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SPRIT

# MENTAL WELL-BEING COACHING TOOLKIT



Sport & Psycho-social Initiative for Inclusive Training with an aim to develop a framework for humane, inclusive and empowering coaching and sport clubs that nurture mental wellbeing.

[www.engso-education.eu/spirit](http://www.engso-education.eu/spirit)



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## Overview of the Toolkit

- **One module on definitions**  
With accessible description of key behaviours and capabilities
- **Five modules on sport coaching for mental well-being**  
Covering 18 different coaching mental key behaviours and capabilities identified in [IO1 Systematic Literature Review](#) and [IO2 Mapping Good Practices](#)
- **One module on club management**  
With resources aimed at building an autonomy-supportive environment for the coach.



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### Module 1: Concepts and Definitions

Accessible description of key terms and behaviours related to mental well-being.

Topic 1: Overall Framework Concepts

Topic 2: Defining Key Mental Capabilities

## SPORT COACHING FOR MENTAL WELL-BEING

### Module 2: Coach Behaviour

Starting by developing coaches' self-awareness, this section highlights specific characteristics that enable empowering and supportive coaches.

Key Lesson 1: Strengthening Empowering and Autonomy-Supportive Coaching Styles

Key Lesson 2: What Gets You Moving: Healthy Goals and Motivations

Key Lesson 3: A Time to Think in Your Affective State

Key Lesson 4: Improving Your Coaching Role by Achieving a Perfect State of Consciousness

Key Lesson 5: Cooling down: How to Cope with Stress?

### Module 3: Coach-Athlete Relationship

Strategies that tighten bonds between coaches and athletes. It intends to develop cohesive strategies and better relationships.

Key Lesson 6: The Keys for Supportive Training: Fostering Your Athletes' Potential

Key Lesson 7: Assertively Managing Interpersonal Conflicts

Key Lesson 8: A Guide to Perceive and Control Emotions

Key Lesson 9: Getting Support from Experts, Peers and Mentors

Key Lesson 10: Training with Passion

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## **Module 4: Managing Threats to Well-being**

Alternatives to solve issues that affect to athletes' well-being.

[Key Lesson 11: Dealing with Aggression](#)

[Key Lesson 12: Body Satisfaction](#)

[Key Lesson 13: Safeguarding](#)

## **Module 5: Health Skills and Coaching during Times of Crisis**

COVID-19 and any other crisis bring internal and external challenges, most of them affecting directly to people's well-being, mental and health.

[Key Lesson 14: Towards the Perfect Work-Life Balance](#)

[Key Lesson 15: Recovery and Nutrition](#)

[Key Lesson 16: Alternatives to Lockdown](#)

## **Module 6: Inclusion**

Resources that develop mental well-being in groups coming from vulnerable backgrounds.

[Key Lesson 17: Coaching the Elderly](#)

[Key Lesson 18: Time to Walk in Their Shoes: Refugees, Social Inclusion and Mental Well-being](#)

## **CLUB MANAGEMENT**

## **Module 7: Supportive Environment for the coach**

Resources aimed at building an autonomy-supportive environment on a managerial level.

[Topic 1: The Need to Create Supportive and Safe Climates](#)

[Topic 2: Recommendations for Club Managers](#)





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3. Cognitive	3. Awareness	13. Meaningful relationships	21. Self-efficacy
4. Grassroots sport	4. Commitment	14. Personal dignity	22. Self-esteem
5. Mental well-being	5. Coping	15. Personal safety	23. Self-image
6. Safeguarding in sport	6. Emotional balance	16. Quality of life	24. Sense of coherence
7. Sport and exercise	7. Emotional control	17. Recognising mental resources in oneself	25. Sense of confidence
8. Self-determination theory	8. Emotion regulation	18. Resilience	26. Sense of mastery
9. Social exclusion	9. Empowerment		27. Social involvement
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<b>Activity 2A:</b> Your players' DNA		<b>Activity 8A:</b> A stress radar crossword puzzle	
<b>Activity 2B:</b> Athlete card templates		<b>Activity 8B:</b> Working on frustration and tolerance	
<b>Activity 3:</b> In search of our superior goal		<b>Checklists</b>	
<b>Activity 4:</b> A task-oriented leaflet for your training space		<b>Checklist 1:</b> Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress	
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- [Activity 10](#): The art of good communication
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- [Activity 12](#): The Circle of Trust
- [Activity 13A](#): Building a stakeholder map of your club or community
- [Activity 13B](#): Improving confidence in others
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MODULE 6: SOCIAL INCLUSION		
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Recommendations		
1. Stress coping	5. Policies and charters	9. Safeguarding
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3. Integral approach	7. Empowering	11. Refugees and other marginalised groups
4. Supportive training	8. Sexual harassment	



# LIST OF RESOURCES BY KEY LESSON AND MENTAL CAPABILITY

KEY LESSON	NAME	MENTAL CAPABILITY
1.	Strengthening Empowering and Autonomy Supportive Coaching Styles	EMPOWERMENT
2.	What Gets You Moving: Healthy Goals and Motivations	GOAL SETTING
3.	A Time to Think in Your Affective State	SELF-AWARENESS
4.	Improving Your Coaching Role by Achieving a Perfect State of Consciousness	SELF-EFFICACY
5.	Cooling Down: How to Cope with Stress?	EMOTIONAL CONTROL
6.	The Keys for Supportive Training: Fostering Your Athletes' Potential	COMMITMENT
7.	Assertively Managing Interpersonal Conflicts	SUPPORTIVE AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION
8.	A Guide to Perceive and Control Emotions	COPING
9.	Getting Support from Experts, Peers and Mentors	SENSE OF CONFIDENCE
10.	Training with Passion	SENSE OF MASTERY
11.	Dealing with Aggression	SELF CONTROL
12.	Body Satisfaction	SELF ESTEEM
13.	Safeguarding	PERSONAL SAFETY
14.	Towards the Perfect Work-Life Balance	HAPPINESS
15.	Recovery and Nutrition	QUALITY OF LIFE
16.	Alternatives to Lockdown	RESILIENCE AND COPING
17.	Coaching the Elderly	PERSONAL DIGNITY
18.	Time to Walk in Their Shoes: Refugees, Social Inclusion and Mental Well-being	SOCIAL INVOLVMENT



**A.**  
SPIRIT Framework  
in a Nutshell

# A. SPIRIT Framework in a Nutshell

The European Non-Governmental Sports Organization (ENGSO) leads a SPIRIT project 2020– 2022 (Sport & Psycho-social Initiative for Inclusive Training) with the partners of Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Spain. SPIRIT project partners are International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), International Table Tennis Federation Foundation (ITTF Foundation), Catalan Union of Sports Federations (UFEC), MIELI Mental Health Finland, Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sports (BUPCS), Hellenic Paralympic Committee, Minor-Ndako, Monaliiku, Flemish Athletics Federation (FAF) and Flanders Sport Agency, and European Lotteries. Aim of the project is to develop a framework for humane, inclusive and empowering coaching and sport clubs that nurture mental well-being.

## This shall be achieved by:

1. Collecting and compiling relevant research review and useful best practice examples in the field of sport and mental well-being.
2. Developing key recommendations for educating coaches that advance the mental well-being of their sports participants. These recommendations for

coaches' education, will be based on the research review and mapping study on best practices.

3. Creating a coaching framework that presents the academic case (based on research review) for sports and mental health in an accessible manner and utilizes best practice examples to guide the learner through an educational path.
4. Producing an accessible online learning course, facilitating the skills development of coaches in a flexible way. This online educational content will be publicly available and free.

This report focuses on describing the good practices collected by partner countries in autumn 2020 with which sports clubs promote mental well-being.


For more information on the SPIRIT project, please visit the ENGSO site.

<https://www.engso.eu/spirit-project>

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Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport @iliasvanbambostphotography

## B. How to Use This Toolkit

### Brief Description

This toolkit is a coach development program that offers coaches a collection of resources with the aim of protecting and enhancing mental well-being skills of sport participants. It has been constructed upon scientific findings and recommendations, of Spirit project's deliverables, namely a systematic literature review, good practice collections from sport clubs and recommendation for coach educators.

#### **Systematic Literature Review:**

Sport and Mental Well-being – IO1: [Click Here](#)

**Mental Well-being' and 'Good Practices Collection: Sport and Mental Well-being – IO2:** [Click Here](#)

**Recommendations for Coach Education – IO3:** [Click Here](#)

**The main goal:** to sensitise coaches on the importance of mental well-being through a practical solution to integrate key mental skills in their coaching.



### Target Group

#### **Direct:**

Who are the resources designed for?  
*Coaches and clubs.*

#### **Indirect:**

Who are the final beneficiaries of this toolkit?  
*Athletes at different levels.*



### Recommendations

Although most of exercises and materials have a practical approach, it is important for coaches to move them to **clearly defined examples of practical situations.**

The programme contents should be adapted to your own sporting environment, containing sport related examples (i.e., case studies, videos, etc.) and facilitating discussion on mental health in the sporting context.



### How to Go Through the Contents

**We recommend two approaches to using this Toolkit:**



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## 1. Pick and choose approach

Following the needs and challenges you or your participants face during your trainings, we recommend starting with [Module 1](#). Here you will find activities and resources categorised by specific “key mental capabilities”. Sessions and related activities are grouped under each capability you would like to work on.

## 2. Step by step approach

Through this approach you will follow as sequence of sessions that will build on and complement each other. The sections are structured by focusing on the coach first, building their competencies, followed by the coach-athlete relation. Only then we start to look at external factors and the surrounding environment – from the inside out. Each section is based on scientific insights which offer specific sets of activities and resources towards building a culture of well-being with yourself and your groups.

**Suggested time to implement all modules:**  
**6 months - 1 year.**

## Key Features of the Toolkit

Each session has the following components based on scientific insights. It includes: Key Lesson and Mental capability, Scientific insights, Tips and activities and much more. Example :

### Key Lesson 1: Strengthening Empowering and Autonomy-Supportive Coaching Styles

Mental capability	
EMPOWERMENT	
Why it matters	
<b>Risks to mental well-being:</b>  Sport coaches often feel that empowering their club members undermines <a href="#">1</a> . <a href="#">Click here</a> their own leadership status. Controlling coaching styles may lead to negative impacts, both at a <a href="#">coaching level and at the participant level</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disengagement of participants and dropouts</li><li>• Low group cohesion</li><li>• Ineffective communications</li><li>• Coaching pressures</li><li>• Increased ill-being</li><li>• Decreased emotional control and self-control</li><li>• Increased aggression</li></ul>	<b>Insights</b>  Teams with <a href="#">Shared Leadership</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perceive their coaches to be better leaders</li><li>• Strength their involvement</li><li>• Produce happiness and sense of belongingness to the club</li></ul> <u>Well-being</u> is felt through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater motivation</li><li>• Sense of vitality</li><li>• High positive energy</li><li>• Increased self-esteem</li><li>• Confidence in one's self-worth and resilience</li></ul>
The Theory Behind	
<b>Achieving an empowering, rather than disempowering climate is dependent on the coach. These are some of the differences:</b>	<b>Consider the ABC approach which represents three basic psychological experiences every coach needs to achieve for their participants:</b>
<b>Empowering:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delegate specific tasks and provide</li><li>• Autonomy-supportive</li><li>• Socially supportive</li></ul> <b>Disempowering:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highly ego-involving</li><li>• Controlling</li></ul>	<b>Tips and Activities</b>  <b>Activity 1: Assessing your coaching style</b>  1. Take this quick test to assess your coaching style. <a href="#">Click here</a> 2. Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions: → When was the last time you had an empowering talk with any of your team members? → What was this feeling about? 3. Use these items as key strategies to promote empowering climates.  <b>Activity 2A: Your players' DNA and Activity 2B: Athlete card templates</b>  A good option to start creating empowering climates is to know the athletes, however a coach can find different ways to build empowerment. The main goal of this activity is to identify areas where empowering climate could be created. 1. Use this template <a href="#">Click here</a> to map essential attributes of your team members: key skills, preferences, occupation, among others. 2. Pass all your finding to one of these Athlete cards templates <a href="#">Click here</a> 3. Keep the record always up to date with additional information/attitudes you note during the trainings: weaknesses, relationship with parents, among others.  <b>TIP: Let the participant know that you are willing to listen and committed to support them as a coach</b>
Additional recommendations for coaches	
<b>Encourage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide athletes with a rationale for their requests</li><li>• Provide choice and a voice in this decision process</li><li>• Try to adopt the athletes' perspective</li><li>• Not only address individualistic goals (level of fitness, mastery, and competence, self-efficacy) but also social ones, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Need for relatedness</a></li></ul></li></ul>	<b>Avoid</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tailored or mutually agreed training plans may not be positive under certain circumstances</li></ul>
Additional resources	
<b>Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations</b>  <b>Sport more enjoyable, engaging and empowering for everyone</b> <b>Empowering Coaching: United Kingdom</b> → To find out more about this platform <a href="#">Click here</a> → Interview with Joan Duda, Director of PAPA Project. <a href="#">Click here</a>  <b>Street Games research project.</b> <b>University of Birmingham: United Kingdom</b> → Project impact report <a href="#">Click here</a>  <b>It's about creating a community</b> <b>Über den Berg e.V.: Germany</b> Is very supportive towards their participants. The trainer is not just a coach, the trainer is there for everyone to share any problems after a session or even at home, people can email them.  <b>Positive coaching: Empowering is important for coaches and youngsters.</b> <b>Minor-Ndako: Belgium</b> We discuss this with youngsters after a match, or before the start of the training in a circle with the youngsters. We acknowledge mostly positive elements of new members, e.g., when giving a good pass, when helping a team member, when expressing their opinion, etc.  We are strongly committed to the empowerment and coaching of our participants. Participants are engaged to volunteer and can join (sports) training courses. In addition to running courses, we support participants with individual questions. Through this guidance we refer them to the right social organisations. This can differ per individual: some need financial support, others need job counselling in their search for work, housing or medical aid. The needs are very diverse.  <b>Other resources</b> <b>Video: Shared Leadership Mapping</b> <a href="#">Click here</a>	

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C.  
Understanding  
Mental Well-being

# Module 1: Key Definitions

Accessible description of key terms and behaviours related to mental well-being.

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## Key message

There is no health without mental health.



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## Topic 1: Overall framework concepts

### Coach-athlete relationship

The coach-athlete relationship refers to all situations in which a coach and athlete's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are interrelated. A good relationship between a coach and an athlete includes communication, positive reinforcement, genuine interest, availability, and trust.

### Coaching effectiveness

Coaches are effective when they can implement their knowledge and skills to positively affect the learning and performance of their athletes.

### Cognitive

Cognitive processes are those that enable knowledge and interaction with our surroundings. They include memory, language, perception, thinking, and attention. It is in essence, the ability to perceive and react, process, and understand, store and retrieve information, make decisions, and produce appropriate responses. Learning is an example of cognition.

### Grassroots sport

Grassroots sport is physical leisure activity, organised or non-organised, practised regularly at non professional level for health, educational or social purposes.

### Mental well-being

Mental well-being is a key part of human well-being and health.

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their own potential and abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life and is able to contribute to their community. It encompasses emotional resilience, allowing us to enjoy life and overcome disappointments and sadness. Believing in our own, and others' dignity and worth, underlies mental health.

### Safeguarding in sport

Safeguarding in sport is the process of protecting children and adults from harm, abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect by providing a safe space in which to play sport and be active.

### Sport and exercise

Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition on all levels.

### Self-determination theory

Self-determination refers to each person's ability to make choices and manage their own life. This ability plays an important role in psychological health and well-being. Self-determination allows people to feel that they have control over their choices and lives. This theory describes motivation in terms of being autonomous and in control. It considers different types of motivation and how they support autonomy, relatedness and competence.

- Autonomy: A desire to feel that one's actions are self-initiated and self-directed
- Competence: A desire to feel capable
- Relatedness: A desire to feel connected to others



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## Social exclusion

State in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political or cultural life. Exclusion from the prevailing social system and its rights and privileges.

## Well-being

Well-being is the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not just the absence of diseases or illnesses. Well-being includes things such as how satisfied people are with their life as a whole, their sense of purpose, and how much they feel they are in control.

## Topic 2: Defining Key Mental Capabilities

Mental health skills are defined as emotional skills, awareness skills, interpersonal skills, resilience to cope with life crises and capability to regulate mental load and stress and furthermore, to create meaningful relationships with people and one's environment. They also include the ability to manage and regulate impulses that could lead to harmful substance abuse or otherwise harmful life controlling activity. Mental health skills also include everyday life skills and recognising the mental resources in oneself and others and the ability to maintain balance between work, studying, rest, and hobbies. Talking about mental health and its deterioration are also mental health skills, as is the readiness to judge when one's own resources are not enough and there is a need for professional help.

## Affect balance

Related Key Lesson: 8 [Click here](#)

Concept that explains that well-being is a global judgement that people make when comparing the relative frequency of experiencing negative affect versus positive affect.

*Example: Think about your current well-being and name three recent experiences that have made you feel good and three more that have made you feel bad.*

## Attachment

Related Key Lesson: 7 [Click here](#)

Attachment can be defined as a deep and enduring emotional bond between two people in which each seeks closeness and feels more secure when in the presence of the attachment figure.

*Example: Think of a person to whom you feel attached and explain what you feel when you are with them.*

## Awareness

Related Key Lesson: 2 [Click here](#)

Knowledge or perception of a situation or fact. Concern about and well-informed interest in a particular situation or development.

*Example: Introspection. Mention two things that motivate you and choose the healthier one.*

## Commitment

Related Key Lesson: 6 [Click here](#)

A commitment is an agreement or pledge to do something in the future.

*Example: Showing up for every training day and staying on the*



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team until the end is a sign of commitment.

## Coping

Related Key Lesson: 8 [Click here](#)

Coping means to invest one's own conscious effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems in order to try to master, minimize or tolerate stress and conflict.

*Example: Recognising when you need more help is a display of coping skills.*

## Emotional balance

Related Key Lesson: 16 [Click here](#)

Emotional balance occurs when we allow ourselves to feel whatever comes up, without feeling stifled or overwhelmed, and learn to accept our feelings without judgment.

*Example: Think of a time when you felt ashamed of your feelings. What do you think you should do in that situation?*

## Emotional control

Related Key Lesson: 5 [Click here](#)

The ability of an individual to modulate an emotion or set of emotions.

*Example: When you experience a situation of shock, such as someone fainting, and instead of being carried away by your emotional reaction, you remain calm and try to help.*

## Empowerment

Related Key Lesson: 1 [Click here](#)

The process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Having power and control over your own life. As a coach you can't

empower someone else or make someone empowered. It is about ways of working and supporting someone that means they can take control and responsibility for their own lives.

*Example: Two sides of a coin: Ask everyone in your group to find a partner. One person shares a memory or experience that was negative in their life with their partner. Together they then explore and identify something positive that came from the experience.*

## Focus

Related Key Lesson: 4 [Click here](#)

The concentration of attention or energy on something.

*Example: Prepare an activity in which participants should concentrate and try to distract them while they are doing it.*

## Happiness

Related Key Lesson: 14 [Click here](#)

Happiness is a sense of well-being, joy, or contentment.

*Example: Think about the moment in your life when you have felt the happiest.*

## Life satisfaction

Related Key Lesson: 3 [Click here](#)

Life satisfaction is the way in which people show their emotions, feelings and how they feel about their directions and options for the future. It's a key part of subjective well-being.

*Example: Think about the life you have right now and how would you like it to be 5 years from now. What would you change and what would you keep?*

## Meaningful relationships

Related Key Lesson: 9 [Click here](#)



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A meaningful relationship is characterised as a relationship that is of personal significance, is healthy, caring and long-lasting. It's with a person who helps us grow, supports and encourages us and is there for us when we need them.

*Example: Think about a meaningful relationship you have and explain what it means to you.*

### Personal dignity

*Related Key Lesson: 13 [Click here](#)*

The right of a person to be valued and respected for their own sake, and to be treated ethically. To believe in your own worth.

*Example: Name two human rights that you think are untouchable to preserve personal dignity.*

### Personal safety

*Related Key Lesson: 13 [Click here](#)*

The legal and uninterrupted enjoyment by a person of their life, body, health, and reputation.

*Example: Think of a situation of your life in which your personal safety was compromised. How would you like to protect yourself against this?*

### Quality of life

*Related Key Lesson: 15 [Click here](#)*

The standard of health, comfort, and happiness experienced by an individual or group.

*Example: What aspects do you think are necessary to have quality of life? Do you think they are present or accessible in your life?*

### Recognising mental resources in oneself

*Related Key Lesson: 2 [Click here](#)*

It could be considered as self-awareness. A form of stepping back and observing your thoughts and feelings as they unfold. Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses.

*Example: Name two of your own strengths and weaknesses.*

### Resilience

*Related Key Lesson: 18 [Click here](#)*

The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. It's the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress.

