

Coaching for Mental Toughness

- Define success as:
 - 1) giving full effort
 - 2) personal improvement of skills
 - 3) execution of strategies
- Keep winning in perspective:
 - You can't control the outcome so focus on the process.
- Identify your athlete's motivations for playing and structure practice to fulfill those reasons:
 - Fun was ranked as the #1 reason, followed by improving skills
- Set SMART goals to motivate athletes:
 - Specific (avoid "do your best" goals)
 - Measurable (able to track behavioral progress)
 - Achievable (challenging but realistic)
 - Relevant (important to the athlete or team)
 - Time-limited (set deadlines for achievement)
- Emphasize internal rewards (fun, love of the game, personal improvement) over external rewards (fame, scholarships).
- Create a practice environment where each athlete becomes more motivated and confident.
 - Catch athletes doing things right and praise them for it frequently
 - Reward effort as much as outcome
- Create a task-focused team climate where athletes practice to get better (vs. defeat others), compete against themselves (vs. each other,) and help others to reach their potential
- Respond to mistakes by:
 - Complimenting the athlete on something well done (effort, etc.)
 - Give future-oriented instruction (technical skill)
 - End with encouragement

