

Racing your own Race – Sport Psychology Workshop Summary

- 1. Control the Controllables:** It is useful to identify your unique demands that can impact your performance. I recommend making a list of these and then next to each one, identify whether they are in your control or not. We want to spend our energy on and put effort towards what we can control. For those uncontrollable demands, think about what you can control about them. For example, you can't control the weather, so if it is cold, what can you do that will help?
- 2. #1 Resource is your MIND:** Remember we all have a chimp that is there to help protect us. Unfortunately, a competition that is thought of as important will most likely trigger the chimp. Our job is to recognise when the chimp is out, what happens when it is out of its box and boxing it back in. That list of demands will most likely be some of the triggers of the chimp to come out.
- 3. SMART BRAIN:** Our thoughts influence what we feel and do and vice versa. So what we do will influence what we think and feel. Our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are in our control. I recommend drawing the Venn diagram with your riders to show them this link and work through a situation like we did in the workshop.
- 4. Ideal Performance State:** Using the table, record down examples of when you have performed well and what you thought, felt, and did before that event. Record down as many examples you can recall. I recommend doing this as a coach and with your rider more than twice. We want to introduce it to them and then follow up. You can use this as a way of reviewing their performances too (i.e., did you match your ideal performance state?). Using the same process, record down poor performances and what you thought, felt and did then. These are the signs that staying in this state will impact performance in a negative way. Even the elite athletes have poor performance states. It is how we get out of them that is important.
- 5. Boxing the Chimp:** Breathing and mindfulness are useful here. An app that I recommend (and is free) is Smiling Mind (<https://www.smilingmind.com.au>). A good starting point is Mindfulness Foundations which is in every age group and starting with 101 – typically 'exploring the breath' and 'body scan'. Two grounding techniques we discussed was 1) Pick an object and described 6 things about it, and 2) 5-to-1 which is 5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell and 1 thing you taste.
- 6. Performance Review Process:** I use the simple "Good, Better, How" process following each training session. I recommend the riders recording this down, so they have a log of data to look back on leading in to competitions to show their progress. The two rules are 1) the Good must come first, and 2) for every Better there better be a Good.
- 7. Training with Purpose:** Although we didn't cover this specifically in the workshop, using the review process above will help each rider to identify what the focus is for each training session as well as what to focus on outside of training (i.e., sleep, nutrition, emotional regulation etc).