



**GIVE YOUR EVERYTHING  
BE A CHAMPION FOR LIFE**

**PRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC SCHOOL PROGRAM**



# PLAN FOR TODAY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. MENTAL FITNESS
3. TIPS, STRATEGIES & RESOURCES
4. QUESTION PERIOD



# ANNAMAY PIERSE

Recently Team Canada's Chef de Mission for 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games, Annamay Pierse competed for Canada in swimming at the Beijing 2008 Olympic games and is a former world record holder in the 200m breaststroke. Now an elementary school teacher, Annamay wants to share her inspiring story and continue to contribute to the Olympic Movement in Canada.





***“The reason I got into teaching was to be that inspiration and to help youth in their journeys, in whatever that may be... as an athlete, that was my favourite part, talking to kids, asking them their goals and helping them achieve their goals.”***





# WHY MENTAL FITNESS?

CHILDREN WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AND MENTALLY FIT LEARN BETTER AND COPE BETTER. AS ADULTS, WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INSPIRING CHILDREN, AND FOR HELPING THEM TO DEVELOP HEALTHY BODIES AND HEALTHY MINDS. ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS WAS ONE OF THE BARON DE COUBERTIN'S ORIGINAL GOALS. DE COUBERTIN, THE FATHER OF THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES WAS INSPIRED BY THE MODEL OF THE EDUCATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN ANCIENT GREECE. "FOR THE ANCIENT GREEKS, A HEALTHY BODY WAS CONSIDERED TO BE A TEMPLE OF A HEALTHY MIND."

(A PROJECT OF THE FOUNDATION OF OLYMPIC AND SPORT EDUCATION (FOSE), 2000).



# WHAT IS MEANT BY MENTAL FITNESS?

Mental fitness is state of psychological well-being derived from our thoughts and emotions, and is based on the need to be valued or appreciated for our strengths and positive qualities (competence), the need to be included or belong (relatedness) and the freedom to make healthy choices (autonomy).

## COMPETENCE

Refers to helping participants recognize, use and expand their personal gifts and strengths in order to achieve their personal goals.

When we fulfill this need, we feel a sense of joy, personal achievement and meaningful accomplishment.

When this need is fulfilled, I feel:

- I have many strengths and gifts that are often untapped that are valued by others.
- When I use them to pursue and reach my goals and work collaboratively with others, I feel a sense of worth and accomplishment.

## RELATEDNESS

Refers to our need or desire for positive connection to and closeness with family, peers, and other significant individuals.

We can fulfill this need through our positive interactions with others, our membership in supportive groups, friends, teammates, classmates and the support and encouragement we give to and receive from others.

When this need is fulfilled, I feel:

- I belong and feel accepted and am a valued part of a team, group or community.
- I feel included, encouraged and supported by others.

## AUTONOMY

Refers to our need or desire for personal freedom to make choices or decisions that affect our lives.

When we fulfill this need we feel a sense of freedom and choice that leads to self-respect, joyfulness and respect for others.

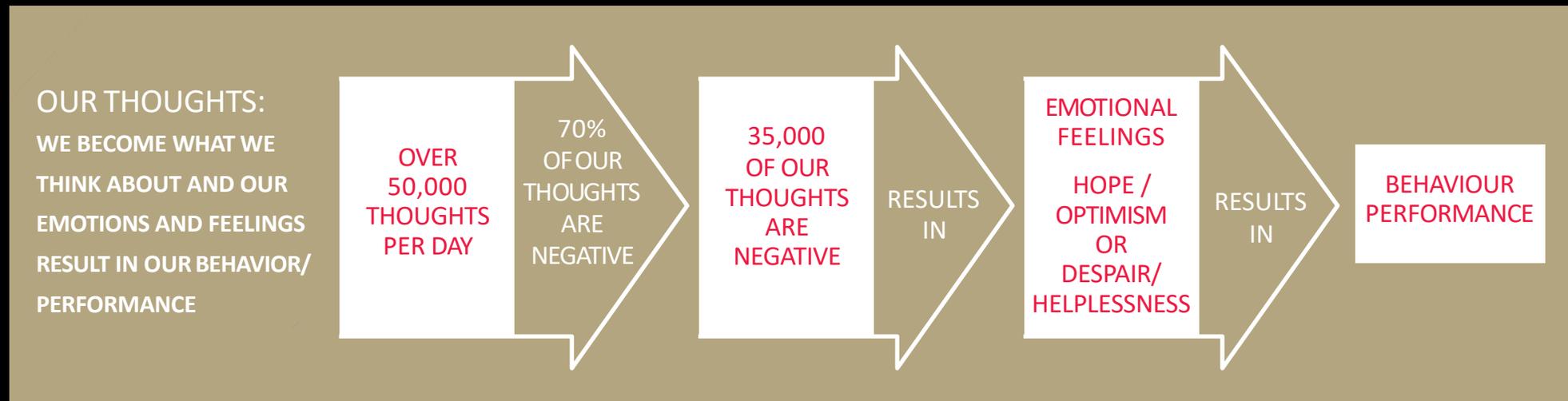
When this need is fulfilled, I feel:

- I'm able to make good, positive decisions about things that are important to me.
- I feel hopeful because other people close to me support me in being an active participant in making good choices and positive decisions.



# WHAT IS MEANT BY MENTAL FITNESS?

Mental fitness is like physical fitness. We need to work at maintaining or improving our mental fitness every day, similar to our physical fitness.





# TRADITIONAL VERSUS POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES

- Traditional interventions in schools often emphasize or focus on problems or challenges.
- Often require to remediate or address areas of risk, need or concern related to student behaviours and performance (Example: schools may have smoking cessation programs, Teens against Drunk Driving or Anti-bullying committees that focus mainly on risk behaviours).
- Initiatives based on positive mental fitness require motivating youth to adopt and maintain positive healthy behaviours.
- These initiatives not only create the conditions that enhance mental fitness, but also focus on the prevention of risk behaviours.



# TRADITIONAL VERSUS POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES

**Educators, coaches and community leaders are encouraged to use a strength-based language rather than deficit-based. For instance;**

- **We look at empowering our students and not fixing them**
- **We look at the possibilities and not at the limitations**
- **We see students' strengths and not their weakness**
- **We work on a solution together and not only focus on the problem**
- **We invite students to take part – making them feel part of the group**
- **We look at the future and not just at the past**

# OLYMPIC VALUES AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY APPROACHES



## **STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE (COMPETENCE)**

It stands for giving our best, on the field of play or in the professional arena. It is not only about winning, but also about participating, making progress towards personal goals, striving to be and to do our best in our daily lives and benefiting from the healthy combination of a strong body, mind and will.

- Feeling like you have the strengths, qualities and skills to be able to perform to your best.

## **CELEBRATING FRIENDSHIP (RELATEDNESS)**

It encourages us to consider sport as a tool for mutual understanding among individuals and people from all over the world. The Olympic Games inspire humanity to overcome political, economic, gender, racial and religious differences and forge friendships in spite of those differences.

- Feeling included and that you belong- relationships with classmates, friends, family members, teammates, coaches, etc.

