



Coaching and Mentoring at Work conference

2nd July 2013
Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, London

www.coaching-at-work.com

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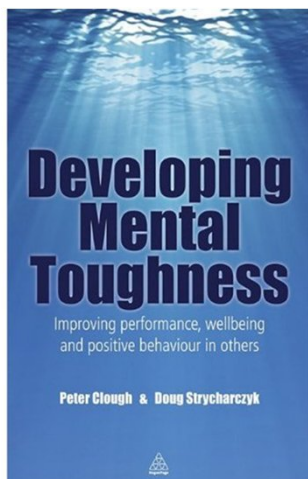
COACHING RESILIENCE FOR
THESE TIMES



MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND MTQ48

Doug Strycharczyk

AQR



What is MENTAL TOUGHNESS?

“A personality trait which determines in large part how people deal with challenge, stressors and pressure irrespective of prevailing circumstances”

It's universal – it's applicable in many walks of life.

What is MENTAL TOUGHNESS?

It describes a mindset.

How we respond when asked to do something

4 Fallacies about Mental Toughness

- 1.MT is a macho, male dominated concept
- 2.MT people are uncaring and self centred
- 3.MT is all about success in work or sport
- 4.Everyone should be mentally tough



Is Mental Toughness Important?

- What can it deliver?

Studies show a strong link between Mental Toughness and

- **Performance** - accounts for 25% of variation
- Adoption of **positive behaviours**
- **Wellbeing**

These translate into

Aspirations - Employability - Openness to Change - Transition
- Completion/Drop Out - Social Mobility - Motivation

Origins



It has origins in the world of the academic and the practitioner.

Resilience - Health psychology - Commitment, control – a passive concept

Hardiness - **Commitment, control + challenge** – becoming proactive

Dienstbier - Physiological toughening = psychological toughening

Sports Psychology - MT can help lesser athletes beat more able athletes -
Often mentioned but poorly defined

Finally Dr Peter Clough @ The University of Hull

Defined MT in useful detail & added a fourth dimension –
Confidence

The Four C's

Mental Toughness has 4 components:

- Commitment
- Control
- Challenge
- Confidence

Which combine to provide an overall measure of **Mental Toughness**

Think of these as aspects of mind-set.

The Four C's

When using the MTQ48 measure scores are reported on a 1 – 10 Sten Scale. MT is normally distributed.

Stens 1,2 & 3 – “Low” scores – 16% of population

Stens 8,9 & 10 – “High” Scores– 16% of population

Stens 4 – 7 – Typical or normal scores – 68% of population

Mental Sensitivity is the opposite of Mental Toughness.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Commitment

“stick-ability”. Describes to what extent you will “make promises” and the extent to which you will keep those promises.

Those promises can be made to others or to themselves.

When asked to do something to a target by a certain time & date do you instinctively think:

- I'll go for that and I'll do what it takes or
- I'll never manage that – I'll look stupid when I fail.



Commitment

How do those
“Low” in
commitment
typically
behave?

- Will avoid setting goals and targets –failure will expose them as “failures”
- Goals & targets, exams, tests, assignments are intimidating
- Give up easily and find a reason for it
- Will try to ignore goals and targets
- Distract attention from the goal – “I would have done it but I did this other thing/ was asked to do something else, etc”
- Often respond to the last person to ask them to do something



Commitment



How do those
“High” in
commitment
typically
behave?

- Will translate goals and targets into “pictures of success” & plan for attainment.
- Set targets for themselves - pbs
- Work hard and go for it.
- Excited by measures, goals and targets



There can be downsides!

Control

“Can do”. Describes to what extent you believe you shape what happen to you and manage your emotions when doing it.

There are two components :

- Life-Control
- Emotional Control

When asked to do something , is your default response:

- I can do it without needing to check if it is possible
- I'll stay in control of my emotions



Life Control

How do those
“Low” in life
control
typically
behave?

- They are fatalists – things happen to them
- Do one thing at a time – panic when overloaded
- Blame others and circumstances for failures
- Tend to focus on why things can't be done
- Cup half empty



Life Control

How do those
“High” in life
control
typically
behave?

- Believe they make difference
- Happily multi-task
- Good at planning & organisation
- Cup is half-full. Everything is possible.
- Work hard to clear blockages
- Problems exist – they are there to be handled



There can be downsides!

