

## **MENTAL TRAINING**

The concept of Mental Training was launched in 1969 by Psychologist Lars-Eric Unestahl and was based on 10 years of research at Uppsala University on "Mind-Body" relationships, Alternative states of consciousness and the effect of training on mental processes and skills. Mental Training, Integrated Mental Training (IMT), or Psychic Preparedness Training, as it was called in the Armed Forces, was defined as a "Systematic, Long-Term and Scientific-proven Training aiming to Peak Performance and Wellbeing. (Unestahl, 1973, 1979, 2011) Mental Training consists of three parts

### **1. Mental basic training**

The basic mental training consists of a 7-week training that includes muscular and mental relaxation training as well as self-hypnosis training (the Mental Room). In addition to being the basis for the subsequent mental training, basic training increases the ability for stress management and recovery. (Ardoris-Uneståhl, 2017) In addition, the precondition for muscular excellence is created, which is defined as: "Optimal tension in agonist muscles combined with relaxation in the antagonist muscles." (Unestahl, 2011, Jansson, L.1995)

### **2. Mental Training**

The mental training is divided into

1. Problem solving with mental training programs for most behavioral, emotional and psychosomatic problems and
2. Personal development based on Uneståhl's four success factors: "SMAE", which stands for Self-image, Goals / Motivation, Attitude and Emotions (Inner climate). This also includes the development of mental skills such as Focus / Concentration, Creativity, Mindfulness, etc.

### **3. Mental Preparation**

Here, mental training is used to prepare for the future, e.g. athletes who are preparing for career, season, competition or police who in the police academy program the best ways to solve future challenging and provocative situations. (T.Bäck. 2010) This also includes mental training programs for phobia situations, where a common one for ordinary people is to "speak in public." (Uneståhl, 1979, 1997, 2014, 2015)

### **From sports to school, business and health**

The practical training programs were developed and evaluated during the 1970s in collaboration with ten national teams and two Olympic teams (1976 and 1980).

During the 1980s, mental training was introduced in

1. Swedish Schools, where Sven Setterlind in his doctoral thesis evaluated 6 years of studies of mental basic training in the physical education subject (Setterlind, et al., 1978, 1981)
2. Business, where training in leadership and employee motivation became the two major areas (Uneståhl, 2015) and
3. Health, where mental training was used both for health development and for help in connection with health problems.

Regarding the last area, Uneståhl made a number of evaluations of the role of mental training as "Complementary medicine" in collaboration with various hospitals (Tinnitus - Sahlgrenska / Gbg univ.), Chronic pain (H.Olson Helsingborg hospital (2001, 2002) Sleep (L.Ljungdahl, Motala hospital (Uneståhl, et al., 1999), Asthma - Åre hospital (Kok.H et.al.1997) Cancer (Eskilstuna hospital / Uppsala univ., Uneståhl, et.al.), Surgery ( Nilsson, et al., 2001)

### **Mental Training at the University**

The first university education started in the 1980's. This led to the new profession as "Mental Trainer" (Örebro, Växjö) and from 1990 also through the private Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan and Scandinavian International University. A number of colleges and universities also included the mental training as part of their education (Health colleges, Music colleges, The Police academy, etc.)

### **Sport**

The mass media attention has always been focused on sport, where much has been written about all the Olympic champions and world champions, who attributed the mental training a crucial importance to their success, from the medalists at the 1980 Olympics and Tomas Gustavsson 3 Olympic gold in the 1980s over to the success of the winter sport and motor sport in recent years. Of great importance for the Sport successes has been all the talented Mental Trainers, who have been trained over the years (Igor Ardoris, Stig Wiklund, Jan Alriksson and many more). Many Olympians and world champions have also described the importance of mental training in their own books (Yamina Enedahl, 2014, Johan Olsson, 2015, etc.)

### **Individuals**

However, since Mental training as well as Physical training, is based on self-training, most "users" have been private individuals, who have used one or more of the over 200 training programs as help and support for problem solving and development. An estimate of the number of users in Sweden, made at the 50th anniversary of 2019, came to a figure of just over 2.5 million. Then, the school children are included who used the mental basic training in the 1980s (73% of the more than 6,000 sports teachers who were in Sweden in 1984 used the mental training programs from pre-school to high school (Uneståhl, 1985, 2015)

### **The Swedish model**

Mental training emerged in Sweden but after the 1976 Olympics, where Sweden was the only nation to have a sports psychologist/Mental Trainer, interest quickly spread and Unestahl was invited by the Olympic committees in a number of countries to introduce " the Swedish model ". However, the use of mental training abroad is still focused on sport while in Sweden it has spread to all parts of society. (Uneståhl-Hellertz, 2015)

### **International organization**

Uneståhl founded in 1979 the international organization "Mental Training and Excellence" which holds world congresses every 4 years at universities worldwide (Örebro 1991, Ottawa 1995, Salt Lake City 1999, St. Petersburg 2003, Beijing 2008, Pristhina (Kosovo) 2011, Chandigarh (India) 2015 and Gävle 2019.) The last conference at the University of Gävle was entitled: Mind Training for Excellence in Sport and Life and presented 84 speakers from 32 countries (Unestahl, 2019)

### **Mental Training for Peace**

The Mental Training Vision is a "A Better world through Education and Mental Training". One of the expressions for the vision is a project in northern Iraq, where Unestahl and Abdullah Tawfik were assigned 2014 by the government of northern Iraq (the Health Minister) to introduce the mental training to the entire population. The name of the project is: "Mental Training for Peace - From Inner Peace to Outer Peace" (Tawfik, A. 2019)

### **Mental Training celebrates 50 years 2019**

The contents, development and the applications of mental training has been depicted in some 20 books in Swedish and English and has been summarized in the book from 2015 on "The history of mental training" (see Bibliography)

### **Bibliography in selection**

Unestahl, L-E. (1973). Hypnosis and posthypnotic suggestions. Doctoral dissertation, Uppsala University.

Unestahl, L.-E. (Ed.) (1975) Hypnosis in the seventies. Proceedings from the VIth International Congress on Hypnosis and Psychosomatic Medicine in Uppsala, 1973, Veje Publ. Inc: Sweden.

Uneståhl, L-E, Hultin, K. & Sundgren, B.: (1975) Effekten av Mental Träning på idrottsprestationer. Rapport nr 1, Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E & Peterson, Y.: (1976) Motorisk inläring och posthypnotisk förstärkning. Rapport nr 8, Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E & Buuts, U. (1977) Sommarolympiaden 1976. Rapport 10, Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E. (1978) Mental Träning. Rapport 12, Högskolan i Örebro.

Setterlind, S & Unestahl, L-E.: (1978) Introducing relaxation training in Swedish schools. Örebro University.

Uneståhl, L-E. (1979) Självkontroll genom Mental Träning. Sweden. Veje. Publ. Inc.

Uneståhl, L-E. (1980) Utveckling och Utvärdering av Metoder för Mental Träning - En lägesrapport. Rapport 20, Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E & Breife, S. (1981) Utvärdering av Mental träning i bowling. Rapport 23. Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E.: (1981) Motorisk inläring genom Mental Träning. Rapport 24, Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E. & Strandh, P. (1981) Simning och Mental Träning. Rapport 29. Högskolan i Örebro.

Uneståhl, L-E, Bexell, S & Lanker, M.: (1981). Mental Träning och återhämtningsförmåga Rapport 30. Högskolan i Örebro.

Setterlind, S. & Patriksson, G.: (1981) Teaching children to relax. Dept. of Educational Research, University of Gothenburg.

Uneståhl, L.-E. Red. (1982). Hypnos i Teori och Praktik. Örebro, Sweden: VEJE Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L.-E. (Ed.) (1983). Mental aspects of Gymnastics. Örebro, Sweden: VEJE Publ. Inc.

Uneståhl L-E (Ed.) (1985) Sport Psychology in Theory and Practice. Örebro: VEJE Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E (Ed) (1986) Contemporary Sport Psychology. Örebro, Sweden, VEJE Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E., Melin, L., Eriksson, L. & Ingelsson, R.: (1987) Mental Träning för Cancerpatienter – En experimentell klinisk studie. Psyk. Inst. Uppsala Universitet.

Kullberg A. & Larsson, R. (1992) Avslappningsträning för flyktingar. Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Bundzen P, Bendjucov M, Kirushin A (1994) The system of Psychoprophilaxis – Mental Training. Bulletin of Sports Medicine of Russia 1–2: 35–8

Carlsson, C. (1995) Mental Träning för patienter med långvarig smärta. Råslätts Vårdcentral.

Jansson, L. & Andersson, T. (1995) Avspänd teknik. Stockholm, SISU idrottsböcker

Englund A-K, Martikkala, I. (1996) Mental träning och motorisk inläring – En litteraturstudie. Örebro, Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan.

Unestahl, L.-E., & Bundzen, P. (1996). Integrated mental training – Neuro–Biochemical mechanisms and psycho-physical consequences. Hypnos, XXIII (3), 148–158.

Bundzen, P. & Unestahl, L-E.: (1997) Integrated Mental Training. Report from the Swedish-Russian Research project. Research Institute of Physical Culture, St Petersburg.

Uneståhl, L-E.: (1997) Integrerad Mental Träning. Stockholm, Sweden. SISU Publ. Inc.

Bundzen, P., Gavrilova, E., Isakov, V., & Unestahl, L. E. (1998). Stresslimiting and immunomodulating effect of mental training. Pathophysiology, 5 (Supplement one), 148.

Kok, H. & Lidbom-Hedin, R. (1997) Mental Träning för patienter med varaktiga luftvägsbesvär. Åre sjukhus i samarbete med Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Noedlund, M. & Skogtjärn, A. (1997) Mental Träning och motorisk inläring vid stroke rehabilitering. Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro

Sundqvist, M. & Torgnysdotter, U. (1998) Mental Träning för äldre kvinnor med psykisk ohälsa. Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Uneståhl, L.-E. (1999). *Skratta dig friskare*. Örebro, Sweden: VEJE Publ. Inc.

Nilsson, Rawal, Uneståhl, Zetterberg, Unosson (2001) Improved recovery after music and therapeutic suggestions during general anaesthesia: A double-blind randomized controlled study. Dissertation - Örebro University hospital.

Uneståhl, Straub, Spino, Englund (2000) The effects of Mental training with diaphragmatic breathing and sleep training on sleep, Jet lag and swimming performance at the pre-olympic competitions in Sydney. Scandinavian International University, Örebro, Sweden.

Olsson, H. (2001) Mental Träning och hypnos på kassettband vid ländryggssmärta. Helsingborgs sjukhus, smärtkliniken, i samarbete med Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan.

Olsson, H. (2002) Mental Training for Pain Patients. Helsingborgs sjukhus i samarbete med Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Blomkvist, T. (2002) Integrerad Mental Träning inför förlossning. Institutionen för Vård och Vårdvetenskap, Mälardalens högskola.

Olsson, H. (2002) Mental Träning och hypnos via kassettband vid fibromyalgismärta. Helsingborgs sjukhus i samarbete med Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Bundzen, P. V., Korotkov, K. G., & Unestahl, L. E. (2002). Altered states of consciousness: Review of experimental data obtained with a multiple techniques approach. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 8(2), 153–165. doi:10.1089/107555302317371442

Uneståhl, L.-E.: (2002) Att utbilda sig till friskhet. Utvärdering av försäkringskasséstödda studerande vid Skandinaviska Ledarhögskolan, Örebro.

Unestahl, L.-E., Bundzen, P., Gavrilova, E., & Isakov, V. (2004). The effects of integrated mental training on stress and psychosomatic health. *Hypnos*, XXXI (2), 83–88.

Hansson, T. & Uneståhl, L.-E. (2004). *Mental tuffhetsträning* Sthlm, Sweden: SISU Publ. Inc.

Hansson, T. & Uneståhl, L.-E.: (2005) *GOLF-Det mentala spelet*, Örebro, VEJE Publ. Inc

Johansson, B., & Unestahl, L.-E. (2006). Stress reducing regulative effects of integrated mental training with self-hypnosis on the secretion of dehydroepiandrosterone sulfate (DHEAS-S) and cortisol in plasma. *Contemporary Hypnosis*, 23(3), 101–110. doi:10.1002/ch.314

Uneståhl, L.-E. (2006). *Den Nya Livsstilen*. Örebro, Sweden: VEJE Publication Inc.

Uneståhl, L.-E. (2008). *Mental träning i fotboll*. Örebro, Sweden: Veje Publ. Inc.

Johansson, B, Uneståhl, L-E et al.(2008) *Kardio Mental Träning: En komplementär metod för självvård för patienter i primärvården med svårbehandlade smärttillstånd och somatiseringar*. Mind & Body AB i samarbete med Brinkens Vårdcentral och Landstinget i Östergötland,

Bäck, T. (2010) *Från student till yrkesverksam polis – Mental träning i polisutbildningen och polisyrket*. Polisstudenters och yrkesverksamma polisers upplevda kompetens i mental träning Pedagogiska Institutionen, Umeå Universitet

Unestahl,LE(2011) *Self-Control through Mental Training*. Mental Training Sweden Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E (2011) *The New Lifestyle*. Mental Training Sweden Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E (2011) *Yes, you can*. Mental Training Sweden Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E (2011) *Hypnosis, Self-hypnosis and Mental Training*. Mental Training Sweden Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E (2011) *Laugh yourself healthier*. Mental Training Sweden Publ. Inc.

Johansson, B. & Unestahl, L.-E. (2013). Elite sport and biological age: Influence of extensive or regular low to moderate exercise on plasma DHEA-S and cortisol in trained ice-hockey players: A pilot study- *Psychology* 2013. Vol.4, No.7, 613-618 (<http://www.scirp.org/journal/psych>) DOI:10.4236/psych.2013.47087

Enedahl, Y. (2014) Under ytan: Mentala höjder ur själens djup. Stockholm: Lava förlag.

Uneståhl, L-E & Hellertz, P.(2015) Den Mentala Träningens historia. Sthlm.,Veje Publ.Inc.

Uneståhl, L-E., Wiklund, S., Olsson, J., Olsson, S.: (2015) Huvudrätt – Mental Träning för alla. Stockholm, Ekerlids förlag.

Uneståhl, L.-E., & Nilsson, A. (2016). Mental träning i Idrott. Stockholm, Sweden: Buena Vida Publ.

Ardoris, I. & Uneståhl, L-E: (2019) Mind Training – grunderna i Mental Träning. Stockholm. Buena Vida Publ. Inc.

Ardoris, I. & Unestahl, L-E: (2019) Mind Training . The Basics in Mental Training – E-book Buena Vida Publ. Inc.

Unestahl, L-E.: (2019) Mind Training for Excellence in Sport and Life. In Press. Stockholm, Buena Vida, Publ. Inc. One chapter in the book is:

Tawfik, A.:(2019) Mental Training for Peace – From Inner Peace to Outer Peace.