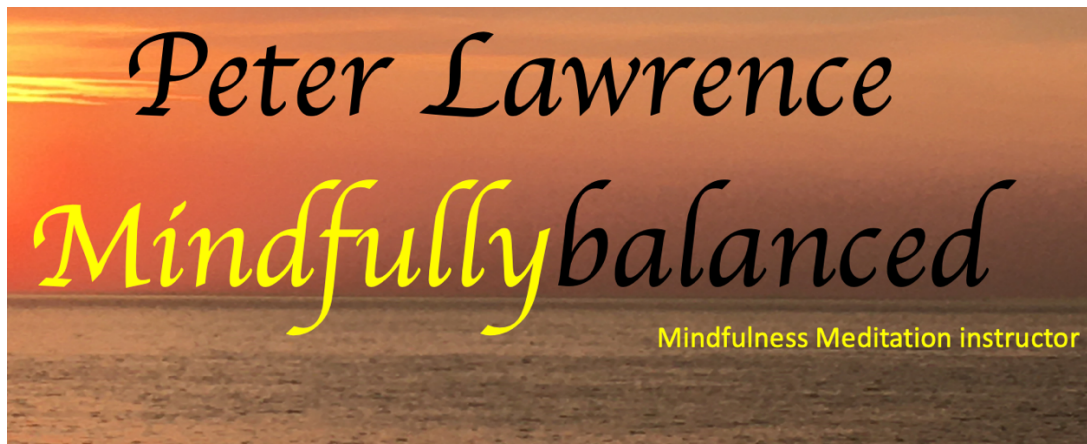


Newsletter 25/2021



Mindfullybalanced.co.uk

Date: 22nd August 2021

Contents of this newsletter:

Section 1: **Update weekly sessions:**

Monday 23rd – Sunday 29th August

Section 2: **How mindfulness can help sporting achievement pt 1.**

As we have just finished the Olympics and with the Para-Olympics starting this week, I thought this article taken from University research on sport performance on how mindfulness can improve sporting achievement no matter your level. And if you know of friends and family who may be interested, please pass this on.



I will be starting a sport based Mindfulness programme in October, which will involve a cost. If you would like more information about this please let me know through the contact form on my website: mindfullybalanced.co.uk

Section 3: **Change of session times from September.
Funding changes.**

Newsletter 25/2021

Section 1:

Update weekly community sessions from Monday 23rd to Sunday 29th August

Monday 23rd August – 9am and 8.30pm
Wednesday 25th August - 9am
Thursday 26th August – 6.30pm
Friday 27th August – 9am and 11.30am

Weekend times:

Saturday 28th August 11am

Sunday 29th August – no session.

Advance notice:

There will not be a 8.30pm session on Bank Holiday Monday 30th August.

If you want the Zoom code for any of the session(s) you would like to attend, please contact me through my website's 'contact page'.



Thanks for all you do for those like my mum; the change you make to their lives will forever be appreciated, and your passion is really contagious. Mum's having a great time and reported back on how beneficial (***your sessions***) have been.

AZ July 2021

Section 2:

Mind over movement: using meditation for performance

by Alicia Filley in **Endurance psychology**, **Psychological aides**

Meditation is the new tool in the kitbag of sports psychology, but can a mantra really improve sports performance? Alicia Filley explores how inner bliss could help propel you across the finish line in record time!

The goal of every athlete is to perform at their best, at just the right moment in time. This optimal performance is called functional athletic behaviour (FAB) and requires not only physical skills, but acute mental focus

1. Negative thoughts, distraction, lethargy, along with physical ailments, can impact FAB. Therefore, sports psychologists have long recommended using mental strategies to gain an edge in competition. Historically, athletes used such skills as visualisation or imagery, self talk, goal setting, suppression, distraction and arousal regulation. These skills come from a school of thought known as 'psychological skills training' (PST). Psychological skills training promotes awareness of thoughts, feelings, and sensations, in order to gain control over them. Mindfulness

Newsletter 25/2021

(meditation) fosters a similar awareness – however, what happens next differs significantly.

What is mindfulness?

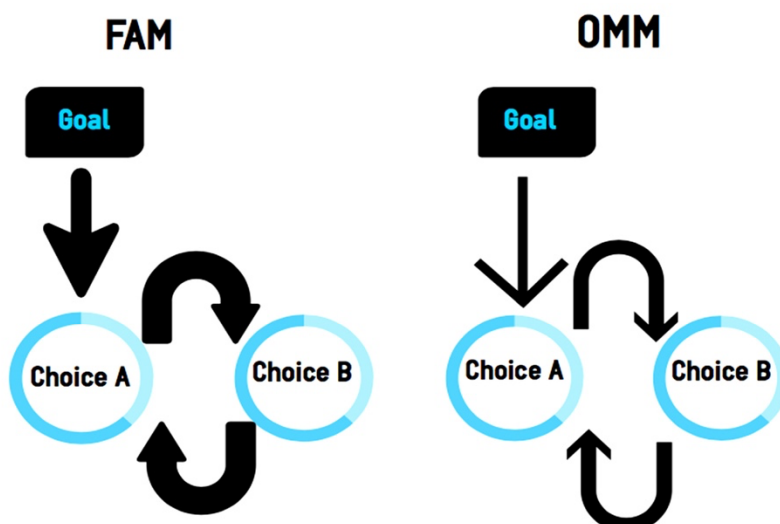
The use of mindfulness in sport began in 1985 with a trial of meditation by collegiate and Olympic rowers

