

‘Creating’ Elite Athletes with the 5C’s of Football

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Lets review

- Early ages <16
- What do we know about what the athlete's needs?
- What do we know about what the coach needs (to know)?

Building SE

- The 4
- But the 1?

Multilevel approach

- Player
- Coach
- Parent

- [The 5C's of Football – Harwood](#)
- [Video](#)

Progressing Psychological Skill Development in Youth Sport (Weiss, 1991)

- Moving from 'enjoyment' to 'effort' to 'consistency of personal responsibility'
- Progressing 'social skills' into 'communication skills'
- Understanding 'play' to understanding 'pressure'
- From 'dwelling on mistakes' to 'dealing with mistakes' to 'working with mistakes'
- From 'self-esteem' to 'self-efficacy'

Four Basic Pillars of Psychological Development in Sport

- Motivational (competence [i.e., task mastery/approach goals], autonomy, relatedness)
- Emotional (awareness, management, activation)
- Attentional (relevant vs irrelevant cues, 'dwelling' in the past, 'projecting' to the future, 'living' in the present)
- Communication (verbal/non-verbal expression, giving/receiving feedback, listening/digesting, social support)
- Psychological Performances comprise 90 minutes of challenge to the 'self' in these areas

So the problems...

Workable terms

Motivation

Communication

Concentration

Self-control

Confidence

Mental Toughness?

What we hear

- Desire/100%
- Information
- Switched off
- Bottle/Discipline
- Believe
- “Looks beaten”

Mental Toughness in Football

(Higham, Harwood & Cale, 2005)

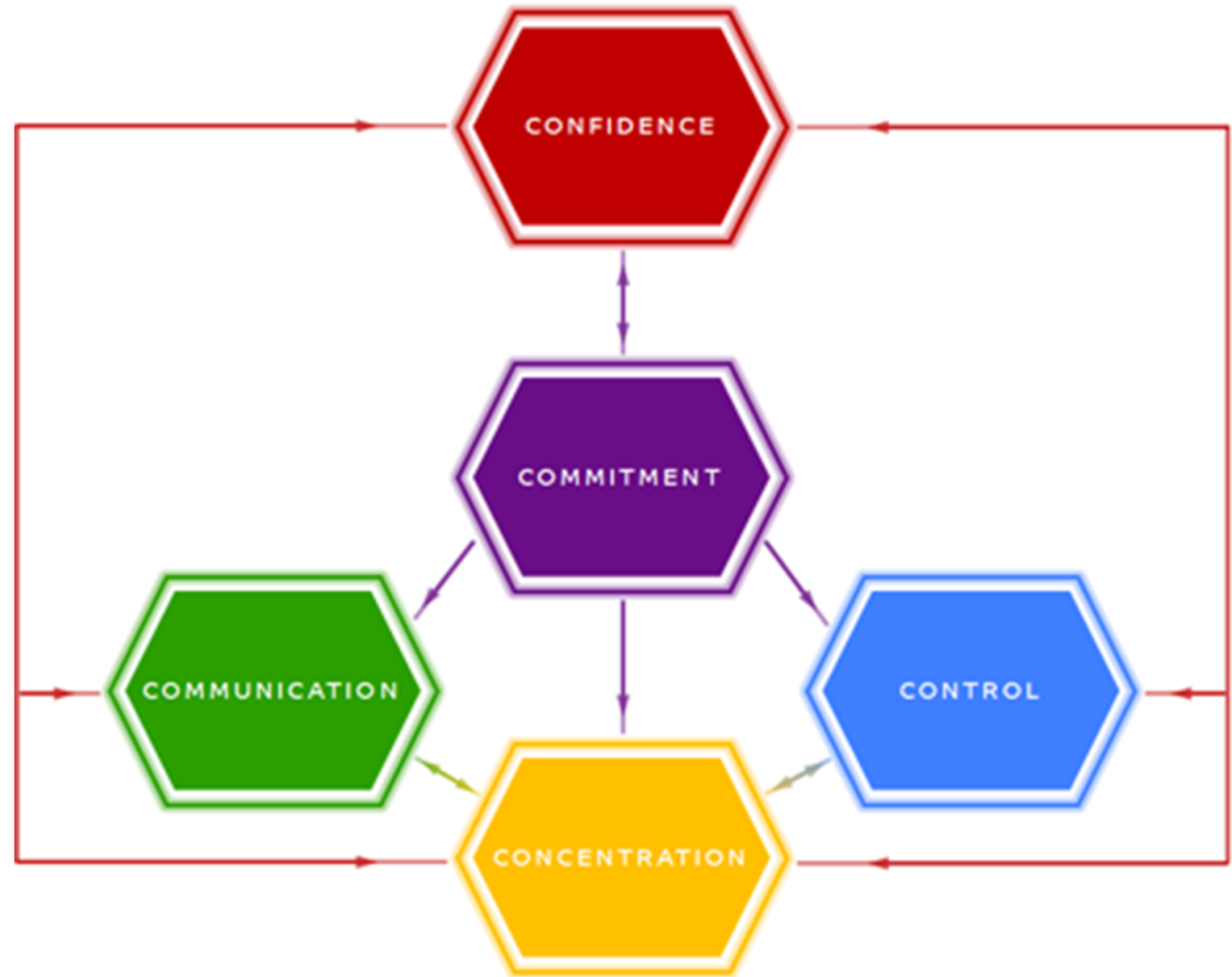
- Characteristic of a player who demonstrate football related mental coping skills
- Enables players to produce and manage optimal technical, tactical and physical performance
- Range of demands imposed upon young players
- Mental skills influence the quality of other performance factors

Key aims of the professional work

- Introducing the architecture of a football mental skill development programme (from U-9's)
- Reinforcing the value of getting coaches/parents to think about the psychological outcomes for each age group
- Empowering coaches/parents with ideas to assist their confidence in shaping psychological competencies (and a positive psychological environment)
- Developing a mental skills 'culture' that has an identity as prominent & strong as technical skills

The 5C's coaching efficacy program

- Harwood, C.G.(2008).
Developmental consulting in
a professional youth soccer
academy:. The Sport
Psychologist, 22, 109-133.





Early Initiatives

- 5C Match and Training Log books (consistent with stage of development)
- Open ended reflection for U-9's; goal setting and coach feedback
- Mindset changing: 'Dealing with Parents' to 'Working with Parents'
- Parental induction and education sessions:
 - Triangular expectation exercise and development of a positive pre-during-post match routine with son
 - Introduction to the 5 C's (as a guided framework) and assistance with match review

Working with Coaches

- Discussing the 5 C expectations to develop in players
- Identify behaviours that should be targeted at specific ages
- Differences between ages
- Clarify positive and negative behaviours as a coaching team that are observable/measurable
- Include psychological outcomes in session planning
 - Establish coaching methods and behaviours that will shape these skills and behaviours in athletes in training

Example: Commitment

- Success is based on a sense of giving consistent effort, of mastery/self-improvement, striving and persistence towards set goals
- Praise effort; individualise skill-specific feedback
- Equal treatment for equal efforts –Zero favoritism
- Avoid creating the ‘Avoidance climate’
 - Employ a philosophy of the ‘Fantastic mistake’
 - Encourage kids to approach a new challenge with confidence, as opposed avoiding looking incompetent through fear.
- Let kids impose ‘effort-pressure’ on themselves as opposed to only ‘result-pressure’

Session directives focused on psychological outcomes

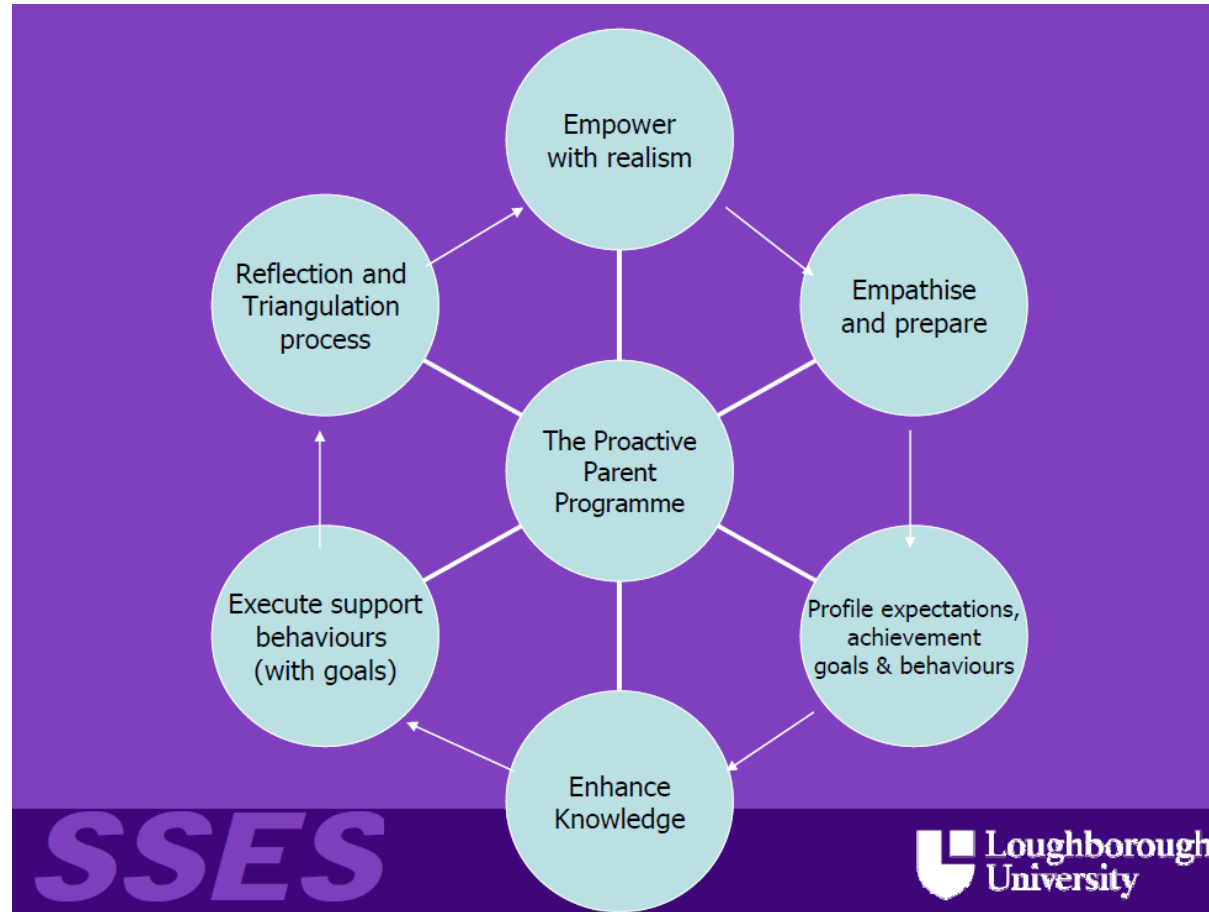
- Intentionally promotes a particular psychological attribute or skill (i.e. C) as they would a technical skill
- Increases awareness of what the 'C' 'comprises' through comparing good vs bad examples
- Emphasizes the value of possessing the 'C'
- Role models the C at all times
- Structures the session in a manner that helps develop/test the C
- Publicly recognises and reinforces those players who respond by demonstrating the C in session
- Reviews the performance/presence of the C throughout the session in a player-involving manner

Examples of 5C Coaching Strategies

- CONTROL: “Every time, they made a mistake, their response was to say ‘I’m back’ or show a ‘thumbs up’”
 - This controls emotions immediately and turns a mistake into a positive action within 2 seconds.
- CONCENTRATION: “I froze the drill and asked them to tell me what they were thinking, doing or about to do at that precise moment”
 - Attention? Talking to a teammate, ball watching, running into space, accelerating etc
- COMMITMENT /CONFIDENCE: “I ensured that every player through the warm-up was praised or encouraged for effort and when I caught them doing something well. I told them exactly what it was that they had done well”

Working with Sport-Parents

- Qualities of sport psychologist and coaches (e.g., core conditions; therapeutic alliance)
- Parents as functional social support resources
- Collaborative, equal, inquisitive, challenging
- Mastery-oriented (sport-parent self-actualisation as well as child)
- Ideal self vs current self 'perceptions'
- Cognitive & behavioural strategies



Example Workshop Quotes with Parents (Harwood & Swain, 2001, 2002; TSP)

- “I couldn’t give my opponent any respect, he (my dad) always thought I’d played crap if I lost, even if I thought I’d played well”
 - 13 year old
- “If I missed a shot, I’d look over and she’d have her head in her hands.....and I always worried about that. I usually double-faulted on the next point”
 - 12 year old

Parental pressure

- “I have come to a frightening conclusion, I am the decisive element in the gym, on the field or at home. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a parent I possess tremendous power to make a young athlete’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a young athlete humanized or de-humanized”

Parent education and self-monitoring exercises

- Working with the player on the 5 C's, write down what your son wants to achieve/focus on developing in the match?
- Encourage him to visualise what he wants to achieve and mentally prepare for the match (in the car, on the coach)
- Monitor the 'emotional environment' that you create:
 - Positive/supportive -----Negative/detached
 - Tense/angry -----Relaxed/at ease
 - Excessive 'instructions' -----Pertinent comments
- Other examples?

Parent Education

- Consider the following:
 - how much effort (consistency) your son put into the match
 - how well he encouraged his teammates, or gave information (verbally/visually)
 - his recovery after mistakes, body language, self-control and support of teammates following errors
 - his alertness and concentration on his position, ability to refocus on his job after a break in play
 - his enthusiasm and keenness to want the ball regardless of the score; show courage –physically and by trying out new skills
- What most pleased you about your son's performance?

Questions to ask parents

- What did your son think about his performance?
- How effective were you at 'resisting excuses' (either from him or you)
- How well did you encourage him to think about his performance in a way that maximised personal responsibility?
 - To motivate him after a good (and poorer) performance
 - To influence his belief that he can improve in these areas through hard work
- What would the 'positive' newspaper 'headline' be?

Developing a Mental Toughness Culture

- Commitment to a psychological process and to outcomes within a system that carries a high technical/tactical identity
- It needs to be multi-level and developmental, not one shot education presentations without 'retention' or follow-up
- Coaches educated in these principles can deliver this when aided by a specialist/consultant and with time made available

Phase 1: 8-11's (Initiation)

- Coaching/Parental environment and methods influence the motivation, enjoyment and competence of players
- Coaches/parents are encouraged to introduce basic self-regulation strategies (concentration; self-talk; body language; patience/use of time)

Phase 2: 12's-15's (Development)

- 'Mental toughness education' becomes a key focus
 - Why is football mentally tough? What qualities do you think you need?
- The development of key self-regulation strategies for matches is an important learning objective
- Behavioural practice of mental strategies should be integrated into the training programme
- Internal self-monitoring and goal setting (through training diaries/review processes) should be optimised as adolescents develop interests in self-referencing.

Phase 3: 16's+ (Mastery plus...)

- Mental training becomes element of a fully integrated sport science support and periodization plan
- Goal setting and self-monitoring become more contextual and sophisticated
- Advancements in mental toughness training include practice/prep for dealing with specific situations and stressors
- Foundations of Lifestyle Management in readiness for the most difficult transition

Players

Mental Skills Training

Breathing

What I can do:

If you are feeling a bit anxious or jittery before a game, control your breathing.

Count 4 seconds while you breathe in
Hold for a count of 2
Breathe out slowly to a count of 7
Hold for 2, then repeat

Breathing like this helps to slow your heart rate and reduce other symptoms of being anxious, so that you are in control of your nerves.

How this helps my ILP:



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Mental Skills Training

Goal Setting

What I can do:

Make sure my goals are **SMARTER**

S – Specific (Who, What, When, Where, Why?)

M – Measureable (How will you know it's achieved?)

A – Actioned (What are you going to do?)

R – Resourced (What do you need?)

T – Time based (How long is it going to take?)

E – Evaluate (How successful were you?)

R – Reset (Once achieved, start fresh)

How this helps my ILP:



Contact us at any time:



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Mental Skills Training

Visualisation

What I can do:

1. Control your breathing so it's smooth and regular
2. Imagine yourself performing a skill that you want to improve.
3. Use all your senses: sound, smell etc.
4. Try and make it as realistic as possible
5. Remember it is about quality not quantity

If one of your Psychological goals in your KPI is concentration, have a go at imagery.