Emotional Control

How do those
“Low” in
emotional
control
typically
behave?

- Reveal their emotional state to others
- Deal poorly with criticism or negative feedback
- Feel things happen to them
- Get down when things go wrong
- Can lose it when provoked or annoyed.



Emotional Control

How do those
“High” in
emotional
control
typically
behave?

- Manage their emotional response to situations
- Difficult to provoke or annoy
- Deal well with difficult people
- Mask anxiety – maintain poise
- Deal well with bullying behaviour



There can be downsides!

Resilience

Resilience is often defined as a function of **Control & Commitment**.

Resilience represents the ability to deal with an adverse situation and still complete some or all of what you had set out to do.

Mental Toughness broadens this concept by adding two more components – **Challenge** and **Confidence**. This introduces a more pro-active element.

Challenge

“drive”. Describes to what extent you challenges, change, adversity & variety as opportunities or as threats.

When asked to do something significant or challenging is your immediate response to say:

- That's great – I look forward to whatever emerges or
- Oh no! I like things the way they are – I'm frightened by what might happen.



Challenge

How do those
“Low” in
challenge
typically
behave?

- Hate change and variety of any sort.
- Don't like shocks & surprises
- Hate new places; people; subjects, bosses, etc
- Respond poorly to competitive types
- Risk averse



Challenge

How do those
“High” in
challenge
typically
behave?



- Like challenge
- Easily bored – will seek change - may provoke change
- Like problem solving
- Work hard & smart
- Risk orientated
- Readily volunteer

There can be downsides!

Confidence

“Self Belief”. Describes to what extent you believe you have the ability to deal with what will face you and the inner strength to stand your ground when needed.

There are two components :

- Confidence in Abilities
- Interpersonal Confidence

When doing something and you face a problem, is your default response:

- I have the capability to plough on?
- I'll deal with those who get in my way?



Confidence in Abilities

How do those who have "Low" confidence in abilities typically behave?

- Low self belief. Not confident that they know subject matter even though they do.
- Inner belief missing – need others to build that.
- Unsure whether they have grasped a subject or not – feel they are still missing something



Confidence in Abilities

How do those who have “High” confidence in abilities typically behave?

- Don't need others to tell them they can do it or to encourage them.
- Can believe they are right .. Even when they are wrong
- Little or no need for external validation.



There can be downsides!

Interpersonal Confidence

How do those
“Low” in
interpersonal
confidence
typically
behave?

- Back down quickly when challenged
- Will allow others to dominate debates – even when they are more knowledgeable and more expert
- Will have difficulty dealing with assertive people
- Will accept criticism even when its not deserved



Interpersonal Confidence

How do those
“High” in
interpersonal
confidence
typically
behave?



- Will argue their corner – especially if they believe they are right
- Will get their own way – even when others may have a better case
- Won't allow others to orally dominate
- Will have a “go” and enter a conversation.
- Will often provide a full response to questions

There can be downsides!

The Four C's – a summary

Scale	What this means
Control	I really believe I can do it
	I can keep my emotions in check when doing it
Commitment	I promise to do it – I'll set a goal
	I'll do what it takes to deliver it (hard work)
Challenge	I am driven to do it – I will take a chance
	Setbacks make me stronger
Confidence	I believe I have the ability to do it
	I can stand my ground if I need to

Together these give rise to **Mental Toughness**

The last 15 years has seen a number who have focused on performance but since the global economic crisis they have received far more attention. Amongst these are:

- # They all say the same thing!

-
- The collage features several book covers:
- Learned Optimism** by Martin E. P. Seligman, with a quote from Dan Keenan.
 - Mindset: The New Psychology of Success** by Carol S. Dweck, with a quote from Dan Keenan.
 - How Children Succeed** by Paul Tough, featuring a row of colored pencils.
 - Good to Great** by Jim Collins, with a quote from the author.
 - The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People** by Stephen Covey, partially visible on the right.

