Sport Psychology: Mental skills and beyond...
Objectives of today’s talk:

- Sport Psychology:
  - What?
  - Why?
  - Where?
  - How?
  - When?
Sport Psychology: facts and myths

• A Sport Psychologist **only** assists with mental skills development.
• Athletes seek help because they have psychological **problems**.
• Sports Psychology can help **beginner** athletes.
• The best time to begin to seek help from a Sport Psychologist is when an athlete is in a **slump**.
• Most athletes in psychological skills training programmes will show **immediate** improvements.
Main objectives of Sport Psychology

- How psychological factors affect an individual’s performance.
- How sport and exercise participation affects one’s psychological development, health, and well-being.
What Sport Psychologists do?:

- Research
- Teaching
- Consulting / counseling role
- Policy making / advocating role
Who?...

- Categorization varies according to context.
- Not a registration category with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).
- Presenter - HPCSA registered Educational Psychologist & Sport Psychology qualification (Unisa).
- HPCSA scope of practice and ethical principles.
- Research and practice both within the fields Educational Psychology and Sport Psychology.
Some aspects addressed in Sport Psychology

- Intra-personal and inter-personal relationships & skills
- Motivation
- Stress management and burnout
- Mental skills
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Problem-solving, decision making and conflict management
- Living a healthy sport life
- Sport as a career
- Professional behaviour on the sport field
I WANT YOU TO TALK ABOUT...

OH, TALK, TALK, TALK! PSYCHIATRISTS ARE OBSESSED WITH TALK. WHAT GOOD HAS TALKING EVER DONE ANYONE, DOCTOR PEEL?

I'M SORRY, BUT IT HAD TO BE SAID.

FEEL BETTER?

YES, I DO, ACTUALLY.
How?

• Individual consultations (solution-focused vs protracted)
• Psychological assessments (personality and mood states)
• Group sessions with athletes and coaches
• Observing practice sessions / matches / tournaments / races
• Workshop presentations to athletes / coaches / parents
Framework Orientation

- Ericsonian (hypnosis)
- Relations Theory
- Social Psychological
- Psycho-physiological
- Cognitive-Behavioral
Importance of mental skills

- **Ty Cobb** - The most important part of the player’s body is above his shoulder.
- **Ryan Sandes** – What I do is 40% mental – there are times when I don’t think I can run another 100m, but my mind overrides my legs and I get through the race. *(Sunday Times Money & Careers, 26/08/2012:6).*
- **Bobby Jones** - The most important distance in golf is the 5” between your ears.
- **Levi Leipheimer**- The body follows the mind.
Guidelines for focus and concentration

• Believe in the process
• Practise regularly
Sport Psychology: facts and myths revisited

- A Sport Psychologist only assists with mental skills development **MYTH**
- Athletes seek help because they have psychological problems **MYTH**
- Sports Psychology can help beginner athletes **FACT**
- The best time to begin to seek help from a Sport Psychologist is when an athlete is in a slump **MYTH**
- Most athletes in psychological skills training programmes will show immediate improvements **MYTH**
DANKIE
THANK YOU
ENKOSI KAHKULU