

Thesis for 9th Degree by Master Willy van de Mortel, Netherlands.



“My experience as a coach on - Motivation and Motivating”

Preface:

This thesis which I am writing for the International Taekwon-Do Federation (ITF) for my 9th Dan exam is about “My experience as a coach about - Motivation and Motivating” in Taekwon-Do sport, especially as I experienced it myself.

Here I write down my experiences as an athlete, coach and parent over a period of 45 years of Taekwon-Do.

I am convinced that a number of things are certainly recognizable for other athletes, coaches and parents.

Looking back, I realize how important the subject of motivation and motivation is throughout my career so far in this beautiful sport.

I wish you a lot of reading pleasure.

Willy van de Mortel

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What does motivation mean.

Motivation is, simply put, the will to achieve something.

If you have a lot of motivation, you feel like doing something.

What types of motivation are there?

Usually there are 2 different forms of motivation:

Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is when you want it from within yourself, for example because you like the activity in question.

Extrinsic motivation is when you are pressured by your environment to achieve something (think of learning for a test in a subject you don't like).

Is motivation to promote.

Children like to do sports. They can enjoy the challenge, the teamwork, getting better and the battle to win. One of the challenges as a coach is to grow this intrinsic motivation. Even if they are going to do top sport, you want them to do this from the inside out, that they are hungry to get better. You do this by stimulating three aspects:

1. **Autonomy: the feeling of being able to (co-)decide independently**
2. **Competency: the feeling of being skilled and getting better**
3. **Connectedness: the sense of interconnectedness**

A committed athlete has good intrinsic motivation. A motivation from within.

Motivation develops over time. There are three stages in development: belonging, distinguishing and developing.

Belonging: man is not 'human' without other people. Humans need others to feel safe. You feel safe when others recognize and accept you in their environment. We feel *acceptance* and *recognition* as appreciation from others.

Distinguishing: someone who is accepted by other people wants to be different and better than the people who have accepted him. Being different gives a sense of self-worth. Self-esteem is knowing who you are and daring to be yourself. Distinguishing oneself is striving for *recognition* and *respect* from others.

Developing oneself: every person strives for *independence* and *independence*. This is one's will to develop one's own abilities, independent of what others think. The development is the personal advantage.

Your own career as a trainer also goes through this motivational change. If you have just come to watch, you are looking for acceptance and recognition from

colleagues. You then want to distinguish yourself by introducing new things into the training sessions or by working with new tactics. You are then looking for recognition and respect from fellow trainers. In the final stage you already have a lot of experience and you strive to develop your own style of training and work towards independence and independence. Your position in relation to board members, athletes, colleagues will also change.



These three motives play a role in all behaviours an athlete does. It is important for a trainer to have insight into which motive is most important at that moment. Only a trainer who knows the motives of his athletes can address that motivation. The athlete has a motive and the trainer responds to it. This motivates the athlete to take action. For novice athletes, recognition and acceptance is the most important motive. Advanced athletes want to distinguish themselves. A top athlete wants to develop his abilities.

Influencing motivation

The question that a trainer (hopefully) often asks is: how can I influence the motivation of my athletes? The previously discussed methods are largely ineffective. But how should it be? Research by psychologist Weiner in the 1970s shows that the response a person gives after success or failure has a huge influence on motivation.

For example, if you used to get an 8 in math on a test, you might ask yourself the following question: how come I got an 8? You can compare your answer later.

The answer that is given after delivering a performance is called an attribution. Success and failure are mainly attributed (attributed) to four factors: ability, effort, task difficulty and chance (luck or bad luck)

My motivational experiences as an athlete.

As a Taekwon-Do athlete I was able to experience for myself what motivation means and how it can always keep the engine running. But of course, I also had my doubts and travelled the road of peaks and valleys. But that is the life and also the life of an athlete or coach.

Where did I get my motivation as an athlete?

After playing football where I noticed that I didn't like it when other team members didn't want to go for it, I started opting more for individual sports. Swimming and Taekwon-Do where you work as a team but are ultimately responsible yourself! This is something I do like. By nature, I am not a natural talent, so I really have to work hard and persevere. And I did and I still do.

After a serious traffic accident in which I ended up in hospital, the switch has turned for me and I have chosen and decided to change my life and go for it.

When I decided to go for it, I was always motivated by my fellow athletes Master Coos van de Heuvel and Sabum Hans Joosten. With Hans Joosten, for example, because we came from the same village and always cycled to training together. If I even thought of skipping once, Hans was at the door! So, I was motivated to go anyway. In my early years as an athlete, I was also able to make several trips abroad with Coos van de Heuvel for competitions and training. Together with these two people we founded our own club where we could support and complement each other.



Another person who has had a lot of influence on me and who has also subconsciously managed to motivate me a lot is Grandmaster Wim Bos. Now living in Italy but then the national coach of the Netherlands. After a trip to Canada for the Intercontinental Cup in Quebec, GM Wim Bos commented that I was good but not good enough for the national team! That was a shock to me and I was very disappointed. I thought about it the entire flight and it was clear to me that I was going to prove the opposite, that became my goal for the future.

And yes, later in the year at the national championships in my hometown of Deurne, I managed to take the national title by beating Master Wijnand Tapilatu in the final! A top student of GM Wim Bos. With the award ceremony done by GM Wim Bos I expressed my thanks to GM Wim Bos for providing his unintended motivation for me to prove myself.



When I go through the list below of the Brain Performance Profile with the competencies, they measure that they consider important in the development of an athlete, I recognize a lot of this. Points are:

- Set goals
- Perfectionism
- Self confidence
- Leadership
- Motivation
- Competition tension
- Focus
- Self-regulation

For example, setting goals, my first goal was to become a district champion and I succeeded so the goal was adjusted to national champion. Hence a new goal to join the national team and do international competitions. And so constantly sharpen and adjust the goals. We also evaluate and adjust our goals every year with my coach colleagues from Norway.

I certainly recognize perfectionism in myself, for example figuring out certain movements/techniques in order to perform them as well as possible. Even by filming it and improving it again.

The self-confidence only really came after results came, something I think is also natural and will be the case for many. Later on, self-confidence did not become so dependent on results, I have grown in this.

Here too a small anecdote about GM Wim Bos, in the early 1980s we participated every year in the Open German Championships of the Korean master Kwak Kum Sik in Karlsruhe, a large international tournament. When I saw my draw and noticed that I immediately had to face the world champion Joachim Weibhart GM Wim Bos said to me that is exactly a good opponent for you when I say now you just go forward with a punch! I looked at him and thought something else, he said I coach and you just have to listen and do what I say. And so the match started with the German who had very good kicking techniques, he came with a round kick and GM Wim Bos shouted "NOW" so I forward with a punch and yes full score. I looked at my coach and felt the self-confidence rise, when this repeated itself a few times and I managed to win the match, my self-confidence had been given a big boost. From that moment it was clear to me how important a coach can be!

But also giving athletes confidence is very important I think and also one of my strong points. Athletes can show what they are so good at or where they have made great strides in all this gives them confidence and that is so important. Not only in sports but also beyond! For example, Miss Julia Cross from Scotland, rarely seen a female athlete with that great attitude. An unstoppable hunger to get better, no matter what she had to do. Remember the training sessions she was with me in the Netherlands but also in Scotland and where they trained very hard physically, she didn't give a kick! I myself had a few times a feeling of doubt whether this was right, but she was completely behind it. Through these training sessions and showing her how good she was (and still is) I am convinced that I was able to boost her self-confidence. She paid me back for this by taking the world title in sparring in Argentina, she already had it in the pattern section. An all-round athlete, an example for many.