Carol Dweck

Professor at Stanford University in USA

MINDSET – defined as character, heart, will, etc. There are two mindsets:

FIXED MINDSET -

Risk avoidance; focus on ability rather than effort; effort is disagreeable; success is effortless; failure can be attributed to others; setbacks are to be avoided

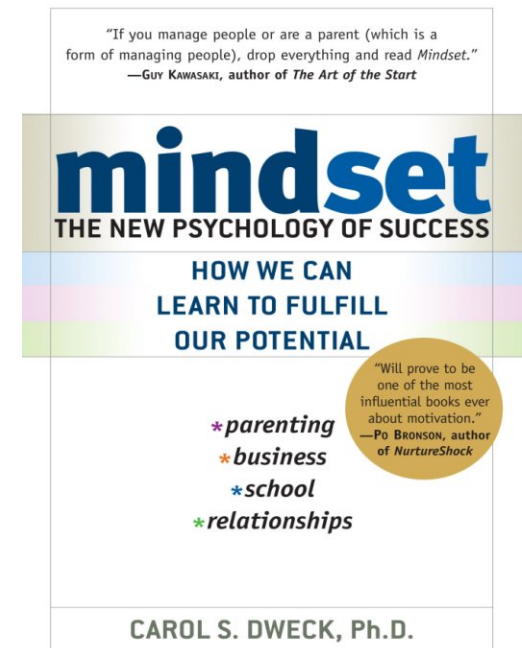
GROWTH (FLEXIBLE) MINDSET –

Challenge is good; confidence; learn from mistakes; hard work is more important than ability; practice develops ability; people can change; what one person can learn, everyone can learn

Only the Growth Mindset delivers sustainable success.

Growth Mindset = Mental Toughness

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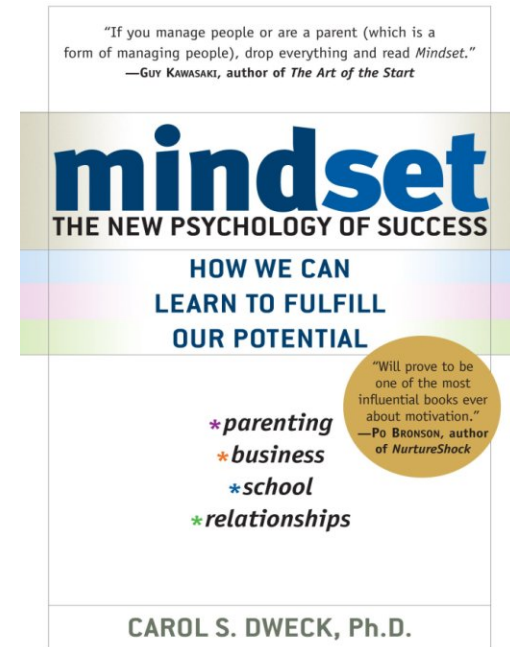


Carol Dweck

Key lesson: Importance of praise and the nature of praise.

Recognising effort & hard work rather than ability.

This is a recurring theme across all the scales in Mental Toughness



Martin Seligman

The “father” of **Positive Psychology**. There are two types of people – pessimists and optimists.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS -

Feeling out of control– avoid challenge – lack confidence. Doing things for people teaches them to be helpless.

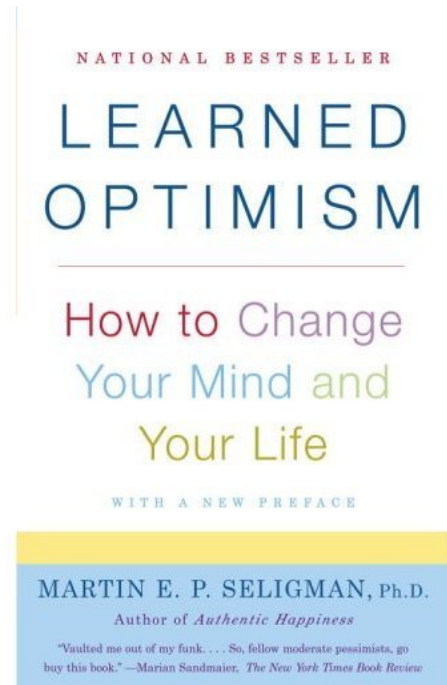
LEARNED OPTIMISM – HAPPINESS

Feel in control – visualise a world full of opportunity (happiness) irrespective of real surroundings – confidence. Learning develops optimism. Resilience.

Optimists achieve more in life.

