

# Dialed In

**Do Your best when it matters most**

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**Dr Dana Sinclair is a founder and partner at Human Performance International. She has been working with athletes in pro hockey, baseball, basketball, football, tennis, soccer since 2000. She is a licensed psychologist.**

**Staying calm , clear and focused beats out natural talent in the long run.**

**We all want results. We all want to be good at what we do. But, getting the most out of ourselves is not easy.**

**As a performance psychologist, my role is to help people use their heads to be better at what they do.**

**I help people focus so they can avoid errors,  
improve their skills and get results.**

**To get better you need to know why you are great some days and not others.**

**You know you will perform better if you stay calm and focused, if you can minimize self doubts and distractions.**



**Your talent does not derail your performance, not accessing your talent in the moment diminishes your performance.**

**Your performance style is being you. How you naturally behave both on the job and more generally in life provides powerful insights into how you will perform under pressure.**

**No one performance style guarantees success or ensures failure.**

**Emotional control rules your ability to get results under pressure. The foundation of emotional control is a calmer, clearer mind.**

**Even a five second delay in responding to a person can make the difference between conveying disinterest or confidence.**

**Listen longer!**

**Fear of failure is powerful and prevalent. It is an unavoidable part of a striving life.**

**High levels of success can lead to an inflated sense of entitlement and unfortunately some bad behavior.**

**Fear will always come and go. Confronting your fears rather than resisting or avoiding them will lessen their hold on you and allow you to move forward.**



**Fear is relative. Fear will find you no matter your skill set or level. Expect it and accept it. It is about how you manage that fear in those moments that matter to you.**

**Confidence is a belief or feeling that you can get something done.**

**It is a measure of trust in your ability to perform well and get the desired results.**

**We pursue confidence because it makes us feel more comfortable and therefore more able. Life feels a little easier when you have confidence and more intense when you don't have it.**

**Confidence is variable and unreliable, as it can change from day to day, hour to hour and even minute to minute.**

**You don't need confidence to perform at your best, but that doesn't mean that confidence is not worth working on.**

**There is no clear link between trying to be perfect and performance success.**

**Perfection is unattainable and striving for it is a script for self defeat.**

**We all make excuses time to time, but some people are fierce in their self deception and their need to justify in the face of defeat.**

**Excuses help us avoid facing the hard truths, what if we are avoiding not the truth but a possibility?**



**Feeling confident is not enough because success depends on *what you do, not how you feel.***

**One can be highly motivated without any hope of success.**

**Motivation is a desire, a want. It is an indication of how driven you feel to make something happen.**

**But feeling motivated doesn't mean you will act.**

**While motivation has to come from within,  
sometimes we need a kick start.**

**Motivation is a desire, not a reliable strategy for getting results.**

**You have to go *beyond wanting to doing something.***

**Superstitions keep your tension flowing and your focus off task.**

**They are anxiety driven based on reason and knowledge.**

**A superstition is an unjustified belief that a random action, by you or someone else or something else will bring luck or prevent disaster.**

**People turn to superstitions when they lack confidence or feel insecure or feel threatened.**

**Acting out a superstition may offer the illusion of control over outer conditions but in reality is not connected with your ability to perform well.**



**Superstitions can blur the line between self control and out-of-my control.**

**Superstitions are an indicator of how anxious and distracted you are.**

**Routines set you up to execute well and come in all shapes and sizes. They will take you one step closer to your desired performance.**

**Routines help you prepare to perform. They provide structure, quality and consistency to your performance.**

**Routines are about working with your thoughts and putting them in order so you are then ready to do your best.**

**Have a routine checklist in your head, or write it down, so you don't forget to overlook or forget what works best for you.**

**Rather than telling someone to focus, be specific on what you want them to focus on.**

**Good communication generates better results. Listen openly and express yourself clearly.**



**Good communicators are clear and direct and not afraid.**

**Parents push, its part of the job.**

**Many parents don't know the difference  
between a healthy nudge and a destructive  
shove.**

**Parents should never make support to the kids conditional, i.e. win and only then will I fund you or get good marks only then will I let you go on a holiday etc.**

**Character is a persons ability to act in a self disciplined, considerate and appropriately restrained manner.**

**Character is the horsepower driving daily decisions and actions.**

**Good performance cultures are positive and straight forward.**

**Invest in character, its power is underestimated.**

**The most important thing for a performer is to be process driven, not results oriented. Results are a consequence of what you do, while a process guides you through what to do.**



**Distractions are plentiful and always close by, some are fleeting and meaningless while others are intrusive and damaging.**

**Tension is that feeling of worry,  
nervousness, or unease that clouds your  
thinking and tightens your body.**

**Tension can cause chaos and drama. Great performance under pressure comes with less tension, not zero tension.**

**Breathing is a natural sedative as a tool to manage tension. Breathe deeply, it eases the tension that pressure creates.**

**Talk yourself through your performance.  
Tell yourself what to do, when to do it and  
what to be ready for.**

**Mental structure isn't only seeing a picture in your mind, it involves all your senses.**

**Mental practice has repeatedly been shown to enhance performance in any field.**

**Its important to prepare a plan for each performance, or at least the big ones. It takes only minutes and clarifies your approach to the task.**



**Always ask**

**What did I do well?**

**What could I have done better?**

**What do I need to adjust next time?**

**This structure will help you.**