

Developing a Winning Mindset Overview **Paul Dennis, PhD**

Although there are many qualities that distinguish great athletes from others, (e.g., talent), perhaps the most important quality is their mindset.

Mindsets include psychological resources, such as, confidence, motivation, mental toughness, and the management of thoughts and emotions.

It has been suggested that today's youth have difficulty in acquiring psychological resources. Some of the reasons for this are:

- They have a strong sense of entitlement.
- They have been protected and sheltered from disappointment (e.g., helicopter parents).
- They are the most self-conscious generation whose self-image is crucial for success.
- There is too much emphasis on outcomes rather than the process.
- The negative impact of engaging in social media.
- Bullying by some coaches, teammates and opponents.

In order to have a winning mindset, it is imperative to develop a resilient or mentally tough disposition, i.e., an ability and willingness to persist in the face of adversity.

This can be accomplished in several ways:

- Strong social support groups who offer warranted praise and encouragement.
- Learn to be a hard worker who is not discouraged by setbacks.
- Positive experiences with coaches.
- Imagery
- Positive self-talk
- Goal-setting
- Team resilience

Further insight:

Dennis, P., (2018) free in iBooks. *Sport Psychology Tips for Hockey Players and Coaches*.

Duckworth, A., (2016). *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*.

Dweck, C., (2007). *Mindset, the New Psychology of Success*.

Epstein, D., (2019). *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*.

Tversky, B., (2019). *Mind in Motion: How Action Shapes Thought*.