

## ***The Mindset for Optimal Performance***

We often hear athletes say when asked how they did something “It’s a mindset.” It seems like that may be a cliché, but your mindset builds the foundation for your mental toughness and your ability to deal with adversity.

Over our years of experience we have found that the most effective mindset for optimal performance is one that we have adapted from the groundbreaking work of Carol Dweck and her book “Mindset.” We have adapted the concepts to be sports specific and labeled the developmentally competitive mindset.

Its focus and its characteristics lead an athlete to learn how to perform in their Optimal Performance Zone (OPZ) on a consistent basis. In developing the characteristics I am about to describe, certain skills need to be developed in order to find and master the OPZ.

When engaged in any skill or activity, our best performances come when we are in our OPZ. Your OPZ consists of the following;

- 1) ***Confidence*** – You believe you have the ability to influence the competition in a positive way.
- 2) ***Immediate Moment*** – You can focus on the most important task for you in that moment.
- 3) ***Time Flies*** – Time stands still and you lose your awareness of time.
- 4) ***Loss of Self Consciousness*** – You are focused on what you need to do not what others think.
- 5) ***Balanced Energy*** – You are poised yet intense.
- 6) ***Fun*** – You love what you are doing.

Learning how to effortlessly stay in or transition back to your OPZ comes with practice. Practicing starts with your attitude toward skill development. The Developmentally Competitive Mindset is the basis for your start. I have listed the characteristics below.

- 1) Challenge yourself every day and compete with your last performance.
- 2) Be Self -Forgiving- Don’t mistake forgiveness for lacking accountability.
- 3) Failure = Learning - Use failure as an opportunity to learn.
- 4) Effort equals excellence – You see extra effort as path to the development of excellence.
- 5) Be comfortable with uncertainty. – Accept the fact that when the competition starts you can only control yourself and your play.
- 6) Enjoy learning and developing.



You may have already been able to see the parallels between the two. Adapting the mindset leads to the conditions needed to be in your OPZ.

- 1) CHALLENGE = CONFIDENCE Being able to challenge yourself builds confidence and confidence allows you to challenge yourself.
- 2) SELF FORGIVING = IMMEDIATE MOMENT If you are focused on the mistake you made, you cannot be focused on the immediate moment.
- 3) IMMEDIATE MOMENT = TIME FLIES – When we are focused on the NOW – time stands still and it flies by.
- 4) LOVE LEARNING = FAILURE MEANS YOU LEARN – If you love learning, you can handle failure and see it a path to future success.
- 5) EFFORT = EXCELLENCE – Preparation, and poised and intense effort leads to excellence and balanced energy in performance.
- 6) COMFORTABLE WITH UNCERTAINTY = LOSS OF SELF CONSCIOUSNESS – If you can tolerate the uncertainty then you are only concerned about what your own thoughts and not worried about what others think.