useful for you. Terry Orlick's stuff is very good. Allen Goldberg's stuff is good and he spoke and he has spoken here before. His stuff is pretty straightforward and understandable and it is easy to utilize. Shane Murphy is the former chief sports psychologist at the USOC at Colorado Springs. He has a book called the "Achievement Zone." It is good stuff. There are so many good books and if you start reading a lot of these you will start seeing that they are very, very similar. You have developed your own language for it. If anybody else has any other questions I would be happy (to answer them). You could come on up and again thanks for the opportunity and glad to have shared some information with you. ●

# Early Registration

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**Registration (please choose one):**

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<input type="radio"/> Current Life Plus Member	<b>FREE Clinic Registration</b>	

**Additional Educational Opportunities Pre- & Post World Clinic**

School - Speaker	Date	Cost
<input type="radio"/> Level 2 Stroke School - John Leonard	Tues. 9/4 & Wed. 9/5	\$75
<input type="radio"/> Level 3 Physiology School - David C. Salo	Wed. 9/5	\$75
<input type="radio"/> Level 4 Administration School - Peter Malone	Wed. 9/5	\$75
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<input type="radio"/> Working Successfully with Swimming Parents - Guy Edson	Tues. 9/4	\$65
<input type="radio"/> How to Write Workouts - Matt Hooper	Tues. 9/4	\$65
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**Hotel Info:** The 2007 ASCA World Clinic will be held at the Town & Country Resort and Convention Center located at 500 Hotel Circle North - San Diego, Ca 92108. Room Rates: Single, Double, Triple, Quad - \$121.00 plus Tax. Cut off date to be guaranteed of securing these rates is August 12, 2007. Hotel Phone: 619-291-7131 Reservations: 800-772 8527 you MUST state the group as the AMERICAN SWIMMING COACHES ASSOCIATION WORLD CLINIC in order to receive our preferential room rate.

To see the full content of the Clinic program, go to <http://www.swimmingcoach.org/worldclinic/asca2007>

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# Everyone's A Winner; Baby, That's The Lie

*By Thornton McCamish, THE AGE OCTOBER 2, 2005*

*IN A WORLD WITHOUT LOSERS, WHERE EVEN PARTY GAMES ARE RIGGED WITH REWARDS FOR ALL, ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING CHEATED OF THE RIGHT TO FAIL?*

They don't play pass the parcel like they used to. Go to a kid's party these days and you'll see that the host parent has rigged the parcel so that each time the music stops and a layer of wrapping comes off, a chocolate frog pops out. It's a fiddle. Every child wins. By the time the real prize is revealed, the orderly circle has disintegrated into a chaos of smeared chocolate and the screaming of sugarised toddlers.

As I recall it from 25 years ago, pass the parcel used to be a strictly one-winner affair. And it's not just pass the parcel that's gone soft. There are blatant rorts of the pinata, too. I've seen toddlers held up and given a free hit at the donkey. And aren't you supposed to wear a blindfold? It dawned on me recently, as I watched a roomful of fathers sweatily whaling away at a pinata, that childhood has changed.

It's the grown-ups who've done it. We seem to have cancelled competition. It's not just parents either. "Improvement in performance," say guidelines on coaching juniors published by the Federal Government's Australian Sports Commission, "should be measured against individual past performance rather than against other children." Prize nights drag on into the early hours now that everyone gets one. It's the rule of modern childhood: you only have to be in it to win it.

When I was a child in the '70s, our district was so short on kids old enough to hold a bat, the only way we could make up a cricket team was to enter us all in the under-14s competition. Our opponents were often twice our size. We waddled out to the pitch in leg pads that came up to our ribs and batting gloves that swallowed the entire forearm. We lost all the time. I remember year after year fielding on the boundary, while St Colemans' opening batsmen filled their boots with runs.

There's no surprise ending to this tale: we just kept on losing. And I'm not sure that I learned much from this over-generous lesson in defeat except that while it might be nice to win some time, it wasn't going to happen until we were good enough. Perhaps we developed a sort of precocious stoicism to cope with each Saturday's thrashing. We certainly learned that none of us was going to play for Australia. Not until we grew, anyway.

Somewhere along the line we've become squeamish about exposing kids to competition that might include failure. In Kanga cricket, losing doesn't come into it. One school's coaching policy for Kanga cricket spells this out: "Because all children are not identical in size, strength, ability and

personality, game co-ordinators should adopt a flexible attitude to enable every player to have success."

When did we decide that competition was too tough for kids?