*Example: Think about the problems that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought you and how you are recovering from them.*

### Self confidence

*Related Key Lesson: 9 [Click here](#)*

A feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgement.

*Example: Name three skills you think you excel at.*

### Self-control

*Related Key Lesson: 11 [Click here](#)*

The ability to control oneself, in particular one's emotions and desires, especially in difficult situations.

*Example: Think of a situation in which you lost self-control and the reasons that made you lose it*

### Self-efficacy

*Related Key Lesson: 4 [Click here](#)*

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a particular situation.

*Example: Imagine a problematic situation and measure on a*



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scale the possibilities of overcoming this situation. Mention the reason.

## Self-esteem

Related Key Lessons: 6 [Click here](#) and 12 [Click here](#)

Confidence in one's own worth or abilities.

*Example: Explain three things about yourself that you are proud of.*

## Self-image

Related Key Lesson: 12 [Click here](#)

The idea one has of one's abilities, appearance, and personality.

*Example: Describe your own personality in three words.*

## Sense of coherence

Related Key Lesson: 3 [Click here](#)

The sense of coherence refers to a person's ability to use existing and potential resources to combat stress and promote health. It is measured based on one's perception of manageability, meaning, and comprehensibility.

*Example: Imagine a specific stressful situation and think how you would act. Then, compare how you would act with how you should act.*

## Sense of confidence

Related Key Lessons: 7 [Click here](#) and 12 [Click here](#)

The ability to be confident. A feeling of trust in a person or thing.

*Example: Choose a partner, blindfold yourself and let yourself fall into their arms.*

## Sense of mastery

Related Key Lesson: 10 [Click here](#)

Mastery, defined as a sense of having control over the forces that affect one's life, is an important component of psychological health and well-being across the life-span.

*Example: Think of a situation in which you have felt overwhelmed by the circumstances that surround your life and how you have felt about it.*

## Social involvement

Related Key Lesson: 18 [Click here](#)

Social involvement refers to one's degree of participation in a community or society.

*Example: Think about an existing problem in your community or society and how you could contribute to solving it.*

## Social skills/involvement

Related Key Lesson: 9 [Click here](#)

Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language, and our personal appearance.

*Example: Think about three important social skills that a good coach should have and why.*



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Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)



D.  
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## Module 2: Coach Behaviour

Starting by developing coaches' self-awareness, this section highlights specific characteristics that enable empowering and supportive coaches.

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### Key message

**If you want to help others to acquire mental well-being coaches need to first learn about themselves from a personal and professional dimension.**



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Appendixes



# Key Lesson 1:

## Strengthening Empowering and Autonomy-Supportive Coaching Styles

### Mental capability

#### EMPOWERMENT

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

Sport coaches often feel that empowering their club members undermines [1 Click Here](#) their own leadership status. Controlling coaching styles may lead to negative impacts, both at a coaching level and at the participant level:

- Disengagement of participants and dropouts
- Low group cohesion
- Ineffective communications
- Coaching pressures
- Increased ill-being
- Decreased emotional control and self-control
- Increased aggression

##### Insights

Teams with Shared Leadership:

- Perceive their coaches to be better leaders
- Strength their involvement
- Produce happiness and sense of belongingness to the club

Well-being is felt through:

- Greater motivation
- Sense of vitality
- High positive energy
- Increased self-esteem
- Confidence in one's self-worth and resilience



Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

## The Theory Behind

**Achieving an empowering, rather than disempowering climate is dependent on the coach. These are some of the differences:**

### **Empowering:**

- Delegate specific tasks and provide responsibilities
- Autonomy-supportive
- Socially supportive

### **Disempowering:**

- Highly ego-involving
- Controlling

**Consider the ABC approach which represents three basic psychological experiences every coach needs to achieve for their participants:**

**Autonomy:** A desire to feel that one's actions are self-initiated and self-directed

**Belongingness:** A desire to feel connected to others

**Competence:** A desire to feel capable

## Tips and Activities



### **Activity 1: Assessing your coaching style**

1. Take this quick test to assess your coaching style. [Click here](#)
2. Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions:
  - ⇒ When was the last time you had an empowering talk with any of your team members?
  - ⇒ What was this feeling about?
3. Use these items as key strategies to promote empowering climates.



### **Activity 2A: Your players' DNA and Activity 2B: Athlete card templates**

A good option to start creating empowering climates is to know the athletes, however a coach can find different ways to build empowerment. The main goal of this activity is to identify areas where empowering climate could be created.

1. Use this template [Click here](#) to map essential attributes of your team members: key skills, preferences, occupation, among others.
2. Pass all your finding to one of these Athlete cards templates [Click here](#)
3. Keep the record always up to date with additional information/attitudes you note during the trainings: weaknesses, relationship with parents, among others.

**TIP: Let the participant know that you are willing to listen and committed to support them as a coach**

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Provide athletes with a rationale for their requests
- Provide choice and a voice in this decision process
- Try to adopt the athletes' perspective
- Not only address individualistic goals (level of fitness, mastery, and competence, self-efficacy) but also social ones, such as:
- Need for relatedness
- Human connection
- Social belonging needs

### Avoid

- Tailored or mutually agreed training plans may not be positive under certain circumstances

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Sport more enjoyable, engaging and empowering for everyone

##### Empowering Coaching: United Kingdom

- ⇒ To find out more about this platform [Click here](#)
- ⇒ Interview with **Joan Duda**, Director of PAPA Project. [Click here](#)

#### Street Games research project.

##### University of Birmingham: United Kingdom

- ⇒ Project impact report [Click here](#)

#### It's about creating a community

##### Über den Berg e.V.: Germany

Is very supportive towards their participants. The trainer is not just a coach, the trainer is there for everyone to share any problems after a session or even at home, people can email them.

## Additional resources

### **Positive coaching: Empowering is important for coaches and youngsters.**

#### **Minor-Ndako: Belgium**

We discuss this with youngsters after a match, or before the start of the training in a circle with the youngsters. We acknowledge mostly positive elements of new members, e.g., when giving a good pass, when helping a team member, when expressing their opinion, etc.

We are strongly committed to the empowerment and coaching of our participants. Participants are engaged to volunteer and can join (sports) training courses. In addition to running courses, we support participants with individual questions. Through this guidance we refer them to the right social organisations. This can differ per individual: some need financial support, others need job counselling in their search for work, housing or medical aid. The needs are very diverse.



#### **Other resources**

**Video:** Shared Leadership Mapping [Click here](#)



## Key Lesson 2: What Gets You Moving: Healthy Goals and Motivations

### Mental capability

#### GOAL SETTING

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

Competitive-oriented goals are related to:

- Anxiety
- Getting upset
- Losing one's cool
- Letting out negative feelings
- Thoughts of escape/dropping out
- Approval of amoral behaviour which includes disrespect for rules and officials
- Reduced task absorption
- Undermined own motivation
- Negative thinking in sport

##### Insights

Task-oriented goals favours:

- Positive affect and positive moral attitudes
- Reduced stress

It is capital for coaches to:

- Determine what their main goals are
- Teach a player to attain the right motivational frame of mind

### The Theory Behind

#### Achievement Goal Theory

Refers to 2 approaches to how individuals think about competence and success

##### Task (mastery) involved

- Emphasis is placed on acknowledging effort and experiencing improvement
- Focus on mastery of skill or task and competence development – focus on growth
- Seeks self-improvement and gives major importance to learning and personal progress

##### Ego (performance) involved

- Tied to the demonstration of superiority
- Need to outperform others to be satisfied
- Satisfied when performance reflects how they have mastered

Photo: International Table  
Tennis Federation  
Foundation



## Tips and Activities



### Activity 3: In the search of our superior goal

Our strongest motivations are rooted in emotions and experiences that lay hidden in our deep subconscious. Your most rooted memories define a superior purpose that will transform your role as a coach.

Apply this activity to experience a quick travel to your past that will show you how to construct a superior purpose goal for your live.

[Click here](#) to get the Activity material and additional instructions

#### To reflect

- ⇒ Why do we do what we do?
- ⇒ What are your biggest motivations?
- ⇒ Which footprint to we want to leave in the world?



### Activity 4: A task-oriented leaflet for your training space

- Use this resource to encourage and sensitise the importance of seeking task-oriented goals in your clubs.
- You can either use a printed version or just disseminate it through social media.

[Click here](#) to get the leaflet

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Effort being rewarded equally
- Seeing a mistake as part of learning

### Avoid

- Different treatment of players based on their ability, differences, rivalry
- Rapid feedback to players obsessed with outperforming partners or competitors
- Comparison of students, or always putting one forward, try putting all forward for different reasons

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Different paths for growing in the club

##### Lahjan Tytöt: Finland

In this club, you can follow the path of an enthusiast or that of a top athlete. If the path of a top athlete is not progressing or attractive, you can move on to the path of an amateur in the same age group, for example in team gymnastics. You can also start acting as an assistant instructor for Lahjan Tytöt.

#### Educational guidelines

##### TanssiDans: Finland

The club sought to increase children's and young person's confidence in their own skills. Encouragement and positive feedback are intended to support each dancer in accordance with their own goals, thus also strengthening their self-esteem. The goal is to support the child in a moment of disappointment and failure and to help deal with negative emotions.

#### Everyone plays

##### Minor-Ndako: Belgium

We keep track of attendance on matches and training. Everyone plays if they come to training and matches regularly. Even if that means putting your best player on the bench. Youngsters do not always agree with this, but they now the rules from the start of the season. We want to win, but we want to do this with everyone.

#### Work to participate

##### Kung Fu ToA: Indo-China

In sports, the first prize is the most important, but in Kung Fu, even the last place is important, because the focus is on yourself, your growth, if you are trained, and you work to participate it is what matters most.



### Other resources

#### An inspiring story in Sydney 2000 – The Guardian

Sydney Olympic Games, Goode and Archer lost their badminton semi-final after failing to convert a match point, but won the bronze medal match after coming back from match-point down. Day 'let's get it over with!' prior to a match that is most probably important to them. Adopting a task-oriented perspective appears to reduce such thoughts.

[Click here](#) to know more about this story

#### A task-oriented power phrase

[The harder you try, the more able you feel.](#)

## Key Lesson 3:

### A Time to Think in your Affective State

#### Mental capability

#### SELF-AWARENESS

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

A lack of self-awareness can have negative impacts on pupils:

- Dissatisfaction
- Emotional and physical exhaustion
- Less concentration
- Increased anxiety

A coach with fluctuations in their affective state may influence the interaction with their athletes, becoming:

- More likely to criticise
- More intimidating
- More arrogant

When emotions [Click Here](#) become intensely negative, they can dramatically **affect our biochemistry** and behaviour.

