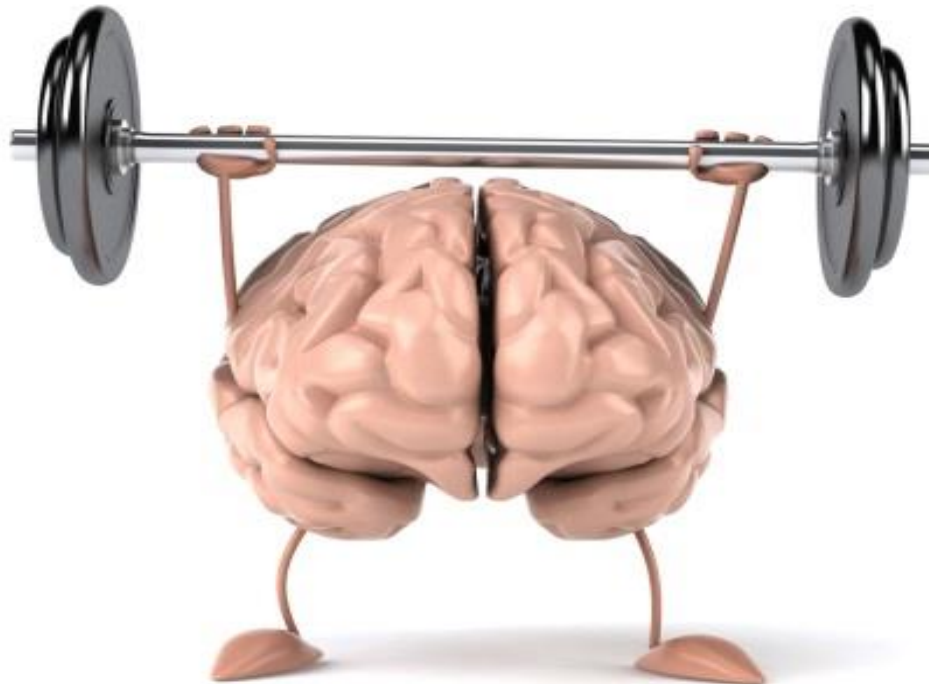


Helping Young Athletes through the use of mental skills



Dr Adele Muscat

Mental Skills

- Instructional Self-Talk
- Cognitive Restructuring
- Goal Setting
- Pre-performance Routines
- Visualisation
- Relaxation Strategies



Positive Self-Talk

- We all talk to ourselves!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD1wEMcjOlw>
- The important thing is to notice our negative/debilitating self-talk and try to change it into positive self-talk
- It is also important to talk positively to ourselves
'Ejja, I can do it'
- Use reminders such as write something on your hand or wear a bracelet!



Cognitive Restructuring

- Change negative thoughts into positive talk- this redirects attentional focus to provide encouragement and motivation
- List types of self-talk that influence your performance negatively
- Use thought stoppage
- Proceed with a positive and task relevant statement



Goal-Setting

- **Goals should be:**
- Specific
- Long and Short Term
- Measurable
- Realistic
- Challenging
- Adjustable
- In diverse areas



Pre-Performance Routines

- A systematic sequence of task-relevant thoughts and actions which an athlete engages in prior to performance
- Increases resistance to distractors
- <https://olympics.com/en/video/nadal-s-pre-serve-ritual>



Visualisation

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB59Z3NFTrw>
- Primes the movement pattern prior to performance
- Reduces the possibility of task-irrelevant thoughts and images
- Include all senses
- Replicate as closely as possible the competition environment



Relaxation Strategies

- Deep Breathing
- Mindfulness Practice
- Listening to calm music ex. Weightless
- Digipill App
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation

