

# Becoming a champion — belief

Submitted by Dr. Natascha Wesch, PhD

What does it take to be a champion? Talent, yes. But talent alone is not enough. In sport, and other areas of life, positive mental characteristics and qualities make the difference between repeated success and failure. These characteristics – such as the desire to win, the ability to learn from failure, the willingness to try new techniques and develop new skills, and the ability to strive in pressure situations, to name a few – are the key ingredients to peak performance and to becoming a champion.

One of the most important characteris-



tics that distinguishes the elite performer from the rest is the depth and strength of self-belief. Self-belief can be developed, over time, by learning the important cues to pay attention to. By focusing on one's individual strengths, by learning to relax and focus on the things that are within one's control, an athlete can take personal talent and allow it to shine when it counts.

Christina Buttenham is a young basketball star who is striving for a NCAA scholarship and has taken the time to work on her mental game.

“Working with Natascha has helped me increase my confidence level so that I’m able to relax and play while coaches and scouts are watching. I have learned to use imagery to go through all the possible scenarios in my mind before performances, which helps me perform at the highest level possible.”

Sport is unpredictable and mental



*Natascha Wesch*

training can help athletes manage the unexpected.

“Before working with Natascha, if I made just one mistake I would lose my focus and struggle to recover. I didn’t realize how much that was holding me back until Natascha taught me techniques to erase errors from my mind and move on to the next play,” added Buttenham. “I am also able to calm myself down before tests now and not get so anxious, and I use imagery to prepare for exams.”

By developing her mental skills, Christina has been able to strengthen her self-belief and is now on her way to playing in the NCAA.

Dr. Natascha Wesch is a Mental Performance Consultant who works with athletes, coaches, and teams of all sport backgrounds. To learn more and to contact her, visit her website:

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