

New Paradigm in Pedagogy

Sara Isakovic

As a lifelong athlete I understand the benefits and impact sports has had on my personal growth and development. It is the life lessons I've learned through swimming, and not so much the schooling system, that shaped me into a resilient person that I am today. In an increasingly fast-paced, stress-provoking and expectation-driven society, today's young generation deserves to have the best quality education. This not only means accumulating facts (which yes, is incredibly relevant and necessary), but also developing coping mechanisms to handle day-to-day challenges, stress and pressure, while having opportunities to tap into their talents and fulfill their maximum potential.

The education system today needs to consider the following performance principles as a way to enhance student's potential.

- Foundational skills- Awareness training, goal setting and visualization.
- Resilience skills- Mental agility, emotional intelligence, focus and concentration
- Cooperational skills- Communication, teamwork, leadership skills
- Self-care skills- Self-love/self-acceptance + the need for physical & mental well-being
- Overall healthy attitude- positive psychology, genuine curiosity and fun

Unless pupils/students are involved in extracurricular activities (dance, music, sport, art..etc.) they rarely acquire skills in school that help them thrive in their demanding environment. It is up to us to make this change and adequately equip the young with tools inside the classrooms, that will positively affect their lives.

1. Foundational skills

Awareness

- Self-Awareness: Breath, perceptions/thoughts, emotions, body (physical state) ,
attitude/actions + relationship between them - interoception and resilience research -
External-Awareness: Surrounding environment/people - Present moment awareness Goal Setting
- Ability to set goals (short term and long term) with focus on the process - Ability to self-track,
self-evaluate, reflect and stay proactive in the goal-pursuing journey Visualization
- Ability to create one own's future, set visions, maintain motivation and mentally
rehearse relevant 'performances' and desired outcomes

2. Success skills (major factors of resilience)

Mental agility- psychological adaptability and flexibility:

- Handling adversity/challenges (anticipating, thinking rapidly/creatively under stress,
improvising when faced with obstacles) - Bouncing back from failure/disappointments -
Letting go of fears and expectations - Confidence building - Importance of making mistakes -
Positive psychology/optimism Emotional intelligence
- Understanding and regulating one's own emotions, recognizing emotions in others
(empathy), and handling relationships effectively Focus and concentration
- Ability to stay on task with full purpose and intention without being distracted

3. Cooperational skills

- Communication skills (w/peers, parents and 'authority' figures) - Teamwork - Asking for
support/guidance from older more experienced professionals in the field - Developing leadership
skills

4. Self-care/self-love/self-acceptance

- Eating healthy, exercising, sleeping (understanding of brain function as a result of
quality sleep, food and exercise) - Practicing positive self-image, self-acceptance and
cherishing one's own body - Developing healthy body language + posture - Tapping into
mind-body connection (ability to notice how the body influences the mind
and vice versa) - Creativity through movement - Letting go of comparison

5. Overall Attitude:

- Habit of practice, practice, practice - Daring, brave and bold attitude -
Responsibility/independence/time-management - Healthy competitiveness - Discipline,
commitment, persistence, determination - Willpower (doing the right things even when most

difficult) - Positive/growth mindset

6. Fun/ Playfulness - Enjoyment - Genuine curiosity - Willingness to keep growing/improving -
Living and breathing one's passion