Physical activity outcomes:
- to complete an aquathon in 30 mins
- to make sure my heart rate monitor says an avHR between the 80-90% MHR in the runs
- to make sure I am at all class sessions and keeping to my swimming training program

Goal Setting

Goal setting is an important strategy to have because it will help me achieve my goal by providing me with an image of what I aim to accomplish.

It could be argued that having a goal does make your mind focus on what you want to achieve therefore the training appears easier.

However, I am assuming that having a goal will make me more likely to achieve and will make me train harder. The research says that goal setting focuses attention and enhances persistence and motivation which means an athlete can be encouraged to work harder than an athlete not working towards a goal (http://www.brianmac.co.uk/goals.htm) (http://believepārform.com/performance/goal-settings). However, we know that when it comes to training and performing there are many individual differences and individual influences such as … As well as this, completing an aquathon is new to me and I am assuming I am capable of completing it, with the right training. I'm also assuming I can work out what the 'right training' is for me and not just risk following a 'one size fits all' approach. I am also assuming I can apply the science of training and also take care of the motivation side of actually doing it, which is not considered in a lot of training programmes. Then there is the assumptions around training and its effects, which are often stated in a way that says if we do X and Y; then we will be fit and ready.

I believe that having a goal does make your mind focus on what you want to achieve therefore the training appears easier. Research supports this, and this has been my experience in the past when I set myself little goals such as… and I am aware of what motivates me, and this includes having goals and achieving these. However, I am also assuming that my past experience will transfer into what is a much tougher goal and I am untested in sticking to a programme when the going gets tough. Being aware of this I think will help me monitor my motivation and my ability to stick to my goals. For me, I know that having milestones or short term goals acts as positive feedback on my progress and helps me feel good about achieving and therefore am more motivated. It might not be the case for some other people as they are more focused on the end goal rather than the short term goals like running hard up hills in individual training sessions. Often focusing on the final outcome you might lose focus as well as not overloading as much.

What this means is that when I am training, I will be able to be motivated to work as hard as I can to improve. Enhancing motivation will be great for me because in the running I will be mentally weak and having a goal means that I can think about working towards the goal and not giving up or taking breaks on the running. ... My overall goal of completing the aquathon in a time of 30 minutes will be quite hard to achieve, so I think it is important to broaden this goal to getting an Excellence, which is more achievable and it is more realistic. In the first two weeks I will be focused on making every training session and trying to keep exactly to the training session. In my training program I will make sure the session goals are achievable so that I am challenged as this will be me motivated to be successful in completing each session. If my session goals are too easy or too hard I will not make the necessary gains. For example, my goal for the run sessions is to make sure my heart rate monitor says an avHR between the 80-90% MHR (see overload section for reasoning). For the swimming sessions I will need to make sure I am at every session and keeping to my training program. In my 3rd and 4th weeks I will be timing myself to check my progress and from these results I will be able to make any necessary adjustments to my training programme.

Reflection after 2 weeks Over the first two weeks, I have achieved my goal of having an avHR of between 80-90% of my MHR. This has been a big short term goal for me because this means that I am, making improvements and will reduce the time to complete the aquathon. I am making an assumption here though which is that working at the upper end of my THR will make me improve my time over a short timeframe, and we know that changes in aerobic capacity don't happen that quickly. Research does tell us though that over an extended period of time, working at this intensity for 4-5

times a week will improve my aerobic capacity. I am assuming this in turn will increase my speed which I don't know yet!

During the runs have been running with AA and CO, which has helped me to be more positive about my running. I have been having fun, as well as thinking about my goals while I run. This means that I should be aware that a motivating factor for me is the social component of being with my peers and so if I find training hard I should make sure I have this social aspect included in what I am doing. Having the heart rate monitor on means that when my HR goes below 162BPM I can put my head down and work harder, seeing the heart rate go up even though it burns, feels good to know that I am working toward the goal. The only time I have not felt motivated towards my goals is when I went for the W... run by myself, even though it was a good run, I had no idea if I worked hard enough and it wasn't as fun as being with others. This was also because I didn't have my HR monitor on or else I would have known how hard I was working. It seems for me I am motivated my running with others but also by knowing I am working at the top end of my THR zone. These two motivating factors don't always match up unless I run with people who are at the same pace as me or else when I need to increase my intensity to keep my HR up, I risk leaving others behind, which cancels out the social benefits. Having realised this means I am going to be selective about who I run with to ensure I meet my goals as well as being motivated by being with others.

My other goal was to complete every session, which I have done. This means that if I have an effective training programme, I should be making progress towards my outcome goal of completing the aquathon in 30mins. I am on track for my swimming goal of completing all swimming sessions and have not missed out sets or laps in the pool. I think that setting these goals has helped me to complete the training sessions because the goal provides me with a purpose and direction towards achieving my aquathon outcome Therefore this makes me feel more motivated to train. For example, (see log entry).

Overall, I will need to adjust my short-term goals to include learning focused goals because my swimming stroke is not very efficient. I plan to join the school squad for each swimming session to make use of the school swim coach. My first learning goal is to focus on a high elbow recovery as my hand and arm come forward and slam into the water which causes me to lose momentum in the form of drag, and my arm fails to move me forward (see my blue highlighted log entry) The coach will there to provide me feedback in achieving this goal and subsequent short term goals I will set with him to improve my stroke efficiency.

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