## **DEMONSTRATING RESPECT (AUTONOMY)**

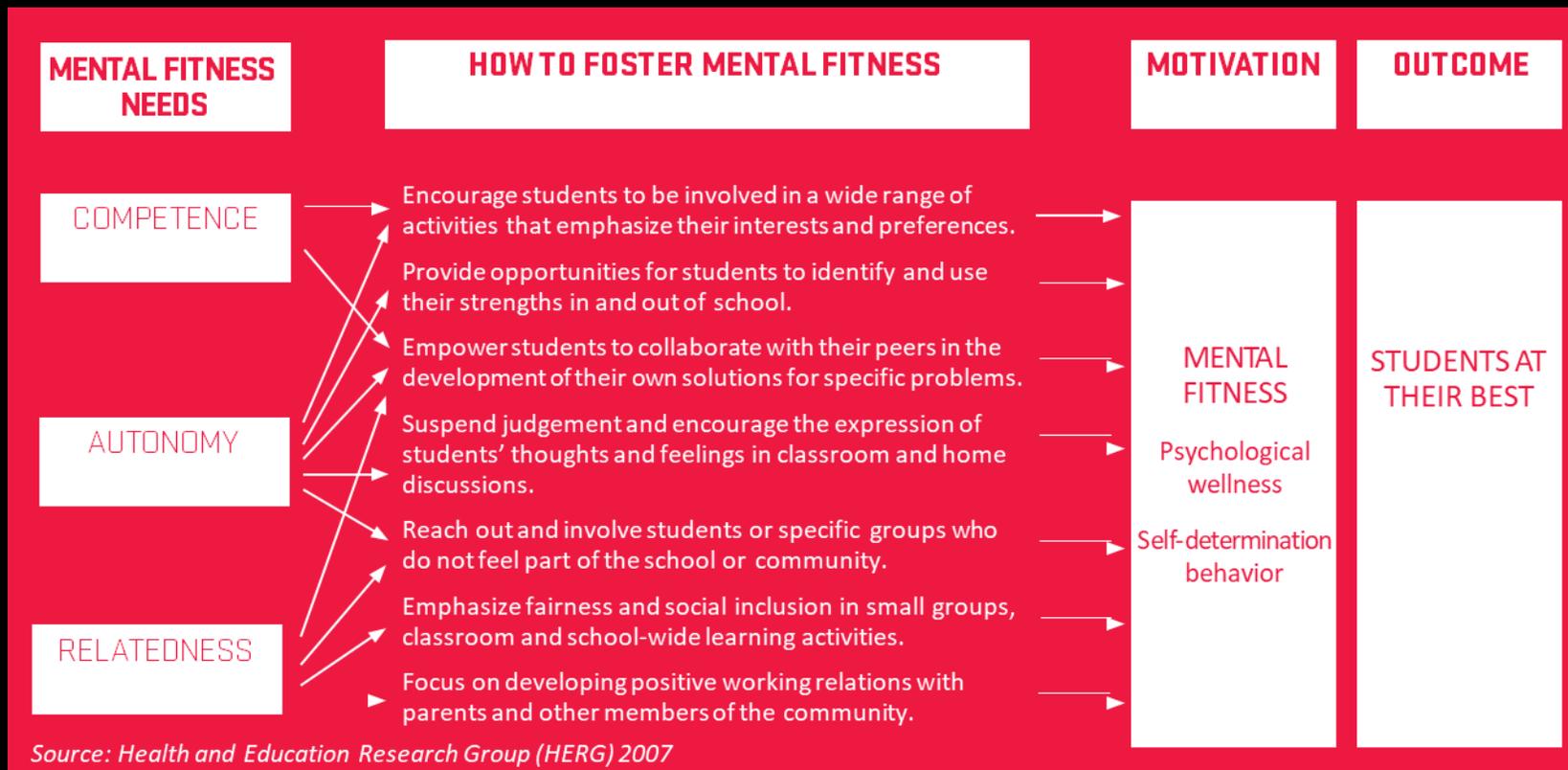
This value incorporates respect for oneself, for one's body, for others, for the rules and regulations, and for sport and the environment. Related to sport, respect stands for fair play and for the fight against doping and other unethical behaviour.

- When we respect someone, we look to engage and invite them and to share what they are thinking

# TIPS ON FOSTERING MENTAL FITNESS IN SCHOOLS



The following chart provides tips that foster Mental Fitness in Schools and in Communities. Creating an awareness of mental fitness and the conditions that focus on children and youth strengths and positive qualities must become embedded in the Canadian school and sport cultures.



# PROMOTING MENTAL FITNESS IN OTHERS



## HOW WOULD YOU PROMOTE THE FULFILLMENT OF THESE NEEDS WITHIN YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS?

Think about your...

- Attitudes
- Approaches....
- Conversations....
- Skills....
- Actions....

## CONVERSATIONAL APPROACHES THAT FOSTER MENTAL FITNESS

- Open ended questions
- Affirmations
- Reflective listening
- Summarizing

## ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Encourage people to talk about what is important to them. Use words like what, how, would, could?

- How ya' doing?
- How do you feel about...?
- Would you tell me more about ...
- What do you mean by...?

## MAKE AFFIRMATIONS

Statements and gestures that affirm people's strengths and that acknowledge behaviors that lead in the direction of positive change.

- I'm impressed with the way you ...
- That's great how you ...
- You really have a gift for ...

## USE REFLECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

Paraphrase using different words to reflect content and feelings. Check for accuracy.

- So it sounds like you feel ...
- You seem to be wondering...

## SUMMARIZE

Summarize at the close of a discussion or theme of interaction.

- Here is what I've heard... Be sure to tell me if I've missed anything.



# OTHER TIPS & RESOURCES

FOR MORE TIPS AND RESOURCES ON TEACHING MENTAL FITNESS IN YOUR PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION CLASS OR TO YOUR SCHOOL, DOWNLOAD THE HANDOUT AND VISIT [OLYMPIC.CA/EDUCATION](https://olympic.ca/education) FOR MORE!



# QUESTIONS



THANK YOU  
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