

# Promoting Patient Mental Health: Lessons & Considerations from a Sport Psychology Perspective

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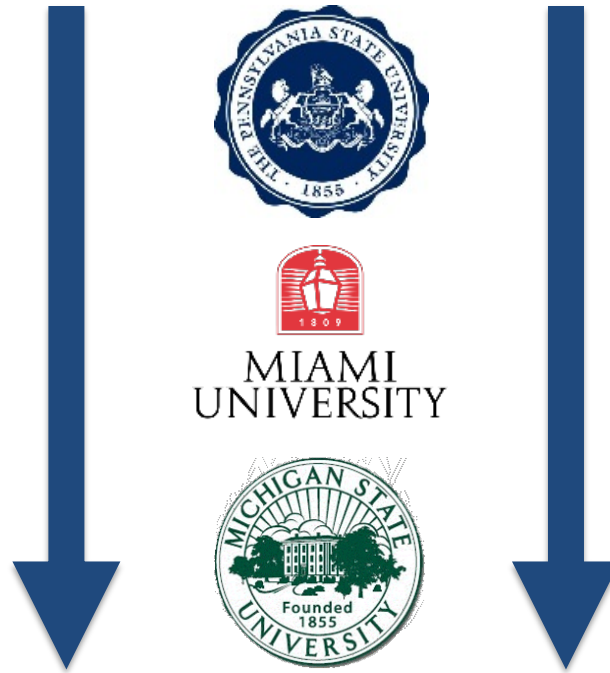
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# Outline

- Introduction
  - Consulting
  - Research
  - Key issues & trends
- Techniques
  - Imagery/mental rehearsal activity
  - Simulated consulting session
- Practical strategies

# Introduction

B.S. in psychology, minor in kinesiology



M.S. & Ph.D. in psychosocial aspects of sport & physical activity

# Introduction

- Consulting
  - Individual athletes and team
  - Volunteer & paid work
  - General and specific to injury
- Research
  - Focus on promoting positive developmental processes in sport
  - Sport specialization/pathways of participation
  - Psychosocial aspects of sport injury

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  - ***Psychosocial aspects of sport injury***

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- My typical interactions:
  - Exclusively conversational
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  - Non-evaluative

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How does this compare to your typical interactions with athletes/patients?



# Introduction

- Goals

1. Understand basic elements of sport psychology consulting for injured athletes
2. Illustrate examples of sport psychology and mental skill use
3. Explore practical applications of these concepts to athletic training practice

# Key Issues & Trends

- Importance of psychosocial treatment of injuries<sup>1-3</sup>
  - Potential negative side effects if not addressed
    - Negative mood state, depression
    - Disruption of identity
    - Social isolation
    - Fear of re-injury

<sup>1</sup>Ardern et al., 2013;

<sup>2</sup>Forsdyke et al., 2016;

<sup>3</sup>Arvinen-Barrow et al., 2015

# Key Issues & Trends

- Athletic Training Educational Competencies: Psychosocial Strategies & Referral<sup>1</sup>
  - “ATs must recognize clients/patients exhibiting abnormal, social, emotional, and mental behaviors and be able to intervene and refer these individuals as necessary”

<sup>1</sup>Athletic Training Educational Competencies, 2015

# Key Issues & Trends

- Patient-Oriented Outcomes: Results<sup>1-2</sup>
  - Most frequent psychological conditions
    - 1) Attention/concentration (3.63 ± .92)
    - 2) Treatment adherence (3.38 ± .74)
    - 3) Stress or anxiety (3.13 ± .64)
  - Most frequent psychological strategies
    - 1) Encouraging positive self-thoughts (4.25 ± .89)
    - 2) Using short-term goals (4.13 ± .35)
    - 3) Encouraging effective communication (3.88 ± .64)

# Key Issues & Trends

- Clement et al., 2015 → Results
  - Top successful athlete coping characteristics
    - 1) Positive attitude
    - 2) Adherence & treatment compliance
    - 3) Seeking out social support
    - 4) Using psychological strategies
  - Top unsuccessful athlete coping characteristics
    - 1) Poor adherence and attendance
    - 2) Displayed a negative attitude
    - 3) Avoidance and withdrawal

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- Key tenets
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- Key tenets
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- Effective mental rehearsal may include...
  - Use of all 5 senses
  - Imagined movement
  - Functional equivalency
  - Emotion
  - Timing

# Sport Psychology Consulting

- Key techniques
  - Open-ended questions
    - Allow the patient to drive the discussion
    - Avoid asking more than one question at once



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  - Active listening
    - Maintain engagement with patient (eye contact, verbal acknowledgement)
    - Don't be afraid of silence

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  - Active listening
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    - Don't be afraid of silence
  - Paraphrasing/comprehension check
    - “So what I think I hear you saying is that... is that accurate?”

# Simulated Consulting Session

- Begin with general plan for session
  - 1) Introduction/rapport-building
  - 2) Current feelings about injury/recovery
  - 3) Positive and negative factors
  - 4) Barriers for return-to-play
  - 5) Conclusion → end on a positive note
- Reflect on session

# Practical Strategies

- Lessons I've learned
  - Most of the time, simple is better
  - Any sign of care, personal consideration can help
  - Establishing a collaborative partnership, rather than a transactional relationship is critical
  - Having a plan in place saves a lot of headaches
  - Not always tangible markers of improvement

# Practical Strategies

- How can you use these elements in your own context?
  - Strategies for purposefully addressing patients' mental health
  - Potential barriers or limitations
  - Best practices for communication between support staff
  - What are skills that their athletes value
  - Strategies for assessing mental health
  - Plan for treatment
  - Procedure for making referrals

# Practical Strategies

- AT Burnout
  - [Athlete Burnout Questionnaire \(Raedeke & Smith, 2001\)](#)
    - Physical/emotional exhaustion
    - Reduced sense of accomplishment
    - Devaluation

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- AT Burnout
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    - Reduced sense of accomplishment
    - Devaluation
- How can you avoid becoming burned out?
- If you are feeling burned out, what can you do?

# Conclusion

- Mental health is important
  - Patients
  - ATs
- Do NOT need a degree in sport psychology to take positives steps in treatment
  - Where does this fit within your practice?
  - What are some strategies you can use from this session?
- What are any questions you have?