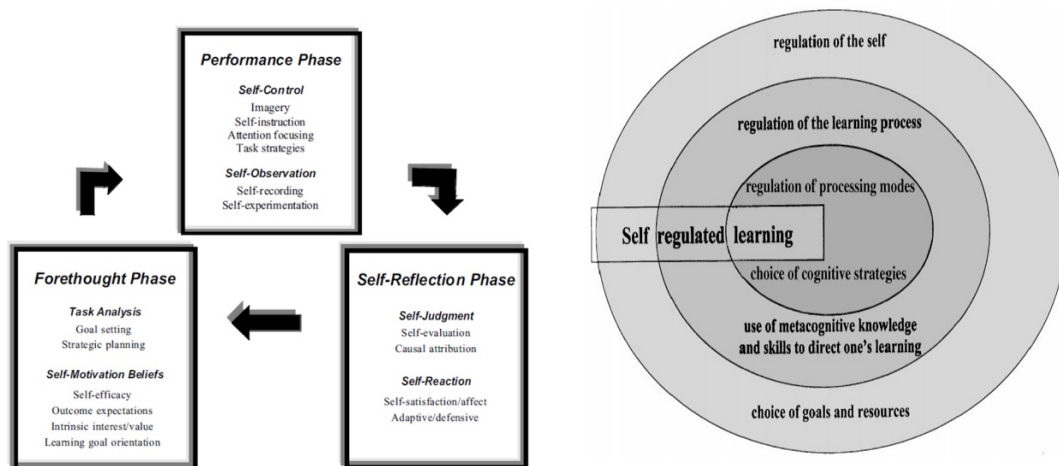


Leadership is no stranger to me either, I soon started looking for people around me with the same drive and organized training courses and internships for other instructors.

In my long period as a competitive athlete, I have never had any trouble maintaining my motivation. Even after a setback, I was able to quickly turn the switch and pick up the thread again. That is why I certainly recognize in myself the intrinsic motivation and the hunger to get better. And if I ever wanted to skip a training session in the morning, my father was there to ask if I didn't have to train? Then the button again quickly got up to 9

Competition tension was not fun in the beginning, but through experience and getting to know your own body better you know how to deal with it better and better. For example, the weighing moment, first I worried about this later I just knew it was good. I also noticed that I liked to be in the room on time to recognize everything and give it its own place. I could also visualize better what had to happen, which in turn helps to regulate the competition tension.

I recognize focus in myself, for example, in training or in gaining/maintaining weight. With my own schedules that I worked with, this because there was no coach available in the area, I knew how to put my focus on that and keep it!



Self-regulation, regulating thoughts, feelings, abilities, and behaviour. But also learning to coordinate and cooperate with the environment. How do you deal with feedback and can you reflect with feedback from the environment? Of all these points I notice as I get older, I am more open to it.

My motivational experiences as a coach.

In the 45 years that I have been practicing Taekwon-Do, I have quickly started teaching and coaching. Of course, in these 40 years of teaching and coaching, I have also been fortunate to work with very talented athletes. I am convinced that I have been able to teach / impart something to many, but also that I have learned a lot from them all!

Learned that everyone is different and that everyone approaches and needs to be treated in their own way, an art in itself! Depending on which culture I was working in, I noticed that a different approach was needed. Worked as a coach in the Netherlands, Italy, Slovenia, New Zealand and currently Norway. I also worked as a full-time instructor in Spain, Italy and the Netherlands where I have my own club.

When I look back at my experiences as a coach with the athletes, I see a few lines that I think are important. In any case, these have worked for me to a good result.

For example, how is the relationship between athlete and coach? In my opinion, it is accessible and open. I want them to feel like they can knock on anything and that we have to get the job done together. So, think along in training schedules, planning, etc. but also give them responsibility and where necessary call them to account!

I have also built up a good personal relationship with most top athletes, because of this we understand each other very well and we can say everything to each other. Even though the feedback was sometimes hard, after thinking about it for a while, we always worked out together.

I think I mainly built the personal bond because we train very hard together, resulting in blood sweat and tears. Also noticed that before that I was in a position that you had a lot of "power" over the athlete, this is of course something to deal with well and not to abuse that trust.

My strong points are that I know how to motivate someone, by always being "present" before and during the training sessions. Can give detailed explanations and feedback, she can point out the small details where profit can still be made. All this with a listening ear and good observation skills I can be involved with the athlete. I also look ahead, among other things, with an eye for new training developments, developing new things myself because standing still means going backwards. If you only copy champions, you probably won't become a champion! At the highest level, everything revolves around the smallest details, hence my slogan "Details make the Difference".

Also, of course, scouting new talents and stimulating them to take this path. Personally, I think I'm good at it and I also know how to motivate the new athletes and make them hungry for their new goal.

A few examples of athletes when I saw them the first time, I immediately knew there is the potential of a world champion.

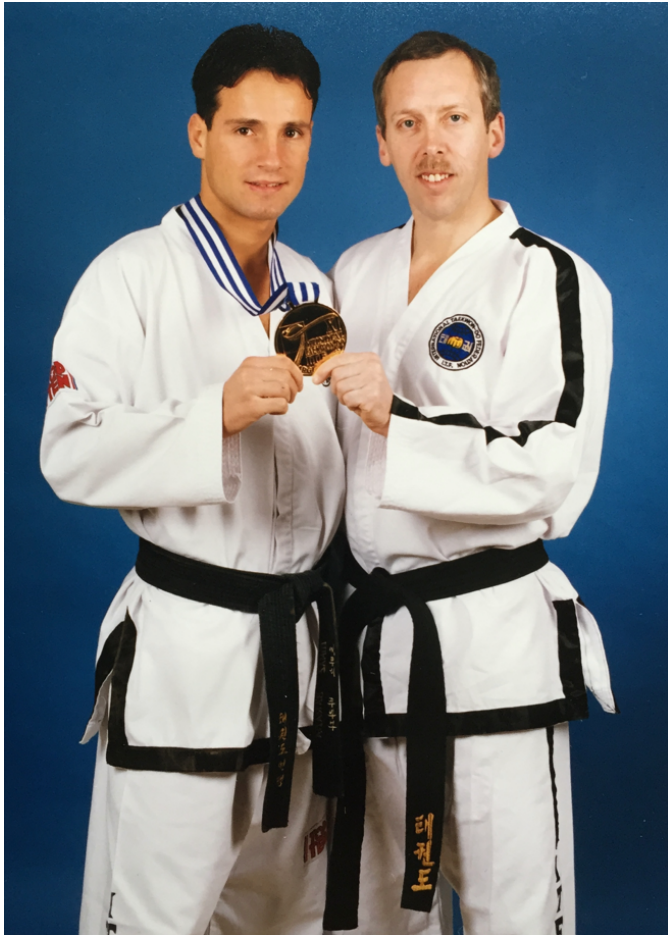
Isabelle Schander from Norway but now living in Sweden, her leg techniques and reach were very extreme.

But Carl van Roon from New Zealand also had physical abilities that stood out and was very structured and looking for new things.

From Norway further Magomed Naurdinov is an athlete with many physical abilities including strength and speed. Also, in possession of the necessary fighting spirit which is oh so necessary during sparring. When I suggested to him to be part of the selection, there was a lot of opposition! He was known to be flammable, difficult to control, etc. That's why others saw no added value in making him part of the roster. I told them that I understood them and that I agreed with them, however, but also what Magomed had the reason why I saw it as a world champion! I also took responsibility for his behaviour and promised that it would be okay. This also did not happen immediately, he did become world champion in Inzell .



But also observing and analysing possible opponents, to give an example of this I once travelled to London for a weekend to observe and film possible opponents of Tomaz Barada during a match. Then first analysed the films and then went through them with Tomaz . This takes time and money, but for our purpose it was worth it. I myself am someone who filmed and analysed a lot, which I often gave as an assignment to an athlete. Watch 3 games of yourself and write down what you do but also what your opponent does! Then second, what do you score with and with what does your opponent. These kinds of exercises give you a good idea of yourself and your sparring, but also whether it makes sense what you are doing! I made forms for this which they could use and so I had an easy overview of what they did, but also what they did and didn't see! For example, I managed to convince my top student Tomaz Barada to run a number of point fight tournaments, this in preparation for the World Cup in Argentina in 1999. With the conviction that if it was equal after extra time, there would be a battle for the first point. And yes, that's how it came out, against an unpredictable unknown athlete from the USA Tomaz ran into a disadvantage. He managed to straighten this one out, but after extra time it was still equal. No more words and explanations were needed, Tomaz looked me in the eye and nodded. We both knew why and what he had to do; the first action was a YES score.



In the end Tomaz became world champion here but on the understanding that this first point was the difference between number 38 or number one. I now see that Tomaz has also learned from this and is also giving his athletes something, this gives me a good feeling.

My motivational experiences as a parent.

With both children who started Taekwon-Do at a young age (5-6 years), I have been able to experience different situations myself. Good and bad moments!

Both now aged 23 and 25 have been training for a while and have also been part of the national team. There they also gained the experience of working with other coaches. At the club I was their coach with another instructor, when she got into the national team this changed. Also, because I myself was a national coach of another country! That was quite difficult for them but also for me.

The first time my daughter took part in the European Championship, I had just started as Norway's coach. In the agreements with Norway, I had stipulated that I could coach my own daughter during this championship. And so I was suddenly a coach of two different countries, which is quite strange. And of course, it came to the point that Norway and my daughter from the Netherlands came up against each other at some point.

Luckily this was the final and I switched from my Norwegian track jacket to my Dutch track jacket. In the end my daughter managed to win and Norway won a silver medal, everyone was happy and satisfied.



However, later we heard comments and questions from Norwegian parents/participants, among others, that this could not have been the intention. I completely agreed with that because it felt very strange, but I had already made the promise to my daughter!

After that I immediately made an agreement not to do this anymore, this meant that my own children would be coached by other coaches from now on.

I did notice how important the bond of trust between coach and athlete is, I already knew it, but my children have only confirmed it. The coach needs to know what motivates and supports the athlete. This is often in small things, from compliments to showing something or asking questions and answering questions. A coach must also be fully aware of the qualities of the athlete, and certainly not make big changes just before an important match. With my daughter, I have noticed that confidence can be broken, in her case on the eve of the World Cup. Then it turned out that her coach preferred to choose an athlete who he was sure would win a medal! When my daughter to language upset at my hotel room arrived, I saw how much impact did this! Something I would never have done myself and which shows that the coach was not there for his athlete but more for his own interest. In my view a bad thing, I have also agreed with my daughter that she will never be coached by this person again. After this incident it became increasingly difficult to find a coach in whom she had confidence, luckily it turned out okay in the end.

My son is different he knows what he can do, but he also had a problem with other coaches. Somehow, he didn't hear them, he also lacked confidence in the tactical part of the coach. Of course, all this doesn't really help if you're under pressure to perform

there. Hopefully he can handle this better in the future, as he gets older and more experienced.

Sometimes it is easy to be fooled about the role of coach, but in my view, this is not the case. It is a very challenging job with great responsibility, but I get a lot of satisfaction in return. And this gives me the “Drive” to continue with it, but also to pass on my knowledge and experience in this to the next generation.

Even as a coach at a club or national/international level you continue to learn every day, from yourself but also from your colleagues and students, this is what makes it so challenging.

For example, at my club when I do a new combination, I often see an expansion or small change in my son Jorg, I immediately respond to that if I see the added value in it. He has a very good view on contemporary sparring which is in demand internationally and that is why he is also a very good sparring partner for me in this area.

But in order to be able to continue to stimulate and motivate your students as a top coach, you will also have to keep looking for new challenges for yourself.

As a coach, never forget the checklist below, it will only help you and your students.

TOP SPORTS COACH CHECKLIST:

- Stimulate the intrinsic motivation of your athlete by stimulating autonomy, competence and connectedness.
- Guide your athlete in the learning cycle of self-regulation: let the athlete think, set goals, plan and evaluate for himself.
- Give responsibility; learn to let go of control. Mistakes are an essential part of the learning process.



Epilogue:

Writing this thesis has been an interesting and educational experience for me.

The topic for this thesis was brought up by my wife Hennita, she said you are good at motivating others why don't you write about that?

When I thought about it, I thought yes why not.

While writing, I realized how interesting the steps I've made and are still making have been. You keep learning, every day.

I was only able to write this story because I am supported by my wife Hennita, the children Maartje and Jorg who also let me take this path.

But certainly not to forget all the athletes I have had the opportunity to work with, together with fellow coaches. But also my experiences abroad as a coach of the Netherlands / Slovenia / New Zealand / Italy and currently Norway.

Also thanks to Grandmaster Wim Bos and Grandmaster Per Andresen for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to work with them.

Willy van de Mortel

Helmond, 25 July 2021