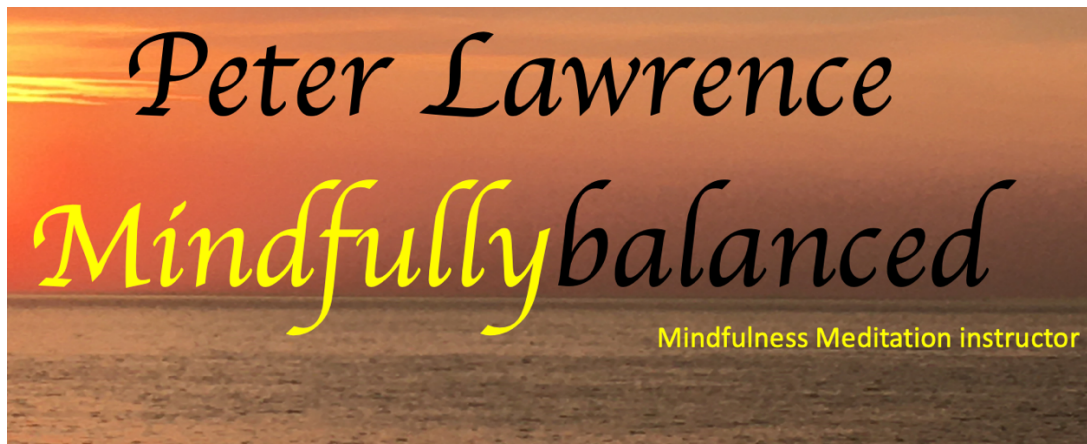


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Mindfullybalanced.co.uk

Date: 29th August 2021

Contents of this newsletter:

Section 1: **Update weekly sessions:**

Monday 30th August – Sunday 5th September

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

Pt 1 was in last weeks letter 25/2021, which can now be found on my website.:

Mindfullybalanced.co.uk/newsletters

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

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

Section 1:

Update weekly community sessions from Monday 30th August to Sunday 5th September

Monday 30th August – 9am **there will not be the 8.30pm session**

Wednesday 1st September - 9am

Thursday 2nd September – 6.30pm

Friday 3rd September – 9am and 11.30am

Weekend times:

Saturday 4th September 11am

Sunday 29th August – no session.

The Sunday sessions will continue from Sunday 12th September.

Advance notice:

From Monday 6th September, the evening session will start from 7.30pm – 8.30pm.

I will also start the 9 week Mindfulness Based stressed Reduction (MBSR) course on the Monday 7.30pm session, with the first session being an introduction. This course will follow the curriculum meditations of the course with added material being my own authenticity to mindfulness.

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'.



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\Section 2:

Mind over movement: using meditation for performance pt 2

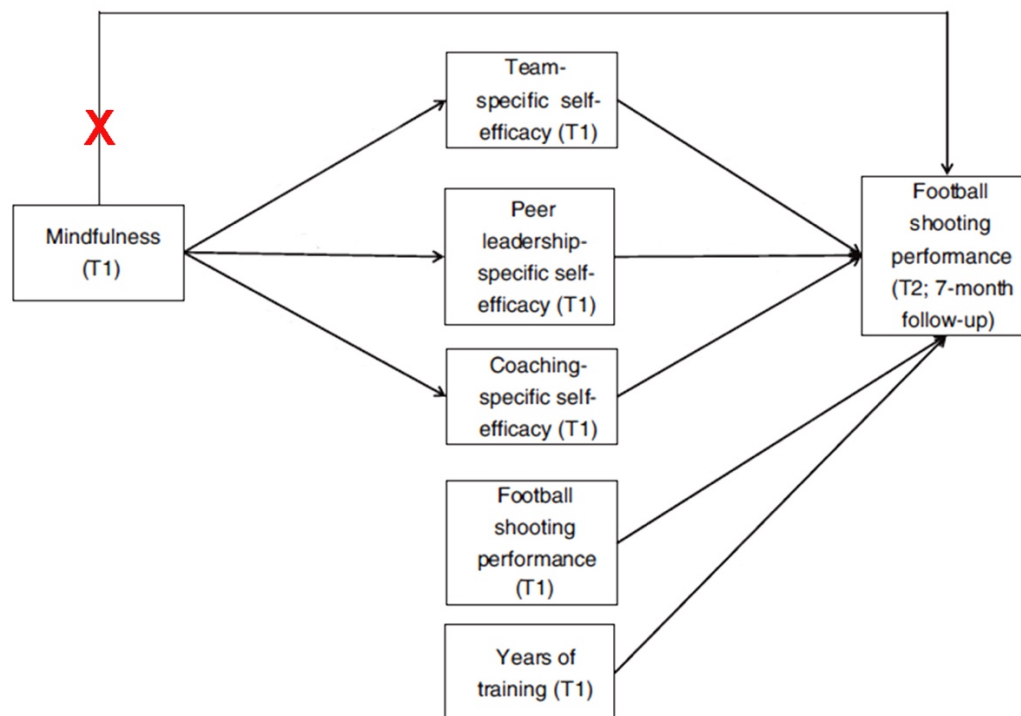
by Alicia Filley in **Endurance psychology**, **Psychological aides**