Focuses on “Subjective wellbeing rather than Psychological wellbeing”

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Paul Tough

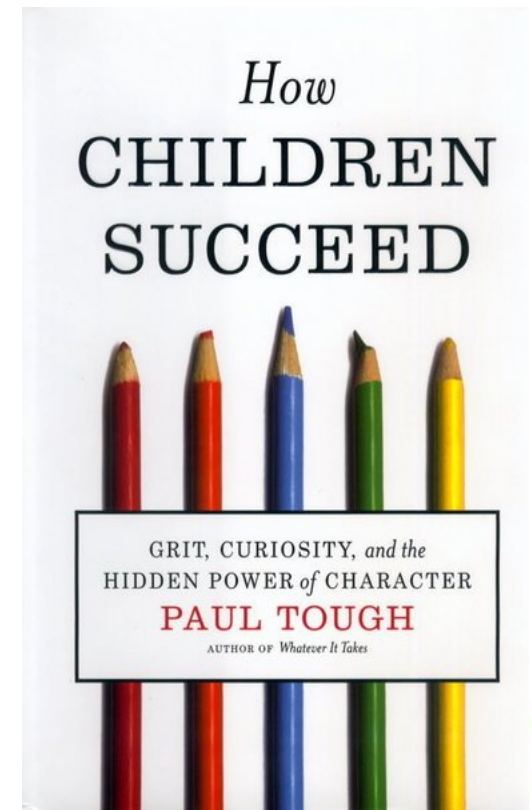
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US Author of “How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character”

The qualities most likely to ensure a better degree, a better job and, ultimately, a more fulfilling life are

- perseverance,
 - curiosity,
 - conscientiousness,
 - optimism,
 - self-control
- and early intervention

He calls these aspects of Character



Matthew Syed

Elite Athlete and author of 'Bounce'

Talent is based on hard work and application
and much less so on innate ability

MINDSET – advocate of Dweck

CHARACTER & ATTITUDE are important – mind
over matter, self belief, citadels of excellence
(work with stars to be a star)

CHOKING – dealing with setback, fear

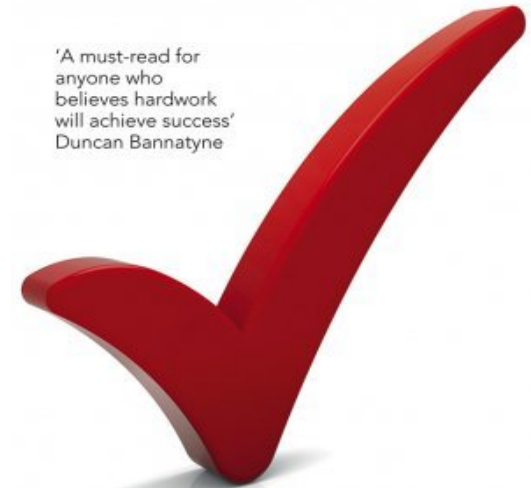
LEARNING FROM MISTAKES – confidence, its OK
to choke if you do it once

HARD WORK & PRACTICE – purposeful practice
and stretching develops ability &
performance, feedback.

MOTIVATIONAL JOLTS – inner drive, sustain it, "
I can do that if he can do it"

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'A must-read for
anyone who
believes hardwork
will achieve success'
Duncan Bannatyne



Matthew Syed
Bounce
The myth of talent
and the power of practice

Jim Collins

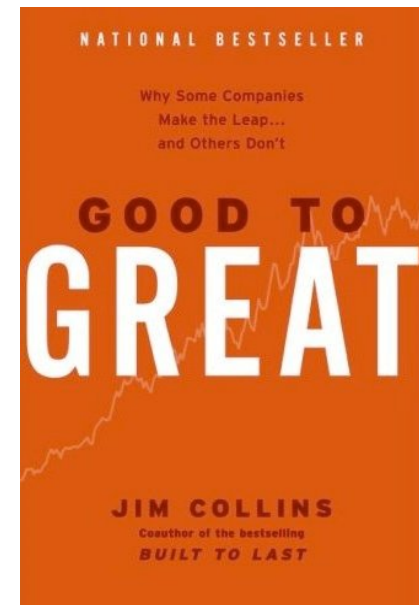
Author of “Good to Great”

- Carried out research on top global businesses.
- 1435 organisations had featured in the Fortune 500 listing over 30 years
- Identified companies that had featured consistently and sustainably over a long period of time (15 + years)

Found

- Only 11 companies but they all did the same things
- One was that 10/11 were led by introverts!!!

