

## **THE MIND BODY CONNECTION**

That there is a relationship between mind and body is still puzzling but it has been established that physical symptoms can result from mental processes for example various psychosomatic conditions.

An idea buzzing around sport is whether this relationship can be used and whether physical effort and pain can be separated or modified by what is called 'dissociation'. Taking an example of say endurance training or racing you can try to by-pass the brain or pain barrier by using a mantra or distracting the mind by say naming all your friends or relatives by alphabetical order. Paula Radcliffe is on record as saying that at the New York marathon on the point of being overtaken by her great rival Grete Wami she engaged with a mantra repeating 'I love you, Isla' to keep her rhythm going and bring her to victory. Isla of course being the name of her new baby.

Visualisation is another mental activity most often associated with technical events but this can be tried with distance events. You could picture yourself overtaking, winning, getting the medal and so on.

Another thing is to imagine that the hill you are running up is flat and that you adjust your running style accordingly.

Two other tips. You should take your pulse rate every morning and any increase of say five beats per minute is a tell tale sign that you could be over training and that your body is not recovering sufficiently. It could also signal a coming cold. This will suggest a cut back in training and some extra rest.

Always after a training session or race consume some carbohydrate within 45 mins. This time slot is very important in terms of take up as the body is at its most receptive during this period. A favourite among athletes is a fig roll which is packed with carbohydrate. An apple will also suffice.

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