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!

Overcoming obstacles

Psychologists from Europe and the United States conducted a multicentre, multifaceted study to determine how mindfulness improves football performance⁷. This study evaluated the role mindfulness plays in self-efficacy, and sports performance. The researchers found that the direct correlation between mindfulness and goal-shooting performance was negligible. However, mindfulness training DID improve scores relating to the coach, peer leadership, and the team in general, which in turn predicted better shooting performance. In short, the more mindful players believed they had greater power over other perceived barriers, which then predicted better shooting performance further down the line (see figure 2).

FIGURE 2: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINDFULNESS, SELF-EFFICACY, AND SHOOTING SCORES



Although there was no direct effect of mindfulness training on shooting performance, it did improve the efficacy measures in three out of five relevant areas. These areas were independently shown to improve shooting performance (ie there was an indirect positive effect of mindfulness training).

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Let it flow

Other researchers think that mindfulness influences 'flow', which can enhance performance. Flow is that elusive feeling that everything is easy and you're performing at the top of your sport. When you experience flow, you become so occupied and fulfilled by what you are doing, you may forget to take care of necessities, like eating! A study at the University of New England measured whether an eight-week mindfulness training programme would indeed change levels of mindfulness and thus influence flow, sport anxiety, and sport-related pessimism in competitive cyclists⁸. Twenty-seven cyclists participated in the 8-week meditation training intervention, and 20 served as controls – ie no intervention.

The control group participants completed online pre and post intervention questionnaires. The intervention group participated in mindfulness workshops, individual home-based, audio guided meditation, and training sessions while cycling on a stationary bike. As expected, the mindfulness training group showed greater increases in mindfulness, frequency of the experience of flow, and decreases in pessimism, than the control cyclists. However, they were not significantly less anxious than the control group, despite the meditation programme.



Timescale

A quick note on timescales; the participants in most of the studies above committed to a long-term practice of mindfulness training, usually around 8-12 weeks. In a study on how athletes experienced a mindfulness training programme, psychologists at Boston University enrolled members of a Division I women's soccer team into a 6-week meditation training for sport programme⁹. Participants were interviewed about their experience in the programme and relayed that the mindfulness training didn't 'click' until halfway through the programme. Therefore, while a five-minute meditation might calm your nerves before an important race, global and lasting results from mindfulness training will almost certainly take time and commitment.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEGRATING MINDFULNESS PRACTICE INTO YOUR TRAINING

- Go local – Search your local area, including yoga studios and health clubs, for group meditation classes and gather a few teammates as accountability partners. Group interaction and support increases motivation to stick with the programme.
- In for the duration – Commit to an extended bout of time to fully integrate the practice – eight to twelve weeks is optimal. Keep in mind you may not see or feel any benefit for several weeks.
- Make a record – make notes about your experience to document changes and recognise benefits in areas such as anxiety, pessimism, self-efficacy, training

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and flow experiences. The athletes in Boston found that reflecting upon the experience helped them see the benefits, especially in performance.

- Daily practice – Protocols vary but most recommend meditating every day. If this seems overwhelming, start with three days per week. Pick a consistent time each day. This is where a group class and accountability partners help.
- Race day – Arrive to the training or race venue 15 minutes early and spend five to ten minutes meditating alone before a session so that you can immediately put your skills into practice.
- Online tools – Find online tools to support your individual progress. YouTube offers many guided meditations with visual input.
- Apps – Search your app store and download a meditation app – there are a few geared specifically toward athletes (see box 1).
- Meditation type – Select a meditation type that supports your sport – a focused FAM based meditation for predictable, sequential sports like running or golf, or a mindful OMM based method for sports that require flexibility and changing responses.

Section 3: Repeated from 25/2021.

Change of session times from September: Funding changes.

Funding from the NHS through their Social Prescribing initiative, London Sports and Sports England has now come to an end. I am now 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