How this helps my ILP:



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Mental Skills Training

Quiet Eye

What I can do:

If you are struggling with negative thoughts or anxiety pre match.

Find a fox and intently stare into his eyes

Focus your gaze deliberately and keep your attention there.

Focusing your attention elsewhere should help reduce those unhelpful thoughts and clear your mind.

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Mental Skills Training

Routines

What I can do:

Before executing a skill, concentrate by using a routine. For example, for a corner or free kick:

Place the ball and set yourself
Pick your target and stare at it
Visualise the flight of the ball
Take a breath
Take the kick

When you practice, always practice the routine too. Make it the same every time.

How this helps my ILP:



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Mental Skills Training

Thought Stopping

What I can do:

Be prepared for distracting and disruptive events on the pitch, if this happens to you, use this thought stopping technique.

STOP – visualise a stop sign in your mind

COMPOSE – yourself with a deep breath

REFOCUS – back onto the task at hand

Using this thought stopping technique will help you to refocus after distraction. If part of your ILP is to work on concentration and control, give thought stopping a go.

How this helps my ILP:



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Mental Skills Training

WHEN...THEN Plans

What I can do:

Be prepared for disruptive events and have a plan to cope with them.

WHEN we let in a goal ...

THEN I will quickly **review** what happened, **decide** how I can do better next time, and then use some **self-talk** to refocus on the game.

If Control is on your ILP, consider what events challenge your self-control and develop a WHEN...THEN plan for each situation.

How this helps my ILP:



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Parents

Parents

- [LCFC](#)



The ability to demonstrate positive psychological behaviours and responses are skills that we value greatly in our young players at Leicester City Football Club. To help us reinforce and develop this important area of development we invite you to play 5C Bingo!



The 5C's of **COMMITMENT**, **COMMUNICATION**, **CONCENTRATION**, **CONTROL** and **CONFIDENCE** represent key phase-related behaviours that we encourage all involved in a player's development to recognise and acknowledge. The ability to demonstrate these strengths are an important measure of success in training and matches.



Punctual at all times for example start of session and each time called together as a group			Renewed effort and intensity after setbacks	
Accepted feedback given to them by coach or team mates		Asked questions of the coach or team mates to help their understanding		Appeared to acknowledge to themselves when they had demonstrated a positive aspect of play
		Refocused quickly after breaks in play		Demonstrated that they had identified an opponents weakness or where they could show their strength
		Responded quickly after successes or positive aspects of play (e.g. scoring a goal)		Maintained positive behaviours in situation that could be perceived as more important / pressurised
Always wanted the ball and didn't hide away	Happy to receive the ball under pressure from opponent			Had a genuine belief in their ability through a positive approach to a challenge

FOUNDATION PHASE

"Can you complete one of the 5C rows?"



Tackled challenges and difficult situations consistently throughout the session				Showed persistence at difficult tasks/situations or didn't have immediate success
		Responded positively when they were encouraged and followed by others	Accepted criticism and corrected mistakes as suggested	
Maintained focus on the key information for success in the play session without getting distracted			17 mins	Quickly refocused and helped to refocus others after distractions in session (e.g. ready for the next ball)
	Didn't show any negative reactions after mistakes (e.g. losing or conceding goals)			
			Showed positive body language that conveyed confidence throughout the entire session	

"Can anyone complete 5C Bingo?"

How To Play

1. Take your phase-related 5C Bingo Card (Foundation or Youth Development).
2. You will see 5 rows representing each of the C's and randomly allocated behaviours for you to observe in your child during the session.
3. As you observe each behaviour on your card, simply cross through.
4. If you know that the session is being recorded please make a note of the time that you observed the behaviour so that we can look back through with you.
5. Ask the player how many behaviours they think were observed.
6. Congratulate the player on every positive demonstration of these important psychological skills.
7. Please drop the completed card back into the S&PP room after the session so that we can also acknowledge this development.



Coaches

Coach Feedback Sessions

- 4+ coaches from academy
- 2 invited coaches from other disciplines
- Head of Coaching
- Development responsible
- Manager
- Sport Psychologist
- Video of session
- Analysis of instruction from all participants
- Feedback
- Discussion
- Planning next session
- Repeat