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Independent Evidence for Mental Toughness

AQR and ICMTD carries out continuous research. Universities in more than 10 countries are also supported. Main ones:

University of

- Hull & Leeds Trinity – core research and development
- Basle – Anxiety & adolescent behaviour
- Western Ontario – Genetic factors
- Modena & Reggio/Parma – Neuroscience
- Lincoln (UK) – Emotional Intelligence

Plus universities in UK, UAE, Greece, Australia, Iran, USA, etc

University of Western Ontario 2008 AQR

An Independent study on mono-zygotic and di-zygotic twins.
Important because it was the first independent study.

Confirmed

- Peter Clough's model was reliable and valid
- The 4Cs through independent factor analysis

But also suggested that

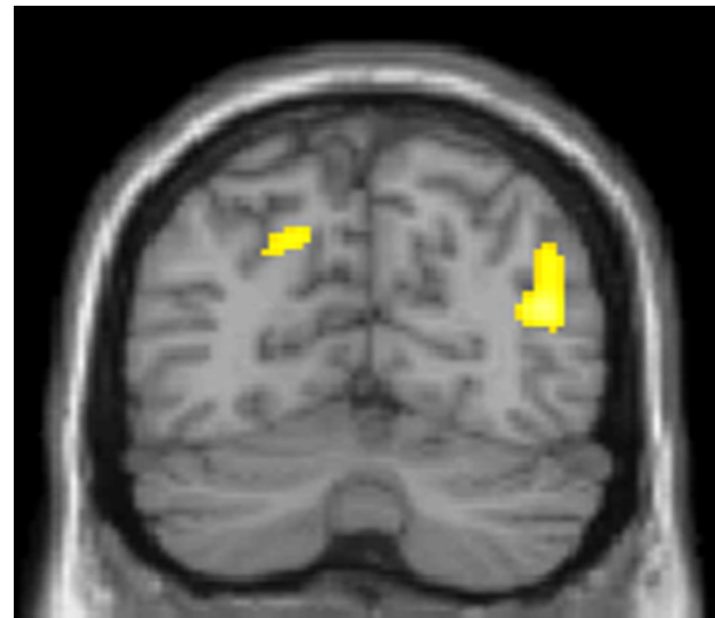
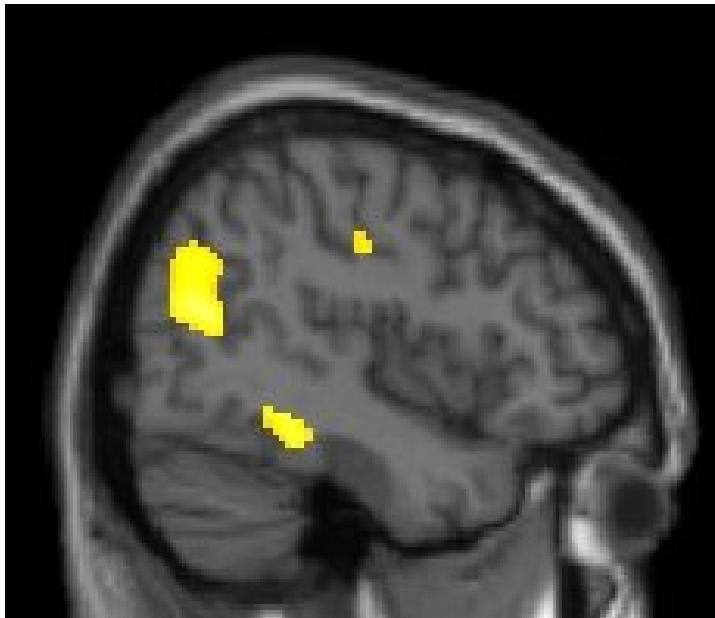
- There is a genetic component with two scales – Challenge and Confidence
- It may be more of a trait than previously thought

Universities of Parma and Modena
& Reggio 2010


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An Independent Mental Toughness MRI Brain Scan study

- A MRI Brain Scan study on 80 adults showed that there is a link between grey matter density in specific parts of the brain and the degree of mental toughness - by scale!



