Application #1

Colin Roberts

Sports Psychology

September 20, 2019

Personality in sports never really crossed my mind as a factor of how athletes are motivated and how they perform. One topic that really stood out to me was the topic of mastery and performance goal orientations. Mastery goals means the athlete is focused on his own performance and isn’t externally referenced. This goal makes success always possible and makes effort a bigger factor which is a great thing. Performance goals is all about winning. No matter if the athlete did better or worse than their previous performance all that matters to them is if they won. This goal is externally referenced so it makes it harder to achieve happiness, because there can only be one winner.

This section stood out to me because it reminded me of my career as an athlete. I fell more into the performance goal. I wasn’t as worried about my own performance, but rather if I won or lost. Even if I played a good game and my team lost, I still wasn’t satisfied. I wanted to be the best in every sport I played, and second place was never good enough which made it very hard to maintain stable happiness while competing. If I would’ve known the psychological effects of having an externally oriented goal, I believe I could’ve been more inclined to be happy win or lose and worked towards personal improvement and improving my skills.

Another reason having a performance-oriented goal was bad for me as an athlete was motivation. For me winning was everything so if I could win without exerting my max effort I would. I wasn’t focused on how I was improving as an athlete, but how I compared to everyone else. Looking back now if I would’ve focused on maximizing effort and not worrying about others, I believe I could’ve improved more as an athlete.

Another topic that stood out to me was when we talked about punishment and how it effects athletes. Personally, I didn’t enjoy when a coach talked down to me or made every mistake into a screaming tirade, because I was already so hard on myself. I would rather a coach tell me what I did wrong and I would correct the next attempt. I respect when a coach respects me and other members of the team. A motivational coach that lifted me up gave me way more motivation to get the job done the next time. Another form of punishment that was used on every sports team I have ever been a part of is running. Running was the form of punishment for almost every mistake made, and it made me grow to hate running. Still to this day I don’t enjoy running. I enjoy lifting weights and competing in recreational sports but running is still something that brings back memories of being punished. After discussing this in class I realized that my hatred for running may stem from having to run excessive amounts for bad team performance, breaking rules, etc. This helped me so that if I ever become a coach, I’ll find alternative forms of punishment.

I’ve enjoyed learning about how psychology effects sports. Many people think sports are all about the physical aspects of an athlete, but these discussions proved that there is way more to sports than just the physical side.