Lack of Motivation

Athletics – Javelin

**C1 Javelin – Motivation**

A major issue within my performance is that I often become unmotivated during competitions and training leading to me hitting plateaus and not training properly leading to a decline in performance, further demotivating me. This is more training specific as if I become unmotivated during training then I will not compete at a high standard anyway. However becoming demotivated is also due to me getting no throws and failing to win competitions.

When it comes to motivation there are two types of achievement motivation which are ‘Need to achieve’, defined as, ‘The motivation to succeed or attain particular goals; people with need to achieve type personalities show approach behavior. ‘Need to avoid failure’ is defined as ‘the motivation to avoid failure; people with Need to avoid failure (Naf) personalities show avoidance behavior’. Somebody with a ‘Need to achieve’ (Nach) motivation is likely to seek out challenges and enjoys being evaluated. They do not fear failure, attributes their performance to internal factors and also values feedback from others. Somebody with a ‘Need to avoid failure’ avoids challenge and instead prefers very easy or very hard tasks. They do not like being evaluated and in turn perform worse and are often preoccupied with failure so avoid situations where success is unknown and could be evaluated.

I am in the ‘Need to avoid failure’ category when it comes to motivation meaning that whenever I don’t do well in training or in a competition I can become demotivated and this also causes me to become pre occupied with failure for the next competitions and training leading me to struggle to achieve peak arousal levels to perform at a high standard. Me having a ‘Need to avoid failure’ type personality means that I am going to shy away from challenge while throwing javelin meaning that I will never push myself to beat my personal best and am unlikely to perform in any high level competitions in the fear of being beaten. I also attribute my poor performances to external factors meaning that I am unlikely to force myself to improve; as I always believe other factors have caused me to throw poorly.

When I interpret success I am ego orientated meaning I only deem myself to be successful if I have beaten someone else, so often shy away from competition to avoid failure even though I will become more motivated if I win. This also means that I am unlikely to compete in any high level competitions and if I do I am unlikely to perform well as I will anticipate that I will have poor throws. I also will lack task persistence meaning that if I have a bad competition or throw then I am unlikely to ‘bounce back’ and will continue to throw poorly.

A lot of this is due to me being extrinsically motivated meaning that if anything goes wrong then I will blame other factors such as the weather or the crowd. This also means that I am not motivated by personal achievement (Task orientated) so I have to have extrinsic motivation to encourage me which relies upon me having good support from family and coaches. It also means then I rely upon the praise, applause and medals to motivate me but it does mean that it works to my disadvantage as when I have a poor day then I can become demotivated and it makes me scared to compete.

It is important that if I want to improve then I will have to become intrinsically motivated and change my personality to ‘Need to achieve’, allowing myself to challenge myself. This also means I can become more task orientated resulting in me being able to challenge myself and motivate myself through beating personal bests and improving technique. This could be achieved through many techniques such as goal setting and role models.

**C2 – Motivation**

Motivation is thought to be a combination of the drive within us to achieve our aims and the outside factors that affect it. To improve my motivation all of the time I need to change my type of personality from ‘Need to avoid failure’ to ‘Need to achieve’ so that I can challenge myself and have a drive within me to improve. This also requires me to change my motivation type to intrinsic motivation from extrinsic motivation so that I no longer require outside input to feel like I have succeeded through goals and general knowledge of performance. This also will result in me changing the way I interpret success from ‘ego orientated’ to ‘task orientated’ meaning that I wouldn’t mind losing as long as I have done my best as it is due to my own effort and abilities, causing me to become demotivated less.

A coach is an important person that could be required to help this transaction to a more intrinsically motivated person. They can help by using extrinsic motivation to increase intrinsic motivation such as scholarships. The benefits of this include a better task-relevant focus meaning an increase in performance due to more focus on the javelin throw. Fewer changes in motivation meaning I would be happy to train more often and would become disheartened if I throw poorly in a competition. Less distraction meaning that I could reach optimal arousal more often resulting in a higher probability of a good throw. Less stress when mistake are made meaning that I could become motivated for the following throw during a competition as well as having an increased confidence and self-efficacy meaning that I do not limit myself to a certain distance as much, although it is good to make goals. It will also lead to an all round greater satisfaction in performance, which could lead to improvements.

This could be achieved through goal setting. Goal setting is when a performer sets goals (Usually by coach) to improve performance by giving the performer an aim or a challenge (Linked with task orientated people by challenging themselves). These can be achieved in many different ways such as long term goals (Outcome goals) can be worked towards using a series of process goals, for example my outcome goal could be to compete internationally for javelin and this would be achieved through a series of process goals which could include reaching county standard, regional standard and then national standard to keep me motivated for the period of time it take to reach international standard. These shouldn’t just be concerned with results as main improvements come from the performance itself, as this is more valuable. This is also linked to task orientated people as in athletics there is only 1 winner so those who aren’t just ego orientated and are strongly task orientated are more likely to reach that international standard.

Smarter goal setting is an effective way of achieving intrinsic motivation as it gives the performer a sense of ownership. Smarter goals contain 7 aspects, which are all important in order for it to work and each begin with a letter to spell out ‘Smarter’.

**S**pecific – Making the goals less general (Throw further) make an aim such as 5 metres further than my personal best.

**M**easured – Measure each distance I throw to show the progress more clearly

**A**greed – Making sure it’s agreed between my coach and I instead of my coach just telling me what to do

**R**ealistic – Making sure my targets are challenging but also achievable, preventing loss of motivation

**T**ime-scaled – Limiting the time I have to achieve saves me from feeling like I have a large amount of time to reach the goal as well as setting a clear different between my long term and short-term goals

**E**xciting – My coach should make sure that I am engaged and motivated

**R**ecorded – This makes sure progress can be evaluated

There are many other ways to maintain and improve my motivation such as varying training to prevent boredom and adjusting the training environment meaning that I would compete against people of a similar ability. My coach could also use role models of people that I could possibly be as good as making it achievable. Reward specific behaviour could be used, which puts an emphasis on a better performance being a direct result of improvement. All these methods will help me to become more intrinsically motivated to prevent me becoming demotivated as much and to consistently compete at a high standard.