##### Insights

Coaches need to be aware of and manage their feelings, as well as recognise what is happening within them.

**A sense of congruence** between their coaching role and their personal values can result in:

- Increased autonomy-supportive coaching
- Pushing coaches to devote more energy and effort into that role



Photo: International Table Tennis Federation Foundation

#### The Theory Behind

##### What is an emotion?

- It is an innate feeling that describes an affective state of a person.
- Millions of chemical reactions take place in the brain at any given time.
- It affects the decisions we make, the people we meet and underpins both positive and negative outcomes.
- Neurotransmitters and hormones, such as **dopamine and serotonin**, are chemicals that are involved in the process of feeling emotions.



- Emotions are measured in physiological responses, such as:
  - ⇒ A pounding heart
  - ⇒ Sweat
  - ⇒ Blood rushing to the face
- The parts of the nervous system that affect emotions are:
  - Frontal cortex:** Associated with feelings of happiness and pleasure
  - Amygdala:** Associated with feelings of anger, fear, and sadness

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 5: A quick scanner of your affective state

Use the following mapping tool and instructions to assess your current affective state. [Click here](#)

#### To reflect

- Depending on your results, you should be aware of the consequences of each mood.
- You should be aware of the negative or positive consequences that each mood can have on the people that are next to you.

Active mood

⇒ Positive affectivity

⇒ Negative affectivity

Passive mood

⇒ Positive affectivity

⇒ Negative affectivity



### Activity 6: Identifying your rush hours

1. Imagine a normal, typical day in your life.
2. Use this affective state matrix to assess which are your rush hours. [Click here](#) to access
3. Follow these coaching recommendations to act consistently with your affective state:
  - ⇒ Avoid transferring negative thoughts and feedback onto your athletes
  - ⇒ Take advantage of your positive hours to inspire and provide autonomy support to your group

#### To reflect

When are you most likely to be in a positive affective state (e.g., after a lunch break)?

**Bear in Mind:** You can also adapt this activity to your athletes

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Before interacting with another person, in particular with your athletes, wait a few minutes to think about your affective state chart
- Give yourself the opportunity to have an awareness pause to reflect on your affective state

### Avoid

- Immediate reactions when you are in negative affectivity

## Additional resources



### Other resources

#### Emotions Inside Out



- Associate your inside emotions with these characters and colours:

Joy

Anger

Disgust

Fear

Sadness

- In the movie, memories are kept in spheres. Do something similar with yours by keeping a **track of negative and positive emotions as they happen**. A google sheets document is an option to save all these moments.

#### ⇒ Recommended video:

Emotional Theory Comes Alive. [Click Here.](#)

## Key Lesson 4: Improving Your Coaching Role by Achieving a Perfect State of Consciousness

### Mental capability

#### SELF-EFFICACY

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

###### Burnout

- Syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed [3 Click Here](#).
- Half of the stressors reported by coaches could be categorised as organizational in nature [4 Click Here](#).
- **5 consequences** of burnout
  - ⇒ **Affective:** depressed mood, hostility
  - ⇒ **Mental:** feeling helpless, cynicism, impaired attention
  - ⇒ **Physical:** exhaustion, illness
  - ⇒ **Behavioural:** absenteeism
  - ⇒ **Motivational:** disillusionment and lack of enthusiasm

###### Risk of burnout

**6 times higher** for coaches with **10+ years** of experience [5 Click Here](#)

###### Loss of flow

**47 %** of the time we are mentally off-task [6 Click Here](#)

##### Insights

Excellence in performance and in life begins with a vision of where you want to go and commitment to do what it takes to get there. [7 Click Here](#)

Mindfulness can produce several benefits:

- A potential tool to aid athletes who suffered from burnout to recover. [8 Click Here](#)
- Self-management
- Prevents detachment from distractions
- Powerful vehicle for well-being as it enhances:

- ⇒ Confidence
- ⇒ Relaxation
- ⇒ High energy
- ⇒ Present centered focus
- ⇒ Extraordinary awareness
- ⇒ Acceptance and resilience
- ⇒ Reducing or negative thoughts
- ⇒ Feeling in control



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport

## The Theory Behind

### Flow

A state of mind or consciousness in which a person is completely absorbed in their actions and experiences a unity of body and mind.

### Mindfulness

- A state of mind that intentionally brings one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment.
- It aims to free the mind of harmful thoughts.
  - ⇒ Practising half an hour of mindfulness daily alleviates symptoms of disorders such as depression or anxiety [9 Click Here](#)

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 7A: Burnout and inattention assessment and 7B: Express mindfulness programme to overcome burnout and strength focus

- Start with this quick test to see your current state of burnout. These inputs will allow you assessing the changes this mindfulness programme has produced. [Click here](#)
- We propose a 3–6-week mindfulness coaching programme. [Click here](#)
- Main goals are overcoming coaches' burnout with an immediate shift in their flow and level of performance

### To reflect

- ⇒ After completing the assessment, which were the main reasons for your burnout feeling?
- ⇒ Learning to focus “mindfully” on the present moment develops control of attention, a useful skill for individuals who struggle with completing important tasks because they are distracted by worries, memories, or negative moods.
- ⇒ When you stop reacting to discomfort and manage to stop controlling everything that happens to you, your energy has another focus: the sporting task itself.
- ⇒ Remember: Fewer distractions will have positive consequences in more flow and more enjoyment of what you do.



### Activity 7C: Other exercises to work on self-efficacy

The objective is to show participants to value their abilities when facing a challenge or a problem, and learn that they can overcome a challenge even if they believe they cannot. [Click here](#)



## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Using your affective state scanner tools to permanently identify your emotions
- Helping athletes understand their feelings without judgment and interference
- When we pause, we make room for new ideas to show up. Mental breaks boost our productivity, energy, and focus
- Listening to the birds sing, watching children play in the park, appreciating the different smells of the road. If you are in a city, notice the sound of your breathing, the sensation of temperature in your hands or the air in your face
- Developing and enhancing mindfulness through training and practice

### Avoid

- Focusing only on an immediate result approach. It requires patience.
- Excessive screen time: stepping away from your digital devices and headphones relaxes your mind
- Escaping from your environment through technology – try to resist this temptation!
- Being excessively harsh with yourself

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Everything you need to focus

From: anonymous from IO2 Mapping Good Practices questionnaire

In relation to the hockey lifestyle, we are normally working to teach habits and daily routines that can help athletes or persons to focus and get the best of themselves. Of course, in our club aims to get the best attitude to compete, but at the same time we are teaching a way of thinking, a way of doing, we talk about the process, and how to focus in your aim to succeed. This means that in everything you need to focus, sport activities or in extreme situations to survive. You can always follow the same process but of course, first you need to teach athletes and persons to work well.

#### Training and other mindfulness resources

Mindful Sport Performance: International [Click Here](#)

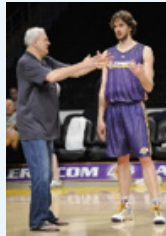
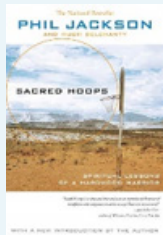
#### Mindfulness platform

Potential Project: Sweden [Click Here](#)



### Other resources

#### A good read for excelling your mindfulness

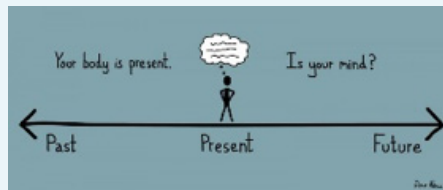


**“Not only is there more to life than basketball, there’s a lot more to basketball than basketball.”**  
Phil Jackson

#### Want to learn more?

- Abstract at Goodreads.com: [Click Here](#)
- Purchasing the eBook. [Click Here](#)

#### Inspiring phrases:



**“Your body lives in the present. And your mind?”**

**“The time to feel, change, grow, and live is neither in the past nor in the future.”**

## Key Lesson 5: Cooling Down: How to Cope with Stress?

### Mental capability

#### EMOTIONAL CONTROL

##### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

Stress has direct implications:

- Coaches' mental well-being:  
Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety
- On athletes:  
Lower sense of personal accomplishment
- On coach effectiveness:  
Loss of focus, lack of decisive action

⇒ Stressed coaches may transmit their emotions to their athletes

##### Insights

Stress is one of the main challenges to sustainable coach well-being.

For coaches, intense emotions may help them persevere under challenging circumstances.

⇒ 116 % cortisol (stress hormone) reduction when applying task-oriented coaching styles



Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

## The Theory Behind

### Stress

- Degree to which you feel overwhelmed because of pressures that are unmanageable. [10 Click Here](#)
- Stress is an umbrella that encompasses: stressors, appraisals, coping, and emotions.
- How stress gets activated:
  - ⇒ When we encounter stress, our body is stimulated to produce stress hormones that trigger a 'flight or fight' response and activate our immune system. [11 Click Here](#)
  - ⇒ This response helps us to respond quickly to dangerous situations.
  - ⇒ Cortisol: main stress hormone best known for helping fuel your body's "fight-or-flight" instinct
  - ⇒ If the coping resources or options are insufficient to counter the threat, feelings of stress will result.

### Main sources of stress:

#### Performance, organisational

- Stressful experiences
- Competitive performance
- Having multiple roles
- Isolated positions
- Role conflicts
- Imbalance between job demands and resources

#### Intrinsic demands

- Status and maintaining elite standards
- Pressures and expectations put on the coach by themselves

#### Personal aspects of life

- Traumatic events
- Work-life conflict, as a result of non-traditional work hours
- Childcare
- Civil and financial obligations: loans, taxes, bills, etc





### Activity 8A: A stress radar crossword puzzle

- Relax your mind solving this crossword puzzle and learn more about the key signs of stress. [Click Here](#)

#### To reflect

- ⇒ How often do you have these feelings?
- ⇒ What are your reactions to them and how you have responded?



### Activity 8B: Working on frustration and tolerance

To work on low frustration tolerance. That participants understand that regularly, both in life and in sport, they are going to feel frustrated, but even so they should not give up and should continue to strive to overcome adversity. [Click Here](#)



### Checklist 1: Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress

We propose 7 alternatives to overcome stressful periods:

1. Creative expression
2. “If-then” plans
3. Mastering key mental relaxation
4. Professional support such as a sport psychologist
5. Escaping the stressful environment
6. Music
7. Breathing techniques

[Click Here](#) to know additional details for each technique

#### To reflect

- ⇒ Write down the stress relievers that were most successful – each person is different.

