



THE REALITY CYCLE



***THE CODE FOR (ALMOST)
EVERYTHING***

Welcome to the eWorkbook about the Reality Cycle!

This concept describes the cycle of our subjective reality and will help you to better understand and influence your thoughts, feelings, physiology, behaviour, experiences and beliefs. For athletes in particular, this cycle can offer valuable insights and practical applications.

What is the Reality Cycle?

The Reality Cycle is a model that describes the interactions between our mental and physical states. It helps us to understand how our thoughts (thought) influence our feelings (feeling), how these shape our posture and physiological reactions (physiology), how our behaviour (behaviour) is controlled by these states and how the resulting experiences (experience) shape our beliefs and convictions (conviction/beliefs). These beliefs in turn influence our thoughts, completing the cycle.

Every subjective reality is unique

A central principle of the Reality Cycle is recognising that each person has their own subjective reality. This reality is as unique as a fingerprint, shaped by individual thoughts, feelings, physical states, behaviours, experiences and beliefs. There is no objective "good" or "bad" within this cycle - every experience and every reaction is valid and specific to the individual.

Sense and purpose of the Reality

The Reality Cycle offers a structured approach to analysing the subjective reality of each individual and bringing about targeted positive changes. Understanding this cycle makes it possible to identify and overcome mental and emotional barriers, which can be particularly beneficial for athletes. By consciously managing the individual elements of the cycle, athletes can optimise their performance and achieve their goals more effectively.

How does the Reality Cycle work?

The Reality Cycle works through the interaction of the following components:

1. **Thought:** Every cycle begins with a thought. Thoughts are the foundation of our reality and influence everything else in the cycle.
2. **Feeling:** Thoughts lead to feelings. Positive thoughts generate positive feelings and vice versa.
3. **Physiology** : Emotions influence our physical states, such as posture, breathing and general physical reactions.
4. **Behaviour:** Our physiology has a direct effect on our behaviour. A relaxed state leads to confident behaviour, while stress often leads to insecure behaviour.
5. **Experience:** Our behaviour and the resulting reactions shape our experiences.
6. **Beliefs:** Experiences shape our beliefs and convictions, which then influence our future thoughts.

Body-Mind Connection

A key component of the Reality Cycle is the so-called body mind connection between **thoughts** and **physiology**. This connection emphasises how closely our mental states and physical reactions are interwoven. Positive thoughts can lead to an upright posture and deep breathing, while negative thoughts often lead to a hunched posture and shallow breathing.

Transfer into practice

The Reality Cycle offers practical applications for athletes who want to improve their mental and physical performance:

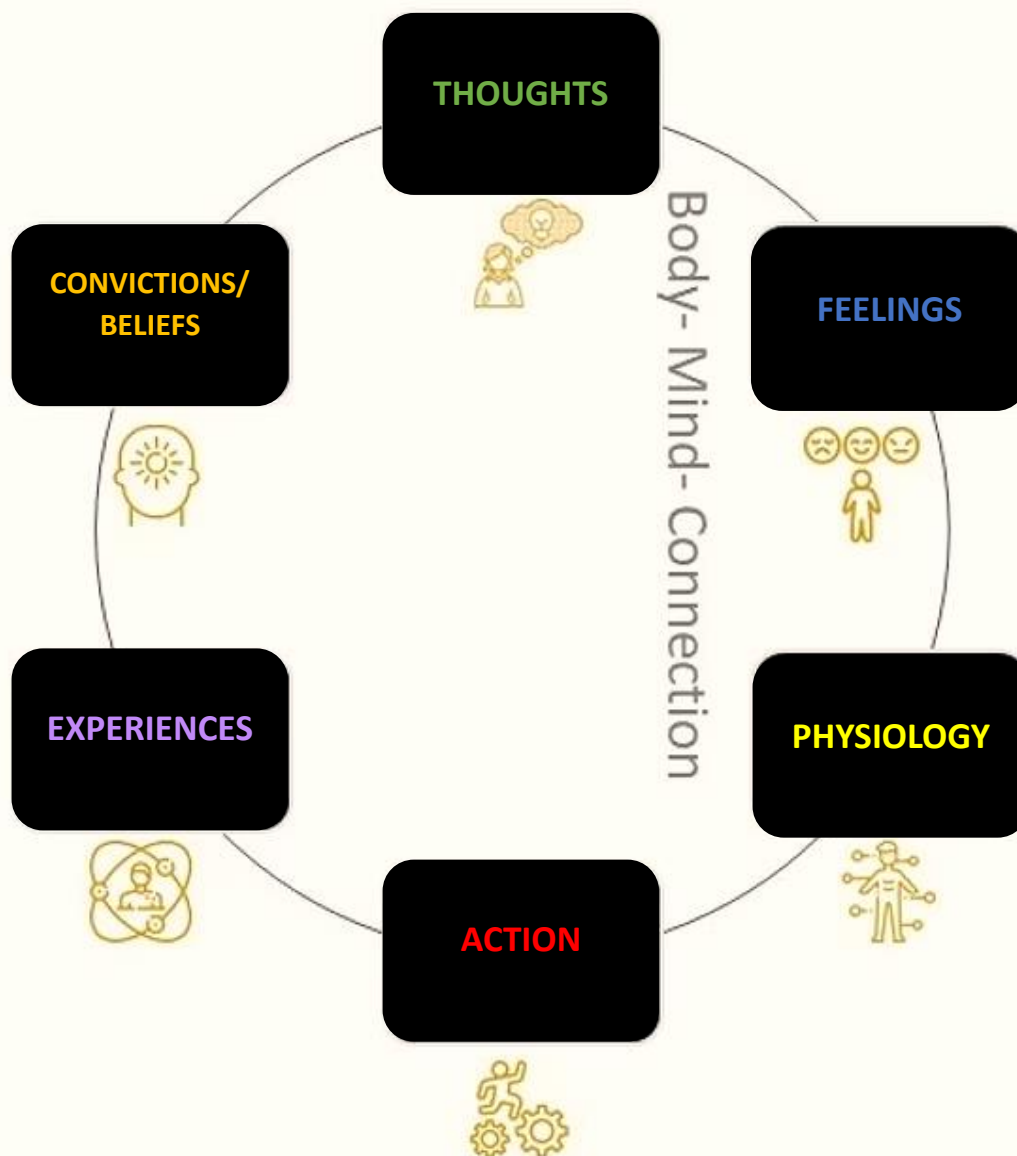
- **Competitive athletes:** By consciously controlling their thoughts, athletes can positively influence their emotional and physical reactions, which leads to improved performance in competition. For example, a tennis player could use targeted self-talk to reduce his nervousness before an important match and focus on his strengths.
- **Everyday situations:** The Reality Cycle can also be used outside of sport to better manage stressful situations. A stressed employee can control their emotional and physical reactions through mindfulness and positive thoughts, which leads to better stress management.

By understanding and applying the Reality Cycle, athletes can not only improve their athletic performance, but also their overall quality of life. The model provides a

structured method for overcoming mental and physical challenges and continuously working on yourself.

And now we will describe each box of the Reality Cycle in detail, give examples from athletes' lives and introduce practical exercises to help you apply the principles of the Reality Cycle in your own life.

Let's go!



Box 1: THOUGHTS

Thoughts are the starting point of the reality cycle. They significantly influence how we feel, how we behave physically and how we perceive our world. The more positive and self-determined our thoughts are, the better we can achieve our goals. Thoughts can be conscious or unconscious and negative thought patterns often influence us without us realising it.

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **A positive thought before an important match:**

A tennis player is about to play an important match and thinks: "I am well prepared and will give my best. I have confidence in my abilities and my tactics." These thoughts strengthen his inner calm and self-confidence. He visualises the successful moments beforehand and feels mentally prepared thanks to these positive thoughts.

- **Dealing constructively with mistakes:**

A footballer thinks after a failed pass: "Mistakes happen to everyone, I've learnt from it and will do better next time." This perspective helps him to see the mistake as an opportunity to improve and take the pressure off.

- **Overcoming the pressure to perform:**

A marathon runner who is worried before a big race replaces negative thoughts such as "I can't do it" with positive self-talk: "I've trained hard and I'm ready for this challenge." These positive thoughts help him to keep his focus and go to the start line with confidence.

- **Visualisation techniques:**

A basketball player who is under pressure repeatedly visualises successful free throws. These positive mental images reassure him and strengthen his conviction that he can make the shot successfully.

Exercises

1. Consciously set yourself three positive affirmations every morning. Make sure that they are realistic but also motivating. Examples could be: 'I am ready to overcome challenges', 'I learn from every mistake' or 'I am able to achieve peak performance'. Repeat these affirmations out loud in front of a mirror or write them down in your notebook to internalise them and integrate them into your subconscious.
2. Make a list of your most frequent negative thoughts and find positive alternatives. Write these positive thoughts on cards and place them in places that you see every day (e.g. mirror, desk). Read them aloud regularly to actively change your thought patterns.



Box 2: FEELINGS

Feelings are the direct reaction to our thoughts. When we have positive thoughts, positive feelings are generated that stimulate us to perform better. However, when we are influenced by negative thoughts, feelings of frustration, stress or insecurity arise, which can negatively influence our behaviour.

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **A feeling of happiness after a victory:**

After a victory, a tennis player feels euphoric and confident. He knows that his training and positive thoughts beforehand have led to this success. This feeling of fulfilment will also strengthen him for future matches.

- **Motivation despite setbacks:**

After a failed move in football, a player thinks: "That wasn't ideal, but I know I can do better next time." Instead of allowing frustration to set in, this thought leads to a feeling of motivation and more focus on the next game.

- **Overcoming anxiety:**

A gymnast who is afraid of a competition concentrates on positive thoughts such as "I have perfected every movement" and "I am calm and focussed". These thoughts reduce their anxiety and create a feeling of security and confidence.

- **Enjoy training:**

An athlete who trains every day thinks: "Every step brings me closer to my goal." These thoughts lead to positive feelings of joy and fulfilment during training.

Exercises

1. Keep an emotional diary. Take 10 minutes in the evening to think about your feelings of the day and note how they related to your thoughts. Ask yourself: "What thought triggered this feeling?" and "How did I react to this feeling?" Try to recognise negative thought patterns and think about how you can replace them with positive thoughts.
2. Use an 'emotional traffic light' to monitor your emotions throughout the day. Draw a simple traffic light circle with the colours red (negative), yellow (neutral) and green (positive). Note each emotional change and the corresponding thought. At the end of the day, analyse the most common emotional states and their triggers to develop a better understanding of your emotional patterns.



Box 3: **PHYSIOLOGY**

Our posture and physical reactions reflect how we feel inside. Our posture influences our emotions and also our performance. An open, upright posture promotes self-confidence, while a slumped posture can increase stress and insecurity

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **Confident posture before the competition:**

A swimmer is about to compete and takes a moment to stand up straight, take a deep breath and mentally prepare for the race. This conscious posture helps him to feel calm and focussed and gives him a sense of control and strength.

- **Negative effects of poor posture:**

A basketball player goes into defence, but his body is bent, his shoulders are slumped and he is breathing shallowly. This posture increases his insecurity and makes him more likely to make mistakes in stressful moments.

- **Improving performance through breathing techniques**

A weightlifter uses conscious breathing techniques to maximise his strength. Before lifting, they breathe in and out deeply to centre themselves and relax their muscles. This technique helps them to stay focussed and stable.

- **Reduction of stress through targeted relaxation**

An archer uses progressive muscle relaxation techniques before a competition to calm her body and mind. By consciously tensing and relaxing different muscle groups, she can reduce her tension and improve her aiming accuracy.

Exercises:

1. Do at least two minutes of power poses every day. Get into a victory pose (e.g. Victory Pose), where you raise your arms in the air or position your hips in a wide, stable position. This activates confidence in yourself and reduces stress hormones. You can also do this pose before important games or competitions to activate your mental strength.
2. Integrate breathing exercises into your daily routine. One simple exercise is the '4-7-8 breathing technique': breathe in for four seconds, hold your breath for seven seconds and then breathe out for eight seconds. This exercise helps to relax your body and improve your concentration.



Box 4: **ACTION**

Our behaviour reflects how we bring our thoughts and feelings into the world. If we have positive thoughts and feelings, we show this in our behaviour, through self-confidence, determination and a willingness to take on challenges. A negative thought, on the other hand, can make us hesitant to make mistakes or take risks.

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **A determined start to the race:**

A swimmer who feels confident after positive thoughts and feelings goes into the race motivated and implements his technique, without a doubt.

- **Susceptibility to errors due to stress:**

A basketball player who feels blocked by stress and negative thoughts is overwhelmed by the situation and makes more mistakes that lead to a deficit.

- **Proactive behaviour in training:**

A runner preparing for a marathon race takes part in additional training sessions and tries out new strategies to improve his performance. His positive approach and willingness to challenge himself are reflected in his training progress.

- **Stress management through conscious behavioural change:**

A weightlifter under pressure uses targeted behavioural strategies such as conscious smiling and deep breathing to control her nervousness and stabilise her performance.

Exercises

1. Set yourself small daily behavioural goals that encourage you to adopt a positive attitude. For example: "When I feel stressed, I will consciously stand up straight and take a deep breath." Or: "I will reflect positively on my progress after each training session to reinforce my behaviour in a targeted way."
2. Create a list of micro-behaviours that you want to implement every day. For example: "Meditate for ten minutes every morning before training", "Use positive self-talk during breaks" or "At the end of the day, write down three successes of the day". These small, conscious actions can help you to develop a positive routine and increase your performance.



Box 5: EXPERIENCES

Experiences arise from our behaviour and the reactions of the outside world to it. Positive experiences strengthen our self-confidence and motivate us to continue working on ourselves. Negative experiences offer us valuable learning moments if we are prepared to see them as opportunities.

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **A sense of achievement after a victory**

A swimmer's victory in a competition boosts his self-confidence and motivates him to continue training hard. He now knows that his preparation and positive thoughts have led to this success.

- **Motivation through defeat**

A defeat in a game does not discourage a basketball player. Instead, he sees the experience as an opportunity to work specifically on his weaknesses and improve.

- **Learning opportunities through setbacks**

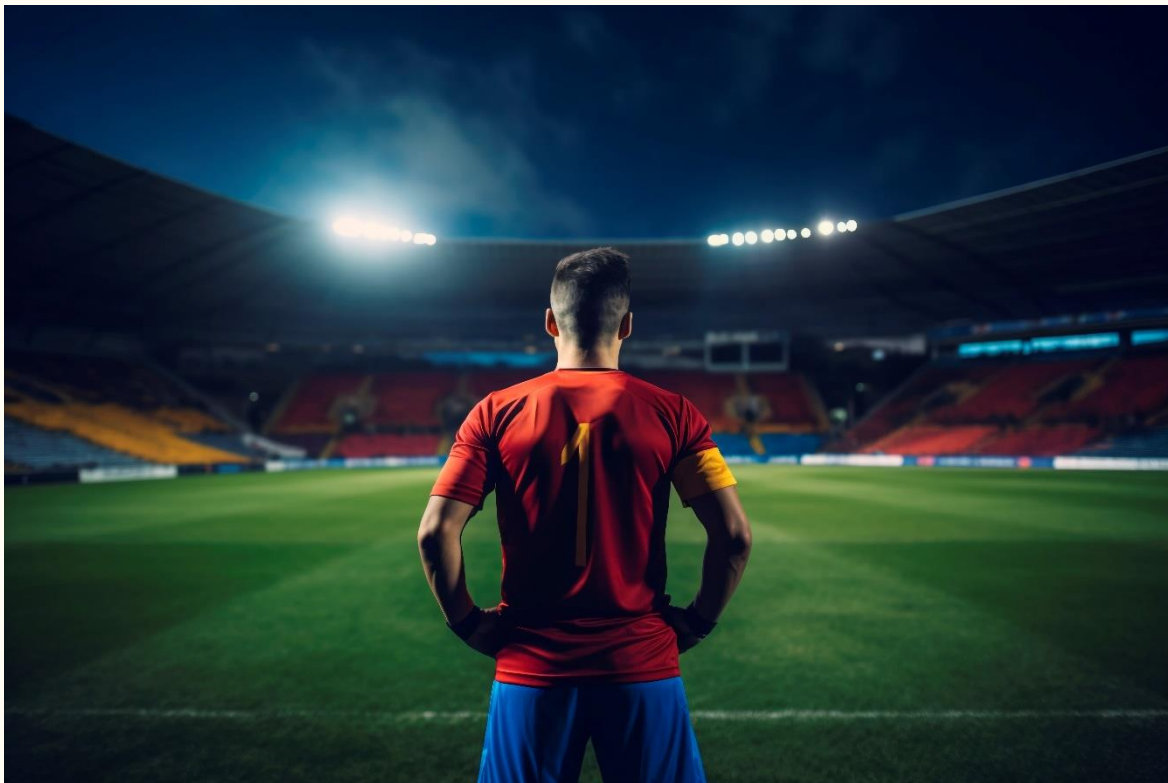
A rower who does not perform at his best in an important race analyses his mistakes and develops a new training plan to improve his weaknesses. This experience teaches him that setbacks are a natural part of progress.

- **Confirmation through continuous improvements**

A sprinter who improves her personal best time with every training session feels validated and motivated to work even harder. Every positive experience strengthens her confidence in her abilities and her training methods.

Exercises

1. Reflect on your experiences of the day in the evening. What went well, what didn't? What can you learn from it and how can you do better next time? Write down your most important insights and think about how you can use them for your next steps.
2. Create a success and learning journal. Every day, write down one positive experience and one lesson you have learnt from a challenging situation. This journal will help you document your progress and learn from each experience, whether positive or negative.



Box 6: CONVICTIONS/ BELIEFS

Beliefs are deeply rooted convictions that guide our thoughts and actions. They shape our self-perception and the way we react to challenges. If you believe in yourself and your abilities, you will reflect this belief in your behaviour and performance.

Examples from athletes' lives:

- **Positive conviction through continuous training:**

A tennis player's belief that he can always improve drives him to train continuously. This conviction helps him to stay motivated even in difficult times. His belief in his ability to improve gives him the stamina to keep going even in the face of setbacks.

- **Dealing constructively with mistakes:**

A footballer's belief that mistakes are part of the learning process helps him to deal with setbacks. This mindset enables him to learn from mistakes and develop further. This belief keeps him optimistic and allows him to see mistakes as opportunities to improve.

- **Strengthening self-confidence through positive self-talk:**

A boxer who talks positively to himself before an important fight strengthens his belief in his abilities. This conviction gives him the confidence and mental strength to be successful in the ring.

- **Motivation through vision:** A long-distance runner who firmly believes that she will one day take part in the Olympic Games is motivated and inspired by this belief. Her vision and conviction drive her to train hard and never give up.

Exercises

1. Identify and write down your strongest beliefs. Ask yourself: "What beliefs do I have about myself?" and "Do these beliefs help or hinder me?" Think about how you can replace limiting beliefs with positive, empowering beliefs.
2. Create a vision board with pictures, quotes and symbols that represent your most important goals and positive beliefs. Hang it up in a place that you see every day to remind yourself regularly of your visions and strengths. This will help you stay focussed and motivated and reinforce your positive beliefs.

Conclusion

The Reality Cycle is a powerful model that helps athletes to improve their mental and physical performance. By consciously managing their own thoughts, feelings, posture and behaviour, athletes can positively influence their experience and continuously work on themselves. With the Reality Cycle, athletes have the opportunity to maximise their success and get the best out of themselves in every situation.

Use the principles of the Reality Cycle to take your athletic performance to the next level!

As an expert in mental and physical preparation, I offer customised coaching sessions and workshops to help you reach your full potential.

Send me an email for more information and to make an appointment.



info@beil-mental-coaching.de

Let's make your reality the best it can be!

Your Björn