

VIDEO 02

WORKBOOK



WELCOME BACK

In the first video I showed you what is possible when you develop the four core pillars and **how you can improve your game by at least 50-75%**.

I shared **how I became an international player**, even though I lived 6000km away, never made a junior national team and none of the selectors knew me.

I also demonstrated why **only working on your skills will not guarantee your success** and that even if you've failed in the past, it doesn't mean that you will fail in future, as long as you change the way that you think and train.

Everything I am about to share with you here builds on what we discussed in that first video.

Now, in this video/workbook I'm going to share with you my top 3 strategies that I use to help players take their hockey to the next level.

As an ex-international hockey player, performance coach and mentor I've had the privilege of personally seeing how big an impact each of these strategies can make and I speak from my perspective as a player and also a coaching perspective having worked with hundreds of different types of players at various ages and levels.

These strategies are listed in order of biggest impact and where I have seen the best results with people.

So, if you're ready then let's dive straight in with...



"I've learnt many tweaks to my skills that make a big difference. I've since improved my vision, confidence and mental toughness. I also knew I needed to do pre-season fitness but I never knew what to do or how to structure the workouts, but HPA has helped with this"

Cameron Ley, 15 years

STRATEGY #1: UPGRADE YOUR MIND

Do you ever **worry about mistakes, doubt yourself** or **wonder if you're good enough** and if you have what it takes? Maybe you have moments when you do amazing things either at training or sometimes in games, but you're not doing them consistently?

For me this strategy is the most important and it's what holds the majority of players back. Most players don't realize that we all have what it takes to get to 4th place, just short of success but so many people give up just before they reach their goals.

The first thing to understand is that your **mind is the foundation of everything you do** and that the mind rules the body, not the other way around.



This means that how you think will determine your actions and what your physical body can or can't do, but most people ignore mindset and just focus on their physical skills and ability which means they limit themselves from what is actually possible. What I've noticed after working with hundreds of different types of players is that:

The more you want something, the more likely you are to get in your own way.

This is because the more something means to you the more pressure you put on yourself. But I believe these players are the ones with the most potential because they are willing to do whatever it takes, they just don't know how to get out of their own way.

As humans we all have a limited supply of willpower, so when it runs out we often resort back to what we know, what is easier and what we're comfortable with which is why 95% of people with new year resolutions fail within the first couple of months of the year.

In terms of hockey, I've seen so many players with great potential not reach their goals, not because they didn't have the skill, talent or ability but simply because they didn't work on their mental game and they weren't able to perform consistently or when it mattered most.

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LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE

I worked with a player from the US called Macy. When her mum contacted me she said Macy had shown signs of having great potential as a hockey player going past players like they weren't even there, but **whenever she went to trials or played against better or older players she no longer played like that and didn't show the best of herself.**



Within just a few weeks of working together she was not just playing her best more consistently but she was getting past much older players that she previously would have compared herself to. This is what her mom sent me shortly after:



"Macy's confidence and focus were off the charts. I've never seen her play like that!! I am so proud because she was handing it to college players! It was amazing to watch. You have helped her confidence in so many ways, thank you Lauren! Her confidence meter is full and she is unstoppable! She couldn't have done this without you and what you have taught her"

Jennifer Szukics, parent of player from US

This was possible simply by **making some shifts to her way of thinking** and by teaching her how to train her unconscious part of the brain to make better instinctive decisions in games. And I've literally had hundreds of other players that I've worked with that have also had the biggest improvement come from changing the way that they think.

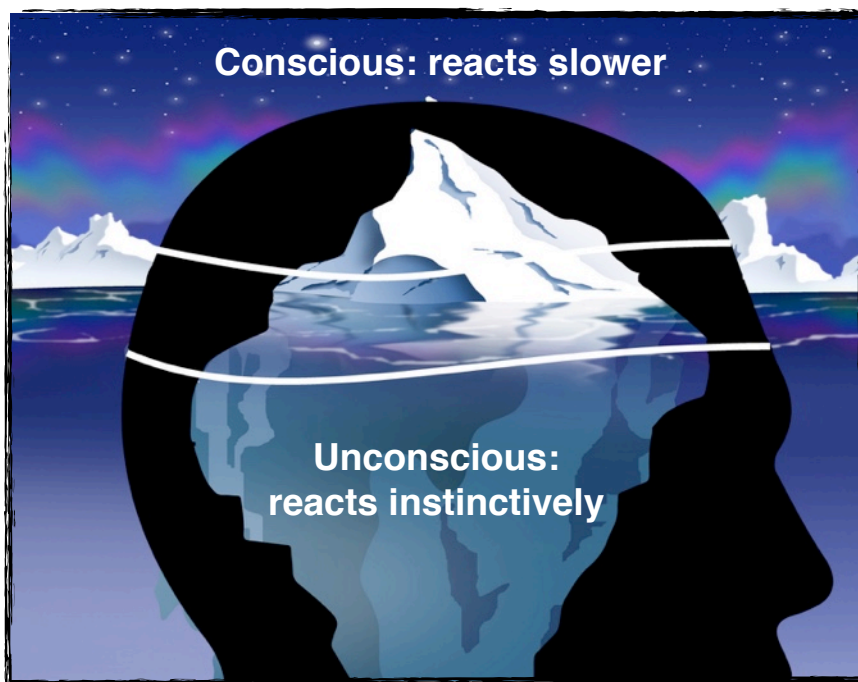
Maybe you too have seen glimpses of greatness within yourself when you do something awesome without really thinking about it and you even surprise yourself but I bet this only happens occasionally, almost by fluke.

But I want you to understand that this wasn't a fluke, that was your unconscious mind operating in it's ideal state which is often referred to as **playing in the zone.**

CONSCIOUS VS UNCONSCIOUS

Often we end up trying so hard not to make any mistakes in a game, particularly an important game that we end up overthinking which is when the conscious part of the brain takes over.

The conscious brain wants to analyze and control everything but the problem with the conscious part of the brain is that it reacts much **slower** than the **unconscious part which reacts off instinct**, which is more important in a fast paced sport like hockey.



Most players only train at a conscious level which is all the things that you are aware of because that's all they know and this explains why **some players have a good level of skill but are not able to execute those skills effectively in games**, because they are operating at a conscious level rather than the automatic unconscious level.

Now, I know this may sound a bit confusing for some of you but that's ok, the point is to show you that **you can improve by learning how to train the unconscious** part of your brain and learning how to trust in your skills so that you can use them effectively in games, especially when it matters the most.

There are a number of different ways to do this and often depends on each person.

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FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT

One simple way is to focus on what you want rather than what you don't want. For example when a bouncing ball is coming towards you, instead of thinking “**don't miss it**” simply change your focus to get behind the line of the ball and **watch it onto your stick**.



This could be the difference between a player scoring, saving a goal or missing an open goal in those last few crucial seconds of a game, to either win or lose the game.

The few players that are able to step up to the pressure and perform when it really counts as well as perform against the weaker teams too are pretty few and far between.

Not many players dedicate time to train their minds simply because they don't know what that means or how to do it, which explains why the majority of people don't reach their potential. The problem is that no-one talks about mental game training and few really understand what it is unless they've done it themselves.

For some reason people tend to associate the word mental or mindset with a negative connotation. The irony is that **embracing mental training is actually a sign of strength**, not of weakness. It's basically admitting that you can be better.

The weakness is actually when you think you have it all or that you don't need help.

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Most players limit themselves only to what they know. That's why I am sharing this with you to show you that you have so much more in you that you may not even realize yet.

Mental toughness is the broad term often used in sport to explain many different aspects of the mental game, yet so many still don't understand what it is or how to improve it. So, here is what I call the 10 Components of Mental Toughness



Playing sport means that you will face difficult emotions, especially as you strive to reach a higher level. As humans we are driven by emotion so if you don't know how to manage your emotions then it WILL affect your performance. If you don't feel pressure then you're probably stuck in a comfort zone, **settling for less than what you're capable of.**

The key message here is that while having a good level of skill in hockey is important, **if you are not using your skills effectively in games then you're probably missing some of the essential mindset skills that can help you reach that next level....**

The good news is that **mindset is a skill that can be developed.**

In fact, our human brain is like a smart phone that comes with a default factory setting which tends to be more negative than positive, so **in order to become a champion you first have to learn how to think like a champion.**



STRATEGY #2: GET FIT FOR HOCKEY

Have you ever played in a game when it feels like your lungs are about to explode or your legs start to feel like jelly and you start to make silly mistakes and bad decisions because you are tired, breathless and feel horribly unfit?

Perhaps there are times when you don't run back when your team lose the ball because you are simply out of puff or maybe you feel relieved when you are substituted because you get to have a rest and catch your breathe?

This is pretty common and the fact is that most hockey players are not fit enough to play at their best for 60 minutes, even though they may also do their own fitness outside of hockey.

The problem is that so many players are doing the wrong kind of fitness training which is not suitable for hockey players and many are **wasting time doing things that are not getting them the results** that they want and deserve.

This is really important because you don't want to be one of those players who lets the team down in the dying minutes because you make a mistake from fatigue, do you?

So, let me give you some context. A common question I get asked quite a lot is:

“How can I get fit for hockey?”

I then answer this with the question: What are you currently doing? I then tend to get one of these three responses:

- 1. I am not doing any extra fitness myself or**
- 2. I sometimes go for a jog or a 5km run or**
- 3. I am doing everything I think I should be doing, training 6-7 days a week**

Now there are a few things wrong here that I want to point out.

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Answer #1: I am not doing any extra fitness myself

- Don't have specific goal with clear objectives
- Don't have a plan
- Don't believe in your plan

Answer #2: I sometimes go for a jog or 5km run

- You're not using your time productively
- Uses a different energy system
- Makes you slower & increases risk of injury

Answer #3: I'm doing everything I think I should be doing, training 6-7 days / week

- You're serious but may be doing TOO much
- Not working smart
- Could lead to overtraining or injury

Now what I'm sharing here can seem quite controversial for some because most people have a mindset of: **"but that's what I've always done"**

... which by the way is a very dangerous mindset to be in, but there are some people who refuse to accept that perhaps there are better or rather more effective ways to train than what they're doing.

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Now you might be thinking, Ok this all makes perfect sense Lauren, but then what should I do instead? Well I'm glad you asked.

I am sure you would prefer to train for **less time**, have **more fun** and ultimately **achieve your goal** of being fitter on the hockey field so the first and easiest switch from longer distance running is to crank up intensity by using intervals.

For example you could start off with 30 seconds of work followed by 60-90 seconds of rest, repeating for a total of 8-10 times. That should take you between 15-20 minutes.

You can then progress from there, increasing the intensity further. This does not even have to be running, you can choose a variety of exercise options from rowing, boxing, circuits, skipping, cycling, etc... as long as you go hard in the work period.

Now, **this is just your starting point** and there are several other phases you need to work through, so doing intervals will only improve **ONE piece of the hockey fitness puzzle**.

There's a whole lot more to hockey than endurance and often it is actually your muscles or your nervous system that gets fatigued first which then affects your heart rate, making you think it's your cardio fitness that sucks, but that's often not the case. So, here are:



10 Physical Factors For Hockey

1. Mobility & Flexibility
2. Core stability
3. Strength
4. Power
5. Speed / Acceleration
6. Agility & Quickness
7. Speed endurance
8. Nutrition
9. Recovery
10. Injury Prevention

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DON'T BE RANDOM!

If you want to maximize your physical fitness as a hockey player, then you need to be working on all of these, but the problem is that:

You cannot work on all of these factors at the same time or you will burnout and probably get injured.

That is why you need to follow a structured plan over various parts of the season which is referred to in sport as **periodization**.

This is basically a structured program that includes different phases of what to focus on when and is used by athletes not just in their season but throughout the year.

Most hockey players only train for a few weeks before their season starts but the problem with this is not only will you not be fully prepared putting yourself at a **higher risk of injury** but you are also missing out on the opportunity to **maximize your physical performance**.

Maximizing your physical performance means to be able to **burst past players more often**, have **more powerful shots**, passes or drag flicks and of course **lasting longer in games**, just to name a few examples.

One of the problems is that most hockey players and coaches are not trained or don't have the scientific background behind great program design for hockey players. This should not be guessed which is why you shouldn't just pick your favourite exercises because just like I did many years ago, you will likely end up injured.

In fact, I've even had many people come to me after working with a qualified fitness professional who didn't understand the demand of hockey and even their programs ended up doing more harm than good.

Hopefully you can see the potential you have here if you were to follow a structured training program and were also able to maintain your fitness throughout the year without burning out or picking up little injury niggles, but you got to get it right.

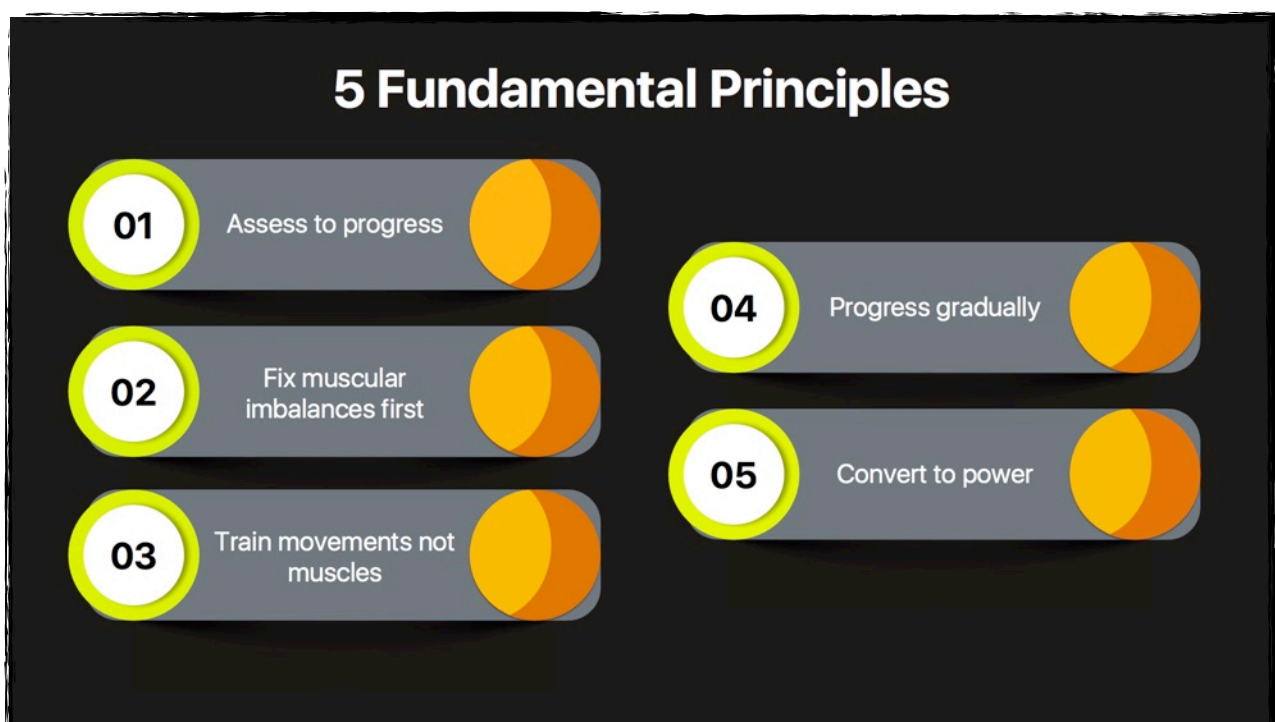
STRATEGY #3: BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION

For some reason there is a huge **myth** that training with weights is not good for hockey players, especially younger players, but this couldn't be further from the truth. As a hockey player, it is absolutely crucial that you condition your body to be able to take the demand that hockey places on you physically. This is called strength training.

For teenagers building strength is more important than any other training you do, simply because your body is growing at such a rapid rate and your body may seem to be out of proportion which means you are at a high risk of injury. The right kind of strength training will make the muscles surrounding your major joints stronger and more durable, meaning it will **reduce your risk of getting injured**, while also helping you to be **stronger on the ball**.

Strength training also improves the major energy system used in hockey and will result in **less fatigue after short bursts** of explosive moments such as leading, tackling, diving, hitting, slapping, drag flicking, etc.

There are however some fundamental principles to bear in mind (see video for more info).





WILL IT WORK FOR ME?

Examples of program design variables which determine the phase you're in will include:

Exercise variation, how many reps, sets, how much rest, what tempo, how much volume, intensity, etc. So you can see there is a real art and science to training the right way. What you do will also vary slightly according to where you are in your season.

Next, you may have a great plan, but you also need to understand how to execute the correct technique for each exercise, making sure you activate the right muscles.

As long as it's done correctly, strength & power training can get you much closer to reaching your goals. But, it is crucial that you have a good structured plan with different phases throughout the year (not just during the season but in your off-season too).

Now if you might be thinking yes this sounds great Lauren but how do I know it will it work for me? Here's the thing, even if you are already doing some of these things, I bet you could probably be doing them better, training smarter and maybe even in less time.

A great example of building a solid foundation is a client I worked with, Michael, who used to train in the gym 6 times a week with a couple of his friends he plays hockey with.

*At first his friends thought he was crazy for listening to me because I told him to **reduce his training** to just 3 times a week, but he was so glad he did because after going through my 12 week fitness system his friends were jealous not only because they noticed a dramatic difference on the hockey field, but because he was the only one who now has a six-pack.*

So, there are a few added benefits to training like a hockey player should.

And for any ladies watching, don't worry you won't become a muscle-mary at all. As females we simply don't have the same levels of testosterone as men so you won't turn into a man, I promise, unless of course like a bodybuilder you inject yourself with steroids.

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YOUR NEXT STEP

Now in this video I've covered the top 3 strategies that help players to gain the most impact and if you haven't yet noticed, they have nothing to do with skills, because without these no amount of skill will get you to the next level.

In the next video I will be sharing **4 more Powerful Strategies** that you can use to take your game to the next level, as well as some examples of real players that have got real results and how they reached their next level.

I will also reveal **5 Critical Mistakes** that most players make that stop them from reaching the next level and how to tackle them.

Keep a look out on your email over the next few days because I will be sending you the link to the next video, but these videos will only be available for a short time so watch it as soon as you can.

In the meantime go and leave a comment in our **FB group** and tell me:

- 1) What you can take away from this video**
- 2) What your #1 challenge has been up until now?**

If you haven't already joined the FB group then you can **join the group here:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1239266636115934/>

Come and join us and start interacting with other likeminded players from all over the world.

I'll see you in a few days.

Lauren Penny
Ex-International Hockey Player & Performance Coach
Hockey Performance Academy