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Focus on the process of coaching, rather than the performance outcomes
- Re-focus attention on enjoyment
- Visualising oneself under pressure can facilitate the creation of contingency plans

### Avoid

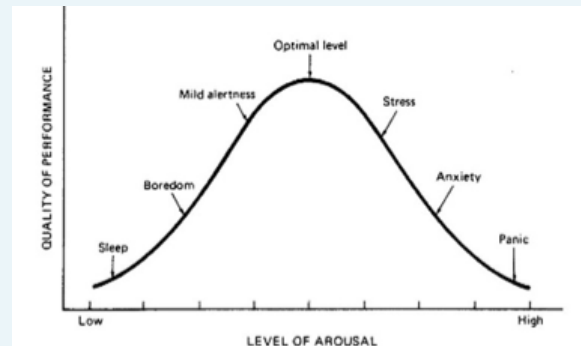
- Not asking for social and psychological support
- Avoiding self-awareness of thoughts and feelings

## Additional resources



### Other resources

#### Understanding the IZOF model



- Struggling with pressures while coexisting with stress is not always harmful.
- It can push your performance to new extended levels and lead you to success.
- Stress should be kept at an optimal level both for coaches and participants.

### To reflect


Is this curve applicable to you daily tasks as a coach?

### Relaxation playlist:

This Spotify play list will definitely free you up from negative and stress charged thoughts. [Click Here](#)

### A short reflection: “Being in the mirror room”

We have an expression on our team called “being in the mirror room”, where you get to a point where all you’re thinking about is yourself and what’s going on with you, up to the point where it’s as if were in a room and the walls are all mirrors, where everywhere you look, all you see is yourself. And when I get stressed, I think that’s where I go. (p. 47) [12 Click Here](#)



## Module 3: Coach-Athlete Relationship

This section proposes strategies to develop better coach-athlete relations.

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### Key message

**In your role as a coach, you have the potential to produce transformations in your groups.**



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Appendixes

# Key Lesson 6:

## The Keys for Supportive Training: Fostering Your Athletes' Potential

### Mental capability

#### COMMITMENT

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

Disconnected coach-athlete relationship can produce:

- Fear of failure, shame, and embarrassment
- Fear of upsetting their coach when they fail a task
- Dropouts
- Reduced happiness in coach and athlete
- Undervalued coach level perception

##### Insights

- The coach–athlete relationship, CAR refers to all situations in which a coach's and athlete's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are inter-related.
  - A quality coach-athlete relationship influences how an athlete perceives their coach
  - Closeness is positively associated with challenge appraisals and negatively with threat appraisals
- ⇒ The greater the commitment and empathy, the better the coach-athlete relationship



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport

### The Theory Behind

#### Empathy

Empathy is the ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.

Empathy is an important aspect of social support in a relationship [13 Click Here](#) and contributes to close and warm interpersonal relationships [14 Click Here](#).

#### 3C + C Model

This is a helpful model to understand a supportive coach-athlete relationship:

- **Closeness:** The extent to which value, support, and care for each other
- **Commitment:** The coach and athlete's intent to maintain the relationship
- **Complementarity:** How the behaviours of the coach and athlete correspond to each other
- **Co-orientation:** Coach and athlete establishing common views regarding the athlete's progression



## Tips and Activities



### Activity 9: Tearing down stereotypes

- A first step to win someone's trust is knowing the person deeply: **Emotions, hobbies, dreams.**
- Be sure that at a certain point, you will get to connect with the other person.
- Put in practice this fun activity to know more about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of your athletes and the other way around. This game will be a unique chance to show your most authentic side.

[Click here](#) to access the game

#### To reflect

- ⇒ When sharing an activity with another person, such as a training session or a working together, we create mental images about our partners. At a certain point, these perceptions can turn into prejudices that are difficult to shift
- ⇒ Give yourself an opportunity to discover incredible people and stories and give your partners and team members the same chance. You are a unique being.

Please also use:

[Activity 2A: Your players' DNA](#)

[Activity 3: In the search of our superior goal](#)

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Coaches speaking to their athletes and provide re-assurance about factors that might cause threat (e.g., the outcome of competitions)
- Softening your tone: It plays a major factor on how an individual feel when receiving positive or negative feedback.
  - ⇒ Use a soft, warm, supportive tone of voice, they leave feeling more positive, even when the feedback is negative!
- Listen attentively:
  - ⇒ When athletes feel they are truly being heard and not being interrupted, their trust also grows.

### Avoid

- Disregarding your athlete's feelings, thoughts, and actions
- Underestimating own behaviours
- Forgetting special details such as:
  - ⇒ Names
  - ⇒ Special moments they mention in their lives
  - ⇒ Birthdays

- Do not stop increasing your self-awareness skills and work towards improving them.
  - ⇒ Keep note of what is working well during your discussions with your players or team [15 Click Here](#)

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### **We are proud of our players**

##### **KSV Roeselare: Belgium**

When a player doesn't show up for two or three training sessions, the coaches will reach out to them: not out of anger or because of sportive targets, but out of an honest concern about their well-being. The fact that they play for the official football club KSV Roeselare gives them an identity to be proud of. When they are asked what they do, they can rightly say they are players of KSV Roeselare or they can talk about the last national tournament they played in. It's is both a great topic of conversation as a source of self-esteem!



#### **Other resources**

##### **The Science of People:**

##### **Other team building activities**

- One of the fastest ways to build connections are nostalgia, emotions, and food
- We are human, so we all eat! This great research even found that eating the same food can increase people's trust.

[Click here](#) to read more about these powerful triggers.

A short reflection:

“Being in the mirror room”

We have an expression on our team called “being in the mirror room”, where you get to a point where all you're thinking about is yourself and what's going on with you, up to the point where it's as if were in a room and the walls are all mirrors, where everywhere you look, all you see is yourself. And when I get stressed, I think that's where I go. [12 Click Here](#)

#### **Video**

##### **Empathy leadership inspirational**

[Click here](#)

# Key Lesson 7:

## Assertively Managing Interpersonal Conflicts

### Mental capability

#### SUPPORTIVE AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

A group conflict or internal quarrel with either club members or the coach involved could lead to negative affect that can create:

- Increased stress
- Anxiety
- Unhappiness
- Aggressiveness
- Dysfunctional thoughts and emotions
- Dissatisfaction
- Less commitment
- Hostility

A common reason for interpersonal conflicts and group disagreements is miscommunication

⇒ Non-verbal communication accounts for 90 % of a message transmission. It includes facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, gestures displayed through body language.

##### Insights

- Coaches can facilitate active communication with their athletes to ensure athletes are able to effectively regulate their own emotions if coaches are not present
- Awareness of conflict management could potentially lead both coaches and athletes to:

⇒ “Broaden” their viewpoints

⇒ “Build” connections that are capable of generating positive emotions [15 Click Here](#)



- Those with a secure attachment to their parent report greater experiences of friendship quality in sport as defined by loyalty and intimacy, companionship and pleasant play, and conflict resolution
- Interpersonal conflict is associated with athletes' perceptions of well-being

Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport  
@iliasvanbambostphotography

## The Theory Behind

**Attachment theory:** Describes the way how people create bonds/connections with each other in 3 different styles:

### Secure

Display confidence in the availability of their close other to provide them with comfort and support in times of need.

### Insecure

Anxious ambivalent, strong desire for proximity and intimacy with their caregiver even in non-distressing conditions, become angry and upset with the caregiver following separation.

### Avoidant

Little distress during separation from their close other and also display few attempts at maintaining contact.

- ⇒ **Attachment: A feeling of love or strong connection to someone or something**
- ⇒ **Assertiveness is the quality of being confident and not frightened to say what you want or believe**

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 10: The art of good communication

This communication booster will show you that people have different ways of seeing and interpreting things. One of the most effective tools to prevent and even to resolve an interpersonal conflict is assertive communication.

[Click Here](#) to check the activity

### To reflect

- ⇒ Non-verbal communication is fundamental. In a conflict situation, the way how a situation is expressed is even more decisive for the potential solution.
- ⇒ The activity will also reinforce the level of cohesion of your group. Your players will be more likely to share their feelings in a sincere, opportune and assertive way. Many conflict resolution techniques lose their potency when separated from visual emotional cues.
- ⇒ As a coach, learn the importance of active listening to create supportive environments. Avoid using your cell phone or any other distractor, as it shows lack of interest in what another person is trying to share or express.





### Activity 11: Assessing attachment styles

A key step to building a better coach-athlete relationship is understanding the attachment styles that dominates the attitudes between athletes and coaches. Once you have this key information, you may design and strategy to approach any interpersonal conflict situation more effectively. [Click Here](#) to try the assessment



### Activity 12: The Circle of Trust

This activity is helpful for coaches working with large groups. On the occasion of internal conflicts, put the whole team against the coach or vice versa. We recommend using it to overcome internal conflicts among players or when the coach is part of the problem. [Click Here](#) to get the complete instructions

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Understanding the attachment type of each of your players
- Active listening: Be sure that your messages are kept in the right directions
- Communication and spending time together
  - ⇒ Give coaches the chance to know if there are any problems or situation that need to be treated
- Controlling and using appropriate intonation of voice
- Adopting different points of view

### Avoid

- Although the causes of an internal conflict may seem obvious, do not take a position on either of the sides
- Use positive phrases that show what athletes should do, **not what NOT to do**
  - ⇒ E.g. “stretch your knee” instead of “don’t bend your knee”;
- Using a sense of humour that denotes sarcasm and/or humiliation

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Mediating effects of boxing in group relationships and social skills.

NAME club: anonymous from IO2 Mapping Good Practices questionnaire

Boxing project, we also specifically organise the Slagkracht project. This is a short-term guidance programme for children/young people who are struggling at home, at school, or in their free time. The project consists of a combination of boxing training and group activities. These boxing activities are the starting point for working on various themes such as relationships, peer pressure, authority, trust, social skills, self-image, etc.



### Other resources

Team Building Activities – Workamajig blog [Click Here](#)

Communication exercises – Positive Psychology [Click Here](#)

## Key Lesson 8: A Guide to Perceive and Control Emotions

### Mental capability

#### COPING

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

- Emotional instability may carry serious implications to mental well-being of athletes
- Adolescents in particular is a critical group for the challenges they face during this period: group pressure, physical changes, new affective needs, among others
- Distress can be manifested in different levels and manifestations:
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Fear
  - Consumption of drugs
  - Bullying
  - Solitude
  - Shyness and low interpersonal skills
  - Intra-familiar aggressiveness
  - Mistreatment
  - Affective breakdowns with couples

##### Insights

- The role of a coach is decisive to prevent in the right moment certain behaviours that may suggest inconsistencies between what an athlete thinks and does.
- Sport itself has a therapeutic application:
  - ⇒ It permits direct social interaction and in most of the times an authentic group support.
  - ⇒ It is a natural distractor that gives a participant the opportunity to get a spontaneous reappraisal
- When athletes provide as well as receive verbal and technical feedback from teammates and coaches it was found to be a good strategy to get encouragement and improve emotions



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport @iliasvanbambostphotography

## The Theory Behind

### Resilience

The quality of being able to return quickly to a previous good condition after problems

### VS

### Coping

All conscious cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage external or internal demands that a person appraises as taxing his or her resources [16 Click Here](#).

### Interpersonal emotion regulation (IER)

- Is used to influence both positive and negative emotions
- Is a short-term, deliberate process
- Two forms of regulation:
  - ⇒ Intrinsic: regulating one's own emotions  
Influencing an individual's beliefs or attitudes
  - ⇒ Extrinsic: regulating another's emotions  
Providing social support

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 2: Key alert symptoms and coping strategies to regulate athletes' emotions

Use this simple checklist as a roadmap to offer the most adequate support to your athletes, recognising key symptoms, factors influencing emotions, regulations and diverse coping alternatives. [Click here](#) to get the checklist

### To reflect

- ⇒ Take into consideration all the factors.
- ⇒ Coaches' emotions influence athletes' emotions.
- ⇒ Facilitate active communication with athletes to ensure they are able to effectively regulate their own emotions if coaches are not present.

In certain cases, more acute emotional conflicts should be addressed with the support of professionals.

### Please also apply:

We recommend additional activities related to coping:



[Checklist 8: Coaching tips to create more supportive environments for marginalised groups](#)

[Checklist 1: Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress](#)

### Additional recommendations for coaches

#### Encourage

- Skills to read non-verbal and other forms of communication
- Act on time
- Autonomy-supportive coaching creates empowering climates. Thus, participants feel they have a voice in the group and can be supportive in certain situations affecting another teammate

#### Avoid

- A supportive coach willing to help a team member in difficulties should first get its own emotional balance

### Additional resources



#### Other resources

**Understanding differences between Emotion-Focused and Problem-Focused Strategies**

[Click Here](#)



## Key Lesson 9: Getting Support from Experts, Peers and Mentors

### Mental capability

#### SENSE OF CONFIDENCE

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

- A coach needs to know different fields: **nutrition, physiology, physiotherapy, facility expert, travel assistant, among others.**
- All are important but certainly the coaching component is affected as
  - ⇒ Time and energies are limited resource: Certain types of support need to be scarified
- Not having the right support to offer athletes may bring certain risks:
  - ⇒ Incapacity to respond to a mental well being issue at the right time
  - ⇒ Lack of follow up in other **vital spaces** such as home or school
  - ⇒ Potential biases when helping in areas the coach is no expert in
  - ⇒ With younger groups: difficulties to get access and understand certain communication codes (E.g., social media)

As the proverb goes:

**Let the cobbler stick to his last. This means that one should do the work one is an expert at.**

##### Insights

- Social and autonomy support through social capacity building is a vital component to foster mental well-being. It has direct effect in improving the adaptation and self-confidence of participants.
- Individuals with a secure attachment to their parent reported greater experiences of:
  - ⇒ Friendship quality in sport
  - ⇒ Loyalty and intimacy
  - ⇒ Companionship and pleasant play
  - ⇒ Conflict resolution
- **Verbal and technical feedback.** Many athletes reported providing, as well as receiving encouragement and support from their team mates as a strategy to improve emotions.



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport

## The Theory Behind

### Social Capital

- A shared property based on community activities
- Features of social organisations such as trusts, and networks can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating different contributions and capacities.

### 4 dimensions of social support

- **Emotional:** enhancing feelings of being cared for or loved
- **Esteem:** Competence of self esteem
- **Informational:** Advice and guidance
- **Tangible:** Concrete instruments and assistance

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 13A: Building a stakeholder map of your club or community

The following matrix seeks to identify potential supporters that have the capacity to strengthen your coaching athlete relationship.

[Click here](#) to get the Stakeholder map

#### To reflect

- ⇒ Social support is a vital component to foster mental well-being.
- ⇒ Parents involvement is one of the most effective sources of support for a coach.



### Checklist 3: Ideas to involve parents

Our strongest bonds come from our family and parents. We propose several activities that may increase the level of involvement of close relatives in the coaching outcomes and thus in their increasing athlete's mental well-being. [Click here](#) to find out more

#### To reflect

- ⇒ Our strongest bonds come from our family and parents.
- ⇒ Strong family involvement contributes with athlete's mental being but also in the sport performance.



### Activity 13B: Improving confidence in others

The objective is to enable participants to develop and improve their ability to have confidence in others. That they value their feelings in a situation where they depend on trusting the other, where they put their health and chances of achieving the goal in the hands of the other. [Click here](#) to know more

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Seeking collaborative mechanisms with:
  - ⇒ Parents
  - ⇒ Sports psychologists
  - ⇒ Teachers
  - ⇒ Other professionals in the fields of education, health or social care
- Making use of role models from their own community.
- Assessing which profiles could influence our players, especially if it is about youths
- Direct communication with parents if you are working with youths
- Organising webinars or short conferences with guest speakers

### Avoid

- Bearing an unmanageable weight of coaching on your shoulders
- Losing contact with your former athletes. At a certain point, they can become role models for your current athletes

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Supporting Togetherness

##### Lahjan Tytöt: Finland

The club's events – such as theme weeks, summer camps, family events, screenings and recreational days – strengthen the feeling of togetherness. The club remembers students, fresh mothers and birthday heroes.

#### Supporting Togetherness

##### Huurteiset Herrat: Finland

Culture and art are promoted once or twice a year and then the spouses are involved and also get to know each other. Players also play golf together.

#### Supporting Togetherness

##### Sportclub Boezjeer: the Netherlands

Most of the members have a small social network, and we see a lot of members making friends. For a lot of these members, it is the only membership they have and often the only activities in their free time.

# Key Lesson 10: Training with Passion

## Mental capability

### SENSE OF MASTERY

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

- Excessive passion can also arouse negative emotions, lead to inflexible persistence, and interfere with achieving a balanced, successful life.
- Lack of passion can produce dissatisfaction in participants, causing negative thoughts, potentially spiralling into negative interactions with others and potential dropout.

##### Insights

- Training with passion can enhance Coach athlete relationship
- Emotions take a decisive role in teaching, training, or whatever activity you do
- Passion can fuel motivation, enhance well-being, and provide meaning in your everyday life

⇒ 34.85 %

Percentage of people that regards individual sports/  
physical activity as a passionate activity

#### The Theory Behind

##### Passion

**Passion** is a powerful feeling that exerts an extreme interest in or wishing for doing something: necessary to reach the highest levels of achievement. Linked to dedication in this scenario, passion helps one identify and contributes to the satisfaction of getting a feeling of belonging a sense of purpose.



Photo: Minor-Ndako  
Sport @iliasvanbambost-  
photography

##### Dualistic Model of Passion

There are 2 approaches for training a group [17 Click Here](#)

##### Type of Passion Harmonious Passion

**Type of behaviour**  
Autonomy-  
supportive  
behaviour

##### Type of behaviour

- Athletes' general happiness
- Better cognitive results (concentration and flow)
- Coaches' well-being

##### Obsessive Passion

Controlling  
behaviour

- Depression
- Anxiety

**"How can people's lives be most worth living?"**

**"By having a harmonious passion towards what you do."**



## Tips and Activities



### Activity 14: Show your passion through story telling

- Pick one day to do something different and creative with your group
- Prepare objects that define your passion on what you do
- One personal story can also do a good job
- Ask your teammates or group members to share their passion

[Click here](#) to get additional instructions

#### To reflect

- ⇒ This activity strengthens coach-athlete relationship but also the group cohesion as each player has learnt a bit more about their peers.
- ⇒ This can be done virtually or on site.
- ⇒ Story telling is an outstanding resource for coaches to develop athlete's attentiveness and therefore to achieve better sporting results and more openness from the athletes.

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Smiling as much as you can
- Always saying hello
- Speaking loudly, speaking confident
- Sharing your good experiences with your group

### Avoid

- Being late to the trainings
- Controlling styles
- Interacting with your group when you are depressed or stressful

## Additional resources



### Other resources

#### Article [Passionatecoach.com](#) | Passion for Coaching

[Click Here](#) to read the article

#### Movie | "Hoosiers" (1986)

[Click here](#) to see summary



### Inspiring phrases:

"There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living."

Nelson Mandela



## Module 4: Managing Threats to Well-being

Alternatives to solve certain issues that affect athletes' well-being.

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### Key message

**An opportune response can prevent irreversible consequences.**



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Appendices

# Key Lesson 11: Dealing with Aggression

## Mental capability

### SELF CONTROL

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

- Violence and sports participation appear to be linked with a direct effect to mental well-being
- Aggressiveness supposes a violent behaviour towards another person
- It could be seen as the expression of a dysfunctional mental state that can produce unwished reactions in different levels:
  - ⇒ Physical and verbal aggression
  - ⇒ Hostility and anger
  - ⇒ Antisocial norms and sexual assault

##### 3 factors that aggravate violence:

##### Relationship with alcohol, mental well-being and aggressiveness:

- Direct damage to the brain
- Mental health issues: hallucinations, psychosis, changes in mood
- More chances of aggression in men who consume on average
  - ⇒ 3 times more of alcohol than women

##### Social norms and identities attached to sport:

- Some male-dominated team sports may lead to
  - ⇒ Toxic masculinity and sexist behaviours
  - ⇒ Excessive alcohol consumption
  - ⇒ Verbal and physical aggressions

##### Insights

- Characteristics of the sport or the sport practice in itself may promote positive (e.g. value-based) or negative (aggressive) environments
- Traditional martial arts (e.g., aikido, taekwondo, karate) seem to reduce delinquent and aggressive behaviour [18 Click Here](#)
- It is the coach's responsibility to build safe coaching environment
  - ⇒ Coach needs to immediately intervene to prevent the spread of violence in a group



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport

## The Theory Behind

### The strength-energy model

Self-control as a limited resource is that a period of rest or relaxation will lead to the replenishment of the resource

#### Analogy with muscles:

- ⇒ Muscles require strength and energy → individuals can only exert self-control for a limited period of time
- ⇒ As muscles require a period of rest or recuperation → self-control can only be gained after a period of rest or recuperation

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 4: Detecting hazardous behaviours on time

Use this observation tool to prevent certain hazardous behaviours that may turn into more complex situations that can affect other participants' mental well-being as well. [Click here](#) for additional information

#### To reflect

- ⇒ Get to know your athletes so you can detect changes in their behaviour and act on time
- ⇒ If the level of aggressiveness is manageable, you can try tempering these behaviours through self control, emotion regulation techniques:



### Checklist 1: Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress

### Checklist 2: Key alert symptoms and coping strategies to regulate athletes' emotions

- ⇒ In case you are dealing with a more difficult case, look for the support of a psychologist or any other professional in this area
- ⇒ Do not underestimate the harm aggressions can produce another person's mental well-being



### Activity 22: Managing impulses

The objective is to show participants how to manage their impulse control, emotions and desires. This serves to reduce impulsive behaviours, so that participants learn to think and reflect on an action before doing it. [Click here](#) for additional information

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Maximising self-regulatory capacity such as getting appropriate nutrition and sufficient sleep
- Zero tolerance to aggressiveness
- Acting on time
- Self-monitoring
- Speaking up and asking for help. Alcohol dependency is a serious matter.
- Putting in practice all the emotion regulations strategies revised in sections A and B:

[Activity 5](#): A quick scanner of your affective state

[Activity 6](#): Identifying your rush hours

[Activity 8A](#): A stress radar crossword puzzle

[Checklist 1](#): Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress

[Checklist 2](#): Key alert symptoms and coping strategies to regulate athletes' emotions

### Avoid

- Using offensive / aggressive language against competitors
- Normalising the use of alcohol in certain social spheres or in public spaces such as social media

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Safe environment and a value-inherent sport practice

##### Brazilian jiu-jitsu Sweden: Sweden

Practitioners reported a decline in aggressiveness. Chinkov: The motto “to train like a team and fight like a family” (p. 49), expressed by a head instructor, is instrumental to show that a safe environment and a value inherent sport practice are crucial for positive outcomes and prevention of negative behaviour, such as aggressiveness. Several studies have shown that the practice of martial arts, especially boxing, can make an important contribution to increasing resilience, aggression regulation, and personal growth in children and adolescents.



#### Other resources

NSCA Article - 10 negative effects of alcohol on sport athlete: [Click here](#)



## Key Lesson 12: Body Satisfaction

### Mental capability

#### SELF ESTEEM

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

**Dissatisfaction** with own body causes:

- Poor psychological well-being,
- Negative emotions and attitudes
- Inadequate self-esteem,
- Anxiety for social assessment
- Depression
- Subsequent avoidance of social interactions
- Decreased flow

Dissatisfaction is related to the **body mass index**

⇒ Declared dissatisfaction regarding weight by more than half of the female population (53 %).

Negative triggers: **Media exposure**

- Predicted body dissatisfaction
- Creates a desire for thinness across settings world regions

⇒ Body image: Escape from sadness, loneliness and failures  
[19 Click Here](#)

##### Insights

- Programs should focus on strategies for improving self-worth
- Activities that support awareness and attentiveness to the appreciation of one's physical functionality, and competence could contribute to a closer and more connected relationship with the body

[21 Click Here](#)



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport@iliasvanbambostphotography

### The Theory Behind

#### Objectification

All genders are typically acculturated to internalize an observer's perspective as a primary view of their physical selves, which can lead to women's devaluation [20 Click Here](#)

#### VS

#### Embodiment

An integrated process in which individuals experience their bodies as central to their self expression and well-being [21 Click Here](#)

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 5: Tips for preventing dissatisfaction with one's body

- If pupils are giving increased importance to physical appearance which could bring potential effects in mental well-being: Use these tips to reinforce self-worth and prevent dissatisfactions in your participants [Click here](#) to read more



### Activity 23: Improving self-image and self confidence

- For participants to improve their self-image, to be more confident in their abilities, to value their physique and personality more.
- Self-esteem is a key factor in being able to function normally, learn and improve [Click here](#) to read more

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Family support, positive assessment of physical condition
- Effective coping strategies, holistic balance and the sense of wellness [23 Click Here](#)

### Avoid

- Focuses less on body appearance and more on recognising and appreciating body functionality

## Additional resources



### Other resources

#### Video: Planning a yoga session

May contribute to their respect and appreciation for their bodies, it is recommended that it is not a “one off” session but rather something regular that can be incorporated at the start or end of a session, playing a similar role to mindfulness with a closer link to the body in movement and its abilities. [Click here](#) to access

#### Aerobic dance programme, an opportunity to win in self-image [22 Click Here](#)

1. It seems that at least 4 to 6 months of regular physical activity are needed to improve self-image.
2. It also influenced the individual, social, and moral self-image, too, of those participants who exercised in a group
3. Dance allows the individuals to compare themselves to the others and they may have positive feedback from others and the coach as well. [Click here](#) to know more about this course

### To reflect

- ⇒ The applied aerobic dance programme enhanced not only the body image, but also influenced the individual, social and moral self-image, too.

# Key Lesson 13: Safeguarding from sexual misconduct

## Mental capability

### PERSONAL SAFETY

#### Why it matters

#### Risks to mental well-being:

##### Coach-Athlete relationship:

It involves:

- Dependency
- A coach stands in a position of power
- Closeness
- Necessary focus on athletes' bodies

When any of these attitudes triggers sexual harassment/violence, athletes may suffer from:

- Depression
- Anxiety (including posttraumatic stress disorder) and irreversible psychological damage
- Impaired performance
- Athlete drop-out
- Reduction in trust by athletes in coaches

- ⇒ Correlation have been found between lack of or low self-confidence and sexual harassment or abuse
- ⇒ Team dynamics are also affected as it suggests preferences for other members.

#### Insights

##### Are Coach-Athlete sexual relationship (CASR) acceptable?

In sport, as it is in other settings where young people depend on adults to learn and develop, a relationship beyond the professional, involving a **minor is thought to be wrong and criminal**.

Between adults, it is complex to define appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in a sporting relationship. However, when coaches adhere to professional standards, they are likely to represent external inhibitors to sexual harassment.



- ⇒ Empowering athletes is an important aspect of protection, safeguarding and equality policy and procedure.
- ⇒ Zero tolerance in relationships between coaches and youths

Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport (BUPCS)

## The Theory Behind

### Sexual abuse

Is a further exaggerated sexualised act where consent is not obtained and often involves victim exploitation or “entrapment”

[78 Click here](#)

### Safeguarding

Refers to the actions we take to ensure children are safe from harm when involved in clubs and activities

### Grooming

The process of getting someone ready to do whatever is asked of them by the abuser. It can lead in to a range of situations they may otherwise not have entered. E.g., sexual abuse [27 Click here](#)

### UNESCO Code of Sports Ethics

Sports organizations have the responsibility:

**To ensure that safeguards are in place within the context of an overall framework of support and protection for children, young people and women, both to protect the above groups from sexual harassment and abuse and to prevent the exploitation of children, particularly those who demonstrate precocious ability.**

### International safeguards [24 Click Here](#)

Sports organizations have the responsibility to:

- **Create safe sporting environments for children**
- **Provide a benchmark to assist sports providers and funders to make informed decisions**
- **Promote good practice and challenge practice that is harmful to children**
- **Provide clarity on safeguarding children to all involved in sport**

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 6: Preventing sexual harassment in coach-athlete relationship and between team members

- This checklist will show you inadequate behaviours that could potentially harm and create ill being and discomfort in your athletes. [Click here](#) to access
- If any of these situations are likely to occur in your coaching routines, please talk with your club superiors immediately.



### Activity 15A: Collaborative readings reflecting about CASR situations

#### Instructions:

- Split your group into 2 teams. Each of them is going to represent one of the two case studies through a role play.
  - Now each player should imagine that they are a part of this team. How would you be supportive in a situation like this?
- Activity adapted from the International Olympic Committee [50 Click here](#)  
[Click here](#) to know more.



## Activity 15B: Working on personal safety

For participants to learn to distinguish which behaviours can and which do not infringe on personal safety. They also learn how to manage how they should act in case they find themselves in a situation where the personal safety of a person or group is violated.

[Click here](#) to access

### Additional recommendations for coaches

#### Encourage

- Empowering your group members
- Awareness of the potential situations
- Athletes, in particular children and teenagers, idolise their coaches: Use assertive communication to put these feelings in order and avoid expectations.
- ▪ Supportive relationships with parent/s and other family members
- Allowing young people to talk about bullying/abuse and who to go to for help

#### Avoid

- Do not underestimate the effect your actions may have on athletes regardless
- Maintain a professional behaviour: Limit alcohol consumption when you have a social encounter with your group
- Ready carefully the signals: In many cases, girl teenagers filter just for testing how attractive they may be to adult men/women and also with the aim of stand out from their peers.
- Not taking reports of harassment seriously

### Additional resources

#### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Controlling inappropriate behaviours

NAME club: anonymous from IO2 Mapping Good Practices questionnaire

- We follow training courses on sexually transgressive behaviour. E.g., [Working with the flag system.](#)
- Harassment behaviour is written down and dealt with in our club regulations
- Safety is an important point of attention in all the training courses we give in the club



#### Other resources

#### Human Rights Channel:

- Kiko and the hand training for trainer's manual [Click here](#)
- Start to talk Campaign [Click here](#)

#### Child protection in sport unit: International safeguards

[Click here](#) to read more





## Module 5: Health Skills and Coaching during Times of Crisis

COVID-19 and any other crisis bring internal and external challenges, most of them directly affecting people's well-being, mental and health.

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### Key message

**Sport can be a decisive driver to overcome pandemic threats to well-being.**



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Appendixes

## Key Lesson 14: Towards the Perfect Work-Life Balance

### Mental capability

#### HAPPINESS

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

Long working hours can create both in athletes and coaches

- Tension in a coach
- Occurrence of work–family conflict (WFC)
- Job burnout
- Job dissatisfaction

Family pressures is one of the main stress triggers a coach faces.

##### Insights

Work-life balance predicts:

- Coaches' need satisfaction
- Mental well-being
- Positive outlook on life.

### The Theory Behind

##### 2 types of well-being:

###### Hedonic

Focuses on the attainment of happiness, and seeks to understand “what makes experience and life pleasant and unpleasant”

###### Eudaimonic

Concerned with human growth and actualisation of potential. Considers their coaching role to be fully integrated in their sense of self

##### Theory of integration

Proposes that an individual prioritises both work and personal time

##### Endorphins and sport

- Nature's way (chemicals) that help you cope with pain and feel “good overall. [29 Click here](#)
- Endorphins are connected with “pleasure centres” in the brain. [28 Click here](#)
- They also produce a sense of well-being.



When can you see the effects of endorphins?

- A great workout
- Eating a piece of dark chocolate
- Having a good laugh with a friend

Photo: International Table Tennis Federation Foundation

#### Benefits of endorphins

- Reduced depression and anxiety
- Improved self-esteem
- Regulation or modulation of appetite
- An enhanced immune response
- Reduced pain

### Tips and Activities



#### Activity 16: Organising your time with work-life balanced planners

- A rapid tool that examines your work-life balance. Use this tool to assess the activities you have had in a certain day
- A day organiser that gives importance to what is important
- An annual or 6-month planner to set and follow up personal goals that give you a balanced lifestyle

[Click here](#) to access the organisers

#### Tip: Smart questions that can stimulate a perfect balance in your participants

- Developing a good work-life balance should be also an aim to achieve with your participants. The more positive outlook on their lives, the more engagement they will have in their sport activities
- Encourage them to apply these tools
- Remember to always pay attention to daily choices of your groups related to general well-being
- Ask questions like these once or twice a week:
  - ⇒ Did you have time to take a break during the day?
  - ⇒ What gave you joy?
  - ⇒ Was your meal enjoyable?
  - ⇒ Are your work, studies, hobbies and leisure time balanced?

#### A physical phenomenon to reflect on: The Second Law of Thermodynamics

- It deals with the quality of energy
- It states that as energy is transferred or transformed, more and more of it is wasted
- Whatever the nature of the processes, there is always a part of the energy that is dissipated, that is, it is not used in a useful way
- The dissipation of energy cannot be totally avoided. **We need to make better use of the energy available.**

### To reflect

- ⇒ What activities consume your time and energy unproductively?
- ⇒ What do you miss doing on a regular working day?
- ⇒ If you could buy some extra time, which activities would you devote it to?

Which are our energy sources?

Food and recovery: Please have a look to [section 15](#) and [section 16](#)



### Activity 17: The endorphimeter

A fun way to assess what are the activities that produce endorphins and therefore the more well-being on you. [Click here](#)

### To reflect

- ⇒ Take the time to make plans with family and friends. It's the little things: a lunch date with your wife or meeting a good friend for a beer.

### Additional information:

See [Activity 19](#), it provides additional information on foods that produce endorphins.

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

Developing a congruence between your coaching role and personal values may empower you with more energy and happiness:

- Use time off and communicate when personal obligations arise
- Effective communication between co-workers and spouses
- Scheduling time for your own personal interests
- Time away from work, vacation time
- Do not neglect your support networks

### Avoid

- Trying to embrace more than you can take on. You should know that at times it is acceptable to “just say no”
- Separate work responsibilities from personal life
- Focus only on the task at hand
- Neglect time for personal activities

## Additional resources



### Other resources

#### Your bedside book:

The Work/Life Balance Planner: Resetting Your Goals

[Click Here](#) to purchase a copy or online version

#### Video: Philosophy World Cup

- A unique football match that faces legendary German and Greek thinkers and philosophers of all time  
[Click Here](#) to watch the video
- Check some of the quotes stated by the players with regard to happiness [37 Click here](#), which of these thoughts would you support?

“What a man is contributes much more to his happiness than what he has or how he is regarded by others.” *Schopenhauer*

“Happiness depends upon ourselves.” *Aristotle*

“The man who makes everything that leads to happiness depends upon himself, and not upon other men, has adopted the very best plan for living happily.” *Plato*

“The secret of happiness is not found in seeking more, but in developing the capacity to enjoy less.” *Socrates*

“Happiness is the feeling that power increases — that resistance is being overcome.” *Nietzsche*

“Pleasure is the first good. It is the beginning of every choice and every aversion. It is the absence of pain in the body and of troubles in the soul.” *Epicurus*



## Key Lesson 15: Recovery and Nutrition

### Mental capability

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

###### Coaches

The pandemic has changed the world drastically. In many cases, working from home has resulted in negative habits such as:

- Increased working hours
- Irregular and “comfort” eating and sleeping times

###### Athletes

Many junior athletes work very hard to become elite

- They will experience a range of stressors in their struggle to develop optimally
- During the pandemic, they also struggle with the uncertainty

In both cases, this could have a major impact in:

- Imbalanced Mood
  - Reduced motivation
  - Decision making and resilience
  - Tiredness
  - Low mental focus
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Mental performance
- [70 Click here](#)



##### Insights

###### Recovery

- Sleep gives you more than just rest for your brain as it recharges your “batteries” (nervous system)
- The deeper and better you sleep, the better you recharge [31 Click here](#)
- Sleep has a significant impact on muscle recovery

⇒ One third of our lives: Is spent sleeping, a basic need like food, and vital to our physical well-being

⇒ We lose nearly twice our mental functioning due to the lack of sleep quality

###### Nutrition

- Eating a well-rounded and nutrient-rich diet can help to:
- Improve mood
- Increase energy levels
- Think more clearly
- Healthier diets reduce the risk of depression
- There is a clear link between food and mood

⇒ 20 % of all our energy

Is used by the brain. This energy comes from blood glucose, and the glucose in our blood comes from the carbohydrates we eat. [34 Click here](#)

- ⇒ People with a very high level of physical and intellectual activity need more sleep
- ⇒ Stress and issues at work are strongly linked to disturbed sleep and impaired awakening [33 Click here](#)
- ⇒ Decreased ability to stay/remain calm in challenging situations
- ⇒ Food is often used as a response to emotions. This can produce increased anxiety and obesity

- ⇒ **20 % of the oxygen and blood in your body**  
Is consumed by your brain

## The Theory Behind

### The secret of sleep

#### REM Sleep:

- Produces rapid eye movements
  - Occurs in cycles of about 90-120 minutes throughout the night
  - It accounts for up to 20-25 % of total sleep time
- ⇒ Provides the energy to the brain that supports it during waking hours

#### Non-REM Sleep (Slow-wave or deep sleep)

- Accounting for 40 % of total sleep time
  - Blood pressure drops and your breathing becomes deeper and slower
- ⇒ Essential for muscle recovery as during this phase the brain is resting with very little activity [30 Click here](#)

#### What else happens during sleep?

- Our brain saves and prioritises all the information, both positive and negative, we have been exposed to during the day.
- Although we may feel or are able to physically functional the following day, insufficient sleep may cause difficulties in
  - Recalling key information
  - Making effective decisions

### The secret of eating: What happens in your brain when...

**Inconsistent blood sugar levels:** it leads to tiredness irritability, mood disorders including depression and anxiety  
⇒ Causes: high-carb, sugary and fatty products

**Omega 3 fatty acids are missing:** neurons cannot communicate effectively [34 Click here](#)  
⇒ Causes: lack of vitamins and minerals

**There is excess of processed food:** detrimental impact on hippocampus, a key part of the brain involved in learning and memory, as well as mental health [32 Click here](#)  
⇒ Causes: lack of vitamins and minerals

**Dehydration:** symptoms of low energy, poor focus, stress, confusion and irritation  
⇒ Causes: insufficient water supplies

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 18: Rituals to improve your nutrition and your overall recovery capacity

#### Instructions:

- In a typical week, analyse the following situations:
  1. **Recovery capacity**
  2. **How well are you eating**
- Every time you follow one of these negative habits, mark it with the number 1.
- Sum up the total results:
  - **Total score per habit**
  - **Total score per day**

[Click Here](#) to know more about these rituals



### Activity 19: We are what we eat: the types of food that contribute to a better mental health

Combine these foods to create healthy meals that secure your mental well-being:

- Carbohydrates
- Proteins and fats
- Vitamins and minerals
- Fibres
- Hydration

[Click Here](#) to see the full list

Keep this in mind:

⇒ When we aren't fuelling our bodies with nutritious foods, we can become more susceptible to stress related symptoms

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Healthy eating: fruits, vegetables, minerals, etc.
- Eating on regular times
- Do not forget to do [Activity 19](#)

### Avoid

- Avoid caffeine and alcohol as much as possible
- Avoid junk food when you're tired
- Cut back on processed food
- **Food shouldn't be used as a way to control emotions**
- **Comfort eating brings adverse consequences**

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Small actions that make a difference

##### Huurteiset Herrat: Finland

While waking up early in the morning can be tiring, especially for those who work, the schedule is good in terms of players' well-being and everyday rhythm. Morning ice twice a week brings rhythm to everyday life and leaves room for evenings. Having a rhythm supports the regularity of life and, for example, sleep and rest.

Through small actions such as water intake, healthy snacks after training or a cooking workshop, we focus on the importance of a healthy lifestyle. We have a collaboration with the Local Health Network (LOGO) for a project about healthy life habits & workshops. We provide information on what to eat before and after training or a game, the importance of sleep and influence of sport for better sleep.



#### Other resources

##### Support for coaches:

Sport Sleep Coach [Click here](#)

#### An inspiring documentary marathon

- Share with your athletes these interesting videos that will show diversity in lifestyle and the search for ikigai and balance
- Prepare a kahoot or any other virtual game to strengthen key concepts of the videos.
- We promise this activity will teach you a lot and may result in a unique opportunity to share a fun and enriching moment.

#### Recommended documentaries:

- ⇒ How to get a good night's sleep [Click here](#)
- ⇒ We are what we eat: Better brain health. [Click here](#)
- ⇒ Food for thought: How your belly controls your brain [Click here](#)
- ⇒ Why Sleep and Recovery Is So Important [Click here](#)
- ⇒ 25 Ways to Improve Your Health with Food [Click here](#)
- ⇒ 10 Healthy habits to pick up [Click here](#)

#### Apps and other virtual resources to track your eating habits

- Calorie checker [Click here](#)
- MyFitnessPal [Click here](#)
- The Daily Meal [Click here](#)

#### Some suggestions of the chef:

- Eating breakfast gets the day off to a good start [Click here](#)
- 10 Foods That Are Healthier Than We Think [Click here](#)
- 10 Foods that keep your energy [Click here](#)

## Key Lesson 16: Alternatives to Lockdown

### Mental capability

#### RESILIENCE AND COPING

#### Why it matters

##### Risks to mental well-being:

The pandemic has brought severe risks to our mental well-being for the uncertainty and fear of the disease plus the implications of lockdowns and restricted social interactions

Moreover, it has negatively impacted the sport sector due to:

- Shift in routines
- Suspension of club activities
- Absence of organised training
- Lack of direct communication between athletes and coaches

##### Negative effects in **coaches and athletes**:

- Elevated rates of stress or anxiety
- Sleep disorders/insomnia
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Levels of loneliness
- Depression
- Increased consumption of alcohol and drugs
- Self-harm or suicidal behaviour
- Irritