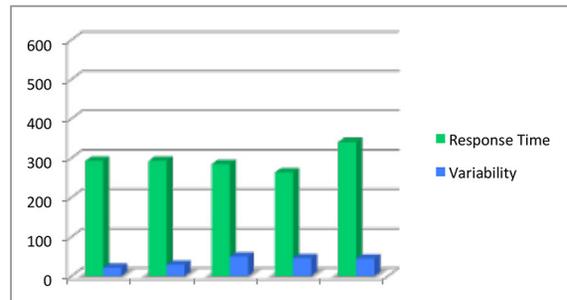
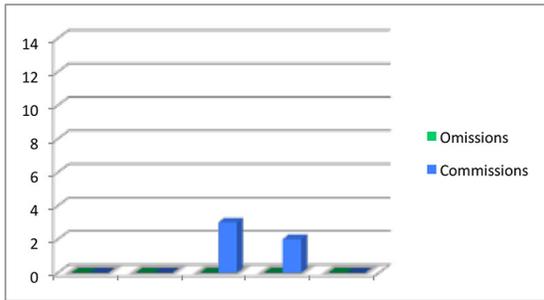
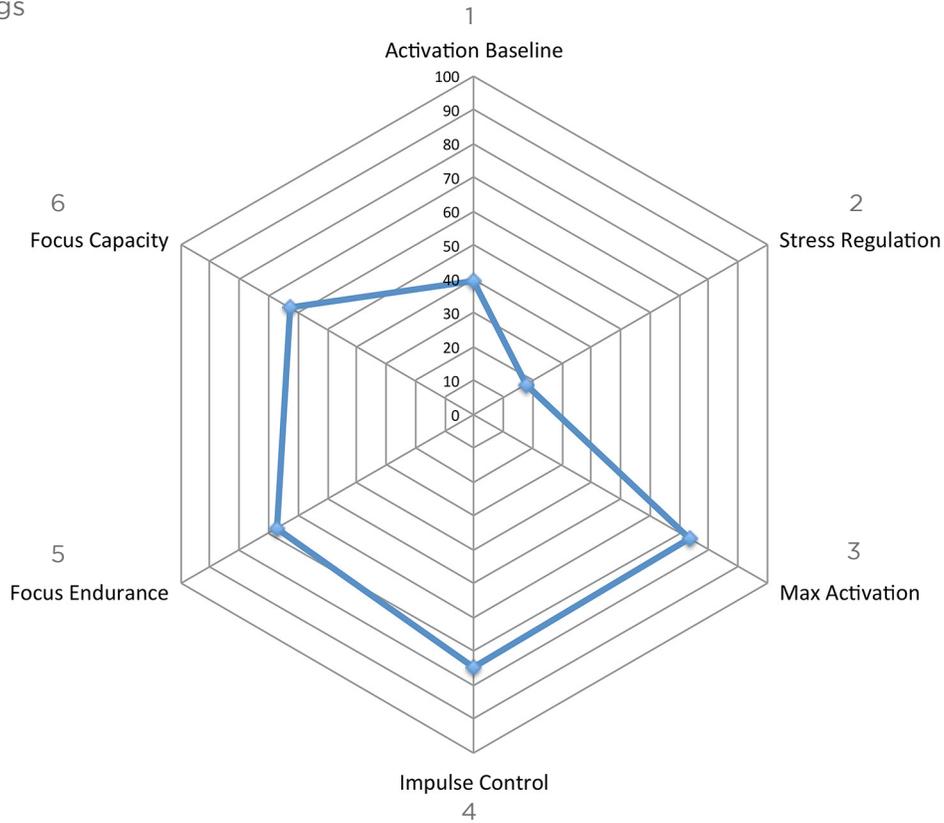


VERSUS

CASE STUDY | KERRI WALSH JENNINGS



Kerri Walsh Jennings
 May 26, 2011
 SC: 3.45
 FC: 2.67



“My brain works this way because it thinks it’s working perfectly, but it’s not and I can change it. I can train it like it’s a muscle.”

KERRI WALSH JENNINGS

3x Olympic Gold Medalist

NeuroPerformance Assessment Interpretation

Kerri Walsh Jennings initially completed her NeuroPerformance Assessment in 2011; the London Olympics were just 15 months away.

At the time, it confirmed what Kerri already knew about herself — she was strong in creating and sustaining a focused brain state. This can be seen in her elevated scores in Focus Capacity (6), Focus Endurance (5), and Impulse Control (4).

The speed of Kerri's response times was also impressive (8). The fastest a human brain can process visual stimuli is about 300 milliseconds (ms). Usually the closer the response times are to that mark, the more errors are seen. Kerri had an average below 300 ms in four of five segments of the Continuous Performance Task (CPT), yet she made only five errors for the entire task and they were during the most demanding part of the task (7).

What surprised Kerri was that her brain was working against her by always maintaining such a high level of brain activity. Her results highlighted that she struggled with quieting her mind during restful periods, illustrated by the low Activation Baseline Score (1). Most people with overactive minds struggle with repetitive thoughts, fail to let go of mistakes and have difficulty falling asleep. The other area she struggled with was the stability of her brain state within each period of the CPT with varying demands. This means her focus throughout the task waxed and waned in the middle.

As you can imagine this was hindering her performance.

"I feel like i'm burning the candle at both ends. I feel like i'm going too fast, especially when I get into an uncomfortable situation," said Kerri.

Surprisingly, even though Kerri's brain was very overactive at rest, she still had additional resources to become even more activated during the task. This is depicted by her high Max Activation Score (3). Further, her focus in the last portion of the task was as good if not better than it was at the beginning, illustrated by her high Focus Endurance Score (5).

Because of these results, Kerri was prescribed a stress training protocol to better manage her high brain activity. This has helped her recover more effectively from stress, and learn to fully engage her brain only when it's necessary. She's learning to maximize limited recovery time and stay in the present moment — in practice, in competition, and with her family.

"I started noticing change, and I went [to the training] fully committed ... this work was taking me places. In London, the last Olympics, I felt like I was a different athlete," said Kerri.

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