In Summary, both the Canadian Twins study and the Italian Brain Scan studies indicate that

- Mental Toughness is a personality trait
 - Mental Toughness has a basis in biology - this is a very important finding
 - Mental Toughness has a hereditary component
- 

Mental Toughness and EI



Frequently asked question but until 2009 little work has been done on this.

A study ([University of Lincoln – Dr Lee Crust](#)) on MT and Affect Intensity* in sports people showed:

- Mentally tough people are as emotionally literate as anyone else
- Mentally tough people handle it better than most people
- No differences between males and females either in MT or Affect Intensity

Since several studies have confirmed - including one which shows that MT people are statistically likely to be more emotionally intelligent than MS people. Are MT people “more comfortable in their own skins” and thus more open to be aware of others.

*Affect Intensity is the strength with which people experience emotion.

Mental Toughness and EI



The relationship is now thought to be a "quadrant" type of relationship. If EI exists, then it may combine with MT in a wide variety of ways.

	Lo -----	MT	-----Hi
Hi -----	Lo MT/Hi EI Very aware & affected by it	Hi MT/Hi EI Aware but not moved by it	
EI	Lo MT/Lo EI Poor awareness of others, but easily bruised	Hi MT/Lo EI Poor awareness, Thick skinned, insensitive	
Lo -----			

Measuring Mental Toughness

MTQ48 Questionnaire



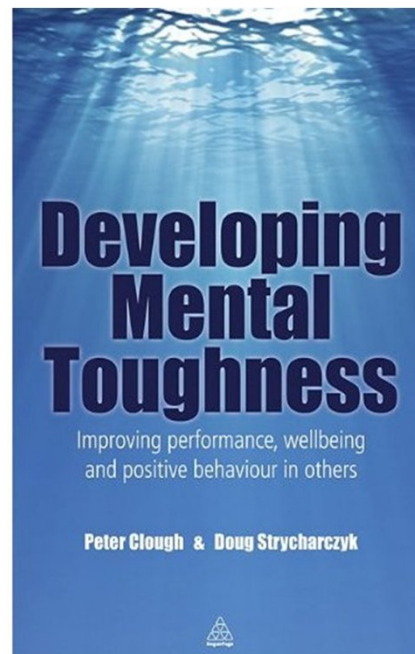
3 versions:

1. Occupational (all ages)
2. Young persons (age 11- 17)
3. on its way –early years (age 3- 5) and junior school (age 7 – 10)

- Normative, valid and reliable measure
- On-line format (can print off questionnaires)
- Easy to use
- On-line facility also helps to manage data
- Short inexpensive licensed user training (2 days)

Developing Mental Toughness

A brief introduction



Mental Toughness Development



The Mental Toughness model is a fairly complete process

Understanding – the model provides a structure



Diagnosis – the measure enables diagnosis, assessment and measurement at a useful level – the 4Cs



Interventions – ability to direct interventions better



Evaluation – the ability to measure change and to relate it to action.

Mental Toughness Development



Interventions fall into these broad areas:

- 1 Positive thinking – affirmations, think three positives, turning negatives into positives, etc
- 2 Visualisation – guided imaging, using your head to practice, etc
- 3 Anxiety Control – relaxation techniques, breathing, etc
- 4 Attentional Control – focus, dealing with interruptions
- 5 Goal setting – SMART, balancing goals, how to deal with big goals, etc
- 6 The test itself + feedback – people respond to the feedback

These all help to develop the capability to deal with stress, pressure and challenge and, where appropriate, to cope with these.

Mental Toughness Development - Positive Thinking

The underlying principle
We are what we think.



Three basic
approaches:

- Think positively
- Banish negative thoughts
- Reframe – turn negative thoughts into positive thoughts

affirmations,
think three positives,
turning negatives into
positives,
self talk
thought stopping
looking at role models
what will I do tomorrow?
attitude ladder

Mental Toughness Development

- Visualisation

The underlying principle

- We can imagine success or we can imagine failure and we can learn from that.



guided imagery

pink elephant

change your environment

target practice

penalty shoot out

you've already done it – in
your head!

Mental Toughness Development

- Anxiety Control

The underlying principle

Psychological responses such as fear & worry have a physiological consequence .

Controlling this can help us to manage the mental responses.

controlled distraction

controlled breathing

muscular relaxation

ear tap

smiling and laughing

self hypnosis

sleep

anchoring



Mental Toughness Development - Goal Setting

The underlying principle

Give meaning and direction as well as fuel and energy to achieve objectives & approach new challenges.

smart goals

balancing goals

setting milestones



Mental Toughness Development

- Attentional Control

The underlying principle

Focus, sustained attention and concentration, enables us to work better and for longer.

Interruptions and distractions undermine that capability

minimising interruptions

concentration

stork stand

shut out distractions

mindfulness

anchoring



Mental Toughness Development

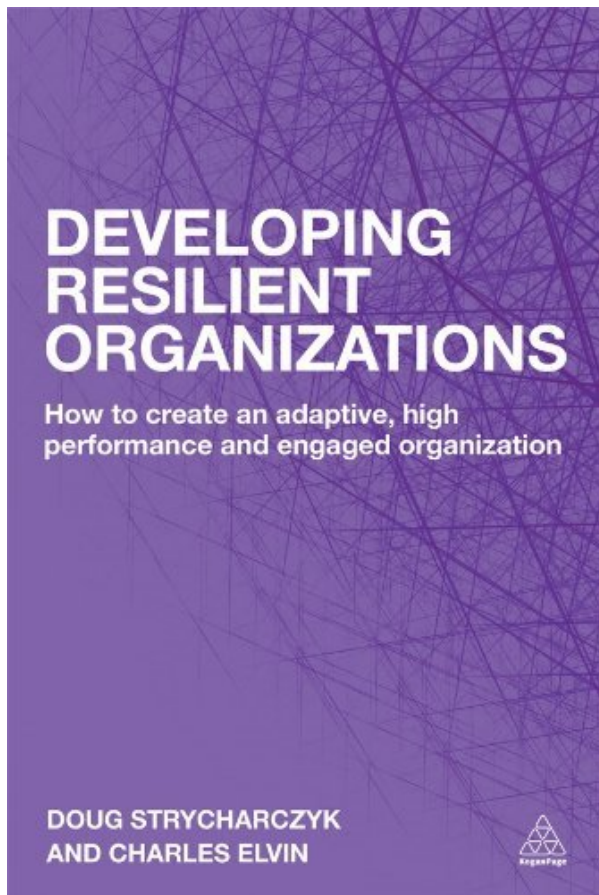
Most interventions are experiential. They require:

- An experience
- (Guided) Reflection
- Purposeful Practice

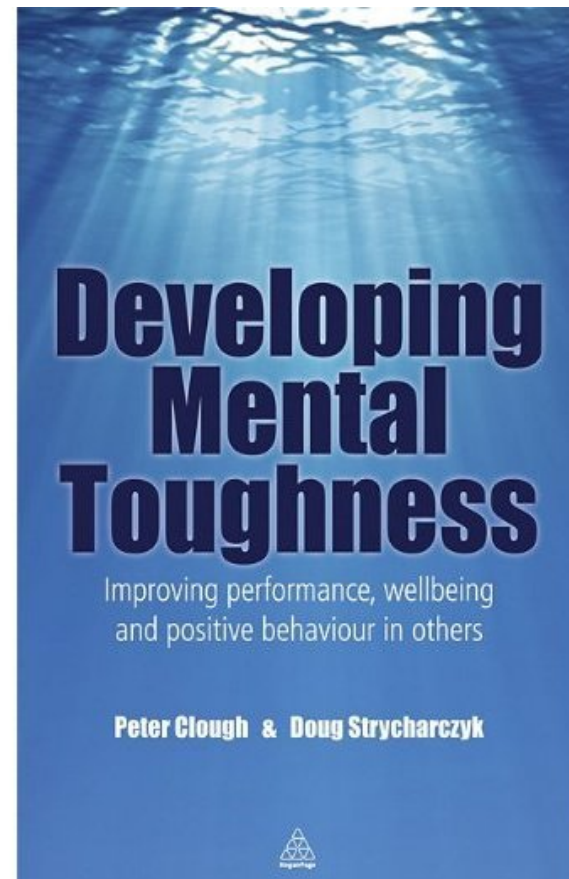


Which is why MT is especially well suited to coaching and mentoring

Mental Toughness Development



Thank you
for
listening





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