2. Some of the rowers felt their competitive performance had improved during the trial, and attributed it to the meditation training. Research conducted since proves mindfulness lowers stress, decreases anxiety, and produces lasting physical changes in the brain

3. Mindfulness can be defined as a fully present attention to everything experienced in the moment (physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and perceptually); however, the focus is to accept each aspect of the experience with compassion. In a mindful state, the sensations, thoughts and emotions you experience simply exist, without any other judgement or action. This level of acceptance allows the athlete to focus on what is needed in that moment, rather than the circumstances of the task, which results in enhanced mental efficiency

4. Many approaches to mindfulness training exist but they are often divided into two schools of thought (see figure 1). The first is ‘focused attention meditation’ (FAM), in which the participant focuses on a specific object or action, like breathing. When a sport requires laser focus on a sequential and predictable task, such as hitting a golf ball, FAM may enhance that focus and enable the athlete to eliminate distractions.

The second type of meditation is open monitoring meditation (OMM) where the subject monitors all external and internal input but remains open and nonreactive. This type of meditation likely weakens task/goal focus. However, in sports such as football where the circumstances are constantly changing, OMM may help the athlete process multiple types of input and choose a correct response.



**FIGURE 1:
DIFFERENT TYPES
OF MEDITATION**

Different types of meditation strengthen focus on the goal (FAM) and improve the ability to eliminate distraction, or weaken this focus but improve cognitive flexibility (OMM).

Newsletter 25/2021

Enhancing performance

Inner peace is all well and good, but will it actually help you obtain a PR?

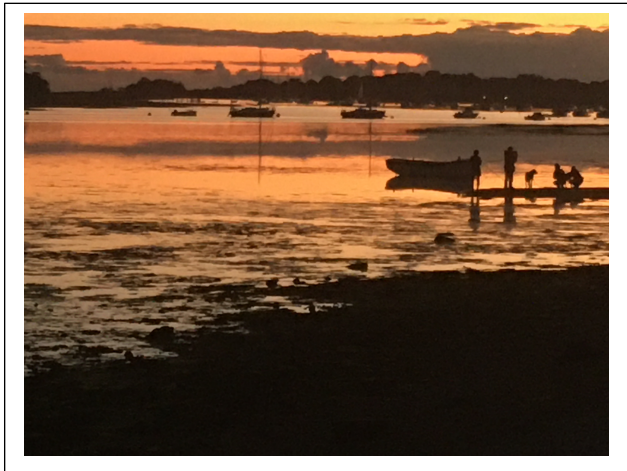
Researchers at the French Institute of Sport, Paris, looked to answer that question with a population of competitive golfers

5. Seven young, elite golfers, previously instructed in PST, participated in a 4-month course of mindfulness training. In between the structured sessions, the golfers were to practice pre-recorded guided meditation exercises independently, two times per week.

The researchers then trained the golfers in an applied exercise routine to encourage assimilation of the learned mindfulness skills with their performance routines. They instructed them to scan both body and environment and notice the circumstances they found themselves in, yet trained them to focus on the target, the trajectory, and choosing the required club. The last stage of the exercise encouraged the golfer to focus only on the target, not on the stroke, helping the stroke to become more automatic.

At the end of the season, the researchers compared the mindful golfers to a control group from another training centre who underwent the same initial PST

training. The golfers who received the mindfulness training all increased in national ranking, while only two of the six golfers in the control group did. All of the mindful golfers reported improvement in their performance since becoming more mindful. To determine if meditation improves performance in a sport that requires a broader awareness, a study at the University of Tehran examined how mindfulness training effected the performance and anxiety levels of young football players



6. Fifteen players received 30-minute guided meditation training twice a week for six weeks. The 15 players in the control group didn't receive any intervention. Sports Anxiety Scale Questionnaires and Shooting Performance Tests were administered to both groups before and after the mindfulness training. The anxiety scale scores decreased and the performance scores increased in the intervention group, significantly more than in the control group. The dosage of mindfulness training and protocols differed profoundly between the golfers and the football players. However, both showed improvements in performance. This led psychologists to question just how meditation works to improve performance.

Part 2 of this research will be in the next newsletter 26/2021.

Newsletter 25/2021

Section 3:

Change of session times from September:

From Monday 6th September, the Monday evening session will start at 7.30pm for an hour.

The Sunday sessions will continue from Sunday 12th September.

Funding changes.

Funding from the NHS through their Social Prescribing initiative has now come to an end. Funding from London Sports and Sports England for my work will finish this month, so I am looking to form a CiC, to be able to bid for funding myself. Croydon Social Prescribing who has supported me so brilliantly over the last 3 years will continue to look for funding as they know how valuable my work is. But don't worry, I will continue taking the free community sessions as I enjoy them so much, and realise what these sessions mean to you; plus I do a bit of private work, which I'm looking to develop more, but I'm hoping will not interfere with the community sessions. I am also developing a Mindful app! Yay! Which is all very exciting. Nothing stays the same and welcoming changes makes life challenging but also exciting.

Yay!!!

Take care everyone.

With kindness

Pete

