



Mental Toughness: Myths, Misunderstanding and More

Mental toughness is the 'buzz' term in sport at the moment; everyone searches for it or wants it in their child and athlete. But what is Mental Toughness? And how do you know if you are Mentally Tough or not?

What is Mental Toughness?

In answering this, it is best to start with what Mental Toughness is not. The myths about mental toughness are many:

Myth1: The mentally tough athlete doesn't think negatively

Myth2: The mentally tough athlete doesn't experience anxiety or nerves

Myth3: The mentally tough athlete is able to control his/her emotions

Myth4: The mentally tough athlete doesn't worry about their opponents

Myth5: The mentally tough athlete thinks positively about everything

Myth6: The mentally tough athlete wants to win more than the less mentally tough athletes

I could go on but I hope you get the picture by now. The above myths tend to be how we see the champions of sport, but don't get caught out by what your eyes see or what the media tells you. Imagine a person who did experience all of the above myths... you would not see a mentally tough athlete, you would see a robot or a psychopath.

Mental Toughness *is not* absence of negative thoughts, *but* the understanding that negative thoughts will occur in the sporting arena and that you can still commit to the game plan, tactics, and behaviours as usual.

Mental Toughness *is not* the absence of anxiety or nerves, *but* the understanding that the competitive sporting arena is a place to experience these and still commit to your game plan, tactics, and behaviours as usual.

Mental Toughness *is not* the ability to control emotions of sadness, anger, anxiety, or fear, *but* the ability to make room for them and still commit to the game plan, tactics, and behaviours as usual.

Mental Toughness *is not* the absence of worries or doubts, *but* the capacity to allow for worrying and still commit to the game plan, tactics, and behaviours as usual.

Contact us: info@pspc.com.au

Tel: +61 406 016 552

Mental Toughness *is not* the ability to think positively about situations, *but* the ability to focus under pressure regardless of the type of thoughts that occur and still commit to the game plan, tactics, and behaviours as usual.

Mental Toughness *is not* wanting to win more than your opponent *but* consistently committing to your shots and tactics, time and time again.

Mental Toughness *is* performing consistently **with** positive and negative internal experiences (thoughts and emotions) **and** staying committed to tactics, shots, and behaviours *regardless* of positive or negative triggers or potential outcomes.

How do you Know if you are Mentally Tough or not?

In short, you cannot know. Mental toughness is not a goal that you know you have achieved or not (like winning Wimbledon), but it can be pursued. It's more like a journey than a destination. Having the mental flexibility to perform consistently regardless of what your thoughts and emotions are, makes it easier to display the behavioural characteristics of Mental Toughness, but that doesn't ever mean that you have it.

Please feel free to contact us for more information on how to promote mentally tough behaviours

Regards,
Daniel Dymond



Dane Barclay



Contact us: info@pspc.com.au
Tel: +61 406 016 552