

## Breaking Psychological Barriers

One of the great human athletic accomplishments occurred on May 6, 1954, in Oxford, England. Roger Bannister, a medical student from Oxford University, ran the mile in 3 minutes 59.4 seconds, setting a world record. Even more important, he broke the four-minute mile barrier, something athletes had eyed since the 1880s.

For 75 years, this barrier (the sub-four-minute mile) refused to be broken. Scientists had long taught that the human body was incapable of running a mile faster than four minutes, and 75 years of trying had solidified it as a time that would never be broken.

But Roger Bannister did it. It was a tremendous accomplishment, indeed, but the story of this feat does not end there. Bannister's accomplishment taught us some important lessons. Just 46 days later, an Australian runner also ran a sub-four-minute mile. Within a year, three more people had broken the four-minute barrier.

What happened? Had training and human performance suddenly taken a quantum leap? Were these people part of a genetic breed of super-runners?

No, something much more fundamental than super-genetics was at play here. It was all about belief. What changed that day in May 1954 was that a psychological barrier had crumbled. A long-held belief was shattered that day in Oxford.

Mindsets changed. What was impossible the day before was now possible, and person after person stepped up and did the impossible because one person showed them the way.

*What a lesson for all humanity!*

*What a lesson in the power of belief!*

*What a lesson in shattering self-imposed limitations!*

### Questions to Ask Yourself

- What psychological barriers has society set for you as a massage professional?
- What barriers have you set for yourself?
- How can you recognize those barriers and set your performance on "shatter mode"?
- Everyone has a different psychological barrier to break as we seek to develop ourselves and grow in the world of massage and bodywork. What is your psychological barrier in the field of massage?
- What psychological barriers are imposed by society at large? By the massage profession?

- Some barriers are self-imposed and become our own four-minute barrier that we alone can identify and shatter. What four-minute barrier have you already broken?

Just like the runners in Bannister's day, we don't know the upper limits of massage therapists' capabilities.

We do not yet know how great of an impact a massage therapist can have on humanity.

We do not know the upper limits of what a massage therapist can earn hourly or annually.

All we know is that we can have more of an impact on our clients than we now have.

How much more? That is yet to be determined.