I remember my father telling my brother and me when we were eight or nine that he didn't care what we did in life. We could be garbos, nurses, explorers or rocket scientists, whatever. What mattered to him was that we were the best at whatever we did. As a way of encouraging kids to aim high, that was probably a bit heavy-handed, even by the standards of the late '70s. But an equally devoted parent probably wouldn't say that sort of thing now. We've become afraid of exposing our children to the possibility of not measuring up.

Now we pretend that comparisons are irrelevant; that every kid is the best at everything. Now that I'm a dad, I find myself doing it too. Last week was my first experience of a school concert-type event, at my kids' day-care centre. Our children performed a song with their classmates. We took pictures, cheered; when it was over we raved about how great they were.

I guess nothing fudges the facts like love. In truth, they had both flubbed it big-time. One fled the stage in panic before his song had even begun. The other hid behind a classmate with fingers in mouth and eyes shut, as if she could thus make herself disappear. But still we raved about how brilliantly they'd performed. All the parents did.

In fairness, these are very young children. At this age, the kid-glove approach seems to come from deep in the DNA. God knows, you don't want your child to form a haunting early memory of being useless at thrashing a papier-mache donkey.

But how far should the "everyone's-a-winner" ethos go? Is sheltering children from the reality-check of competition - particularly in schooling - the best way to prepare them for life?

Brendan Nelson doesn't seem to think so. One of the conditions the federal Education Minister attached to the latest Commonwealth education funding package was that states put in place a "quartile" ranking system in which students are graded from the bottom to top 25 per cent of their class. That was the sort of plain-speaking information, he told Jon Faine on 774 ABC Melbourne, "which most parents consistently have told me they would also like to know". His critics called the idea "educationally

unacceptable", "back to the '50s" and even nonsensical, given that the bottom quartile of a class at, say, MacRobertson Girls' High School, which has selective entry, might well be the top quartile of a class at a school that takes all comers.

Nelson backed down from his threat to cut funding to states that wouldn't submit to his diktat. But not before, in the view of The Age's Education section, "derid[ing] the education community as ideologues who have hijacked the education bus".

Of course, assessing educational performance is all about ideology. Why go out of your way to rank students against their classmates - as distinct from statewide benchmarks - unless you believe that a competitive atmosphere in the classroom is a good unto itself? "The nature of life itself," Nelson told Faine, "is that all of us are being compared to one another."

The way we think about competition in schooling reflects deeper views about the individual in society. To the Tory mind, firewalling kids from the rigour of competition and comparison is just slack liberalism, the sacrifice of excellence for participation. What disturbs lefties, on the other hand, is the prospect of publicly consigning some kids to a dummies' gulag at the bottom of the class.

To me, an educational approach that broadens the categories in which students can achieve, and is supple enough to recognise a range of qualities, sounds like a great leap forward over the dux-to-dunce approach that pertained when Nelson was at school.

But the flare-up over the "quartile" ranking idea reveals a genuine unease about the messages we're giving children.

We're not being entirely candid with our children when we shelter them from the reality of competition. Because the world they're growing up in is competitive, and becoming more so. In governance and economics, the word "competition" is itself a synonym for vigour and health. To describe something as "competitive" - a game, an environment, a race, a jobs market - is to praise it as honest and lean. Heck, humans love competition. It's in the gut of the species. Magazines and newspapers print lists of the week's winners and losers, as if there's nothing in between. Comparisons may be invidious, but they're a lot of fun. If Gore Vidal was wrong when he said "whenever a friend succeeds, a little something in me dies", it's only because there's a fragile splinter in all of us that quails at anyone's success.

Pretending the world is otherwise is a beautiful lie. Or a snow job, depending on your point of view.

What's strange is that it's a fib we adults seem to be telling for our own benefit. Kids seldom need to be told how they're doing: they know already. Another kid is always going to be better at catching; someone will have a cooler backpack. Even in an egg-and-spoon race, several people are going to come - how shall we put it? - non-first. Besides, for many of us, the first and most lasting experience of competition is with our brothers and sisters. "The hideous complexity of sibling rivalry," as the writer Paul Theroux describes it; "struggling like crabs in a basket."

So why are we so chary of letting kids risk winning or losing in structured competition? Perhaps because losing, and even winning, seem properly to belong to the register of adult experiences, like sexual relationships, drinking or managing a credit card.

But children have to try it sometime. The ones who've never struggled to achieve something difficult are easily spotted on, say, the audition rounds of Australian Idol. They're the ones who come in, sing in voices that could crack glass, and then sob indignantly when they don't make the cut. You can see the violated sense of entitlement on their disbelieving faces.

Perhaps failure wouldn't hurt so much if they'd had a chance to experience it a bit sooner. Since they're going to be doing so much of it as adults, why not let children practise winning and losing? The Australian Sports Commission guidelines on junior sport might seem a little over-protective, but they still acknowledge that "competition can be extremely motivating and help children feel good about themselves". In his book *Secret Men's Business*, children's author John Marsden argues that it's important that a boy eventually beats his father at something that matters to them both. "By defeating him you free yourself to go on and achieve the great things that life holds in store for you," he writes. Sure you might lose. But it's a risk worth taking for the exhilarating experience of finding out what you're capable of.

What impact will shielding kids from losing have on them? It's probably too early to say. What's certain is that if we take real competition out of schools, children will learn about winning and losing from the culture. And Australian culture has a monomaniacal focus on winning.

This wasn't always true. I grew up in the 70s thinking of the country's sporting status as pretty much in parallel with the fortunes of my under-14s cricket team: we usually lost. When an Australian won an Olympic gold, when Australia II pinched the America's Cup in 1983, it was like a happy miracle.

After the Montreal Olympics of 1976 - Australia's sporting nadir - the government decided it had had enough of losing. We got the Institute of Sport in 1981, and the cricket academy in 1987. The government paid for sporting excellence, and got it. Soon we were winning all sorts of stuff.

But did we lose something? Now the back pages are so thick with the latest gold-medal victory that there's hardly room for the more subtle, complicated story of the runners-up, the team or athlete who trained their guts out and still didn't win.

Winning's great. And Australia is rich in gracious, inspiring winners - Pat Rafter, the women's swimming team, for example. But if winning's all there is, it's no wonder that losing feels so damning and bitterly personal, as it obviously does for those Australian Idol wannabes.

Our narrow focus on winning misses a richer sense of the full story of competition itself. For a society powered by unsentimental competition, we don't like to dwell much on failure. When it happens, it usually gets spun into

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something else. Take the spectacular self-immolations of John Brogden and Mark Latham: Brogden's demise was smoothly pathologised as depression - inscrutable and too private to contemplate; Latham's was put down to a meltdown in dignity.

Why can't we get our minds around failure? In the quote beloved of modern self-help gurus and manuals, inventor Thomas Edison once remarked: "I have not failed 10,000 times. I have successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work." That might be useful if you live in a laboratory. But using this kind of thing to cheer up flunked adults is just sophistry.

I've lost count of the number of times I've heard AFL coaches say something like: finals is the reason we play the game. It may feel true to the coaches when they say it - they're talking a good game for sponsors and supporters - but it's not. To say that football is only about winning is to ignore the guts of the contest. Every game is a rich

experience: the crunch of bodies, the pies in the grandstand, the struggle, the glory, the boredom. It's what sport, and competition, is.

Recently I was at the football with my father. In the Auskick match, the mum who was umpiring took the ball off a big kid who had taken a clear mark and handed it to a little girl who was nowhere near the contest. "What was that for?" I muttered into my pie.

"Maybe," Dad observed, "she's thinking everyone should get a kick before they go off."

Well, quite. We want our young people to grab the excitement of competition with both hands; we want kids to taste success, and to learn that failure isn't the end of everything. But first we've got to teach them that it's fun just to be out on the ground, or in the circle, passing the parcel. They may not win the prize, but with any luck, there'll be a chocolate frog in it. ●

## Why is there no blood-testing for drugs at the World Swimming Championships?

*By Robin Parisotto, March 30th 2007 Sportingo ([www.sportingo.com](http://www.sportingo.com))*

Blood testing is the only real means of exposing drug-taking in sport. It seems organisers FINA are happy to ignore it at the World Swimming Championships in Melbourne.

There is no problem if you don't go looking for it! This could be FINA's latest catch-phrase.

At the current FINA (Fédération Internationale de Natation) World Swimming Championships in Melbourne there is no blood testing for drugs. Why not? They have had seven years to include them in their repertoire since they were first carried out at the Sydney 2000 Games. Melbourne's Sunday Herald Sun newspaper reported that blood tests, which detect human growth hormone, would not be conducted in Melbourne because they were apparently too expensive. Instead, only urine tests would be carried out.

"We never test for blood during competition and that's standard across a range of sports," FINA executive director Cornel Marculescu was quoted as saying. "We are extremely happy with our testing programme and we've been extremely pro-active in increasing testing procedures. It's very rare we have a problem." Only 300 drug tests (urine) are being carried out at the championships.

But to think that growth hormone is the only drug that blood testing could pick up is naive in the extreme. Apart from synthetic EPO and its companion Darbopoietin (blood boosters), there are many others which can only be detected by blood testing. The cheats have a free ride through these championships. They are not likely to persist using detectable blood doping drugs and it is even more naive to think that if there is an opening, some swimmers won't be tempted to use other blood boosters.

A new version of EPO called Dynepo, Synthetic Haemoglobins like Hemopure, RSR 13, Actovegin, PFC's and blood transfusions, to list but a few, are all known oxygen enhancers and are not detectable in urine, only blood. And it can't be that expensive when you consider that with the synthetic haemoglobins, one tube of blood (about 4 mls) centrifuged at high speed which separates the cells and fluid (plasma) portions of the blood is all that is needed to see if someone has used them.

Synthetic haemoglobins appear as a red fluid in comparison to the normal clear yellow. Can't take more than five minutes and can be confirmed with more detailed tests using established equipment. This is the same procedure as would be done with the urine screening tests.

Isn't it time that some of the world leaders in sport showed some leadership and get serious about the problem. The Olympics, cycling, many of the winter sports have used blood testing for years. If it's good enough for them then why not FINA? Do they really believe their sport is cleaner than everyone else's?

Do they believe that if they don't go looking for it then there is no problem? The "too expensive" excuse is laughable when you consider the millions FINA will be earning in TV rights for the broadcast of the Championships. It would be funny if it wasn't so serious. Another sport, another cop-out.

*Robin Parisotto is author of BLOOD SPORTS – the inside dope on drugs in sport. Shouldn't FINA be taking a hard line at the World Swimming Championships? Send your views to Sportingo at [www.sportingo.com](http://www.sportingo.com).*

# Goals... Goals... and More Goals...

By John Leonard

Recently an old coaching colleague told me of speaking with a young coach on the west coast of the USA who had asked my friend for some advice on getting more work, more effort, more....everything....out of his parent group.

One thing led to another, and my friend finally asked "Well, what do you want to accomplish with this club? What are your goals? What do you want to achieve?" My friend, of course, recognizes that parents and swimmers only commit when there is something of substance to "commit to."

My buddy was shocked to hear the coach say "I don't really like goals. They put too much pressure on the kids. When you set goals, you can fail and that makes people feel bad."

In the shocked silence while my friend tried to absorb that, the young coach followed with...."I don't set goals for the club either...I don't think these people should be able to measure me based on goals I set and whether or not I reach them....all the good stuff about coaching is the intangibles you can give to kids....parents can't measure that. I just need them to support me, support the program and let us do our thing."

My friend left, sputtering. "Hey man, where ya' goin? What can you do to help me here?"

My friend says he was thinking...."No one can help you, young man, and no one will want to.....until you commit something to your own employment situation."

So I ran around for a couple of months and asked every coach I spoke to, (and I speak to A LOT of coaches!) "Do you set goals with your athletes?"

"Do you set goals for your organization?"

Stop now, for just a minute, and without looking at the next paragraph, predict what you think the answers were!

Luckily, not as bad as I had worried about. In speaking with 386 coaches of all ages, shapes, sizes, genders and religious preferences and non-preferences (I am a politically correct sorta guy....NOT.), over 75% of them did some form of goal setting with their athletes. About 60% said they did goal setting with their organization. And about 50% of the 40% who did NOT do organizational goal setting said some sort of "Gee, never thought of that. I like it. How would you do it?"

Disturbing trends were that fully 50% of "young coaches" (which to me means anyone under 30) did not do goal setting with their athletes. And their responses to inquiries as to WHY NOT, closely resembled that of the coach above who started all this.

80% of the young coaches who did not do goal setting with their athletes also did not do organizational goal setting. Which means that 20% of the 50% who did not do goal setting with athletes, DID do organizational goal setting.....they just didn't like the idea with their athletes.

Close to 100% of coaches over 40 years of age, did goal setting with their athletes. Even the few exceptions said "I SHOULD BE, I am just too busy."

What does this tell us? If we see the glass half empty, we'd say that the younger generation of coaches who perhaps grew up in an environment where measurement of oneself was not as accepted or positively viewed, have a hard time being evaluated or evaluating others, comfortably.

If we see it half full, we might say that as we get older as coaches, we recognize the critical role that goal setting plays in the success of the young person we are coaching.

Here's some things I have learned about goals from my coaches and from great coaches I have known. Feel free to add to the list.

1. Goals motivate. Most of us need motivation from time to time.
2. Goals educate. We learn what happens when we aim too high and too low. We learn about our own predelections.
3. Goals should be set by the individual doing the work.. If they are too young or inexperienced to do a good job of it, its OK to do some guidance if you are the coach.
4. Don't underestimate people. Some set impossibly high goals and then exceed them. No one was ever insulted by you demonstrating confidence in them by expressing your thoughts on them having high reaching goals.
5. Athlete goals need to be a delicate balance of challenging, engaging and exciting and NOT impossible, overpowering and self-defeating. The coach can help with the balance process.
6. Goals need resetting IMMEDIATELY after, or just prior to, achievement of the goal. Gotta go where you are heading NEXT.
7. Some people like to keep their goals Private. Some people want the responsibility and obligations involved in telling other people about your goals. Respect both approaches. People have a remarkably different set of psychological needs.
8. Written goals that you can see daily have huge power. Goals found only "in your head" get pretty plastic in there. Commitment means going on paper. Goals are ALL about commitment.
9. Goals set in motion the creative process. You stand in the shower and think about how and what you can do to reach that goal. Not having goals sets absolutely nothing in motion. And motion wins, in this world. Get in motion.
10. Goals make you mature, and tough. Its OK to fail sometimes. You learn a lot when you fail. More than when you succeed. The most important thing you learn when you fail, is that you can get up. And then succeed. Persistence is a wonderful trait of a young person. And before persistence, comes resilience.
11. Organizational goals, if they are big, hairy, audacious Goals, excite everyone in the organization, get THEM asking "what if?" and get your organization in motion. To our young friend on the west coast.....no motion, no action, no progress....without goals. As the coach, YOU COMMIT FIRST AND YOUR ORGANIZATION AND ATHLETES WILL FOLLOW. ●

# What is Wealth?

By Kamal Vinodrai Shah - Kenya

Over the last few months, I have had the privilege of meeting, discussing and training staff from various, different organizations, backgrounds, cultures and educational levels. From my observations, I have been part of many discussions focusing on what is the definition of wealth. During these discussions the majority talk about successful entrepreneurs as wealthy human beings, or CEOs who are leading global successful companies and earning millions of shillings every month. According to my understanding economic wealth can be considered one of the five determinants of one being wealthy. Money is important since each and everyone needs it to survive. It is a mechanism for buying goods and services but it is not the only thing. Your bank balance does not determine if you are successful; it is one of the determinants of wealth.

The second form of wealth is health. A friend of mine reminded me a few days ago that "health is wealth." Why? Very simple, without being in good health you will be unable to optimize your potential and utilize your skills. Most people do not take care of their health in their early years and when they get old they realize all the time they spent not exercising has led them to disease which has hampered their productivity. As a human being, it is important that you spend at least 30 minutes a day exercising your heart. This will reduce the stress levels as well as get rid of the toxins from your body. Exercising will also revive your energy levels and you will experience an increase in your productivity as well as clarity in your thought process. Many of my friends and associates who regularly exercise have told me that some of their best ideas are born when they are on the treadmill or while going for their daily run.

The third form of wealth is relationships wealth. Each and every one of us has relationships with spouses, children, associates, friends, etc. Nurturing healthy relationships is the key to success in life. Most people are craving for recognition in life and a sense of belonging. As a leader in your own life, if you want to improve your relationships with your loved ones, spend quality time with them and allocate time. Last week, a very close relative of mine came to visit me at home and spending time with her was so valuable as I learnt something new about what was happening in the west, and it was good to reminisce on the old times. Although I had some work to complete I made a choice. When I went back to my office I was more fulfilled.

The fourth form of wealth is adventure wealth. It is important that you have a sense of adventure in life. Adventure can be termed as being open to try different things. If you want to travel, do that since it opens your mind. When you are in a restaurant try different dishes and experience the tantalizing tastes. A close business associate always tries something different when we travel and go to different restaurants. His philosophy is very simple; if you don't try you will never know what you are missing. Most successful people can relate to so many different experiences and are able to converse on so many different topics in life. Remember, if you want to improve your quality of life, have a thirst for adventure and keep learning. Be open to new ideas and the more you are open to knowledge you will realize how little you know and it will make life more exciting.

The final form of wealth is spiritual wealth. We are born on earth to fulfill a certain purpose in life. Each and every one of us has a task to fulfill on planet earth. We need to ensure that we are in tune with nature as well as believe in something bigger than ourselves. You know better that if your faith in whomever that you believe in he/she will provide for you. The almighty does not want you to suffer but be successful in life. If you believe in him/her he will provide and guide you and if he challenges your life he/she wants you to grow and become a better human being.

As you start to develop to become a wealthy human being remember that the major value in life is not what you get but what you become. Become a wealthy human being and ensure the people around you are also wealthy.

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