

Track and Field Self-Guided Workouts: Motivation and Activities contains multiple ideas, activities and games that can be used to create enjoyable and productive practice sessions that athletes can do alone without a team and structured environment. The 102 track and field games help teach the fundamentals and focus on skills required to become a more competitive track and field athlete. The activities are designed to guide the athlete to have fun, be challenged, keep active, and motivated when unable to practice in a structured group environment. The games can be competitive and fun to play and they can be easily adapted to different ages and abilities.

The track and field games provided are designed to create an enthusiastic and positive attitude when working out alone. The games focus on the high, long and triple jumps, pole vault, shot put, discus, javelin, sprints, hurdles, and distance. Plus a few ideas of how to do a relay by yourself and share with teammates! Activities are also presented on how athletes can use social media to share and interact with others as they engage in self-guided workouts.

A special section contains motivational stories of track and field athletes that overcame adversity to succeed. These stories inspire, encourage and provide valuable life lessons for athletes in challenging times. Learning questions at the end of each story apply learning principles to athletics and the bigger game of life.

Coaches/Parents Guide for Adapting Games

What can coaches/parents do to ensure that players have fun? Consider the following activities that help to develop the components of fun.

- Match challenges with athletic abilities. Ensure that the challenges present to athletes are commensurate with their abilities.
- Give athletes a sense of control. Set games up for athletes to succeed and athletes will feel they have control over outcomes. It works best to also give players some say in the games and rules they are playing.
- Try to minimize players' self-consciousness. Self-consciousness in athletics is largely fear of what others think of performance. Correcting fear of failure isn't easy, but when athletes can have fun, it's less likely they will feel self-conscious.

A successful coach or parent adapts an activity to individual needs to ensure a more positive activity experience. Each track and field event has its characteristic needs and skills. The following adaptation methods and techniques are outlined as suggestions to ponder when attempting to enhance the learning potential and success of an activity.

Change the space or participation within the playing area

Change the boundaries or the distance

Use equipment that will increase or reduce the range of play Create opportunities for activity.

Change the time or intensity element

Change the walk to a jog or run transition or vice versa Increase or reduce time periods for a run or rest

Add additional repetitions for more activity

Modify the rules

Change the order in relay or team play

Change or add rules in the middle of the activity to best meet individual needs.

Adaptation must be considered a necessary part of the planning process. Enjoyable appropriate games are a significant vehicle toward enhancing the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective growth of athletes.

Using the Motivational Stories

The short stories are designed to be read in a few minutes. The questions at the end of each story are designed to inspire thinking, encourage, challenge and impart a learning lesson.

The principles embedded in the stories can be applied to athletics, but more importantly to the bigger game of life. Rather than hoping athletes can be gaining positive lessons from the athletic experience, we can be proactive by educating athletes through a story and its applications to athletics and life.

There are many ways the questions can be used. Here are ten suggestions.

1. Athlete reads the story and reflects in their mind.
2. Athlete reads the story and writes down the answers to the questions.
3. Athlete discusses story and answers with parents or coach.
4. Assign event specific stories to athletes.
5. Coach reads story and then a group discussion takes place (such as on Zoom).
6. Athlete discusses story and answers with peers and teammates (this could be done on Zoom).
7. Athletes can be given a story to help motivate them when injured or performance is sub-par.
8. Athletes do further research on athlete that was featured in a story.
9. Athletes find stories of other athletes that overcame adversity.
10. Athletes reflect on how they have overcome adversity and how a story they read may relate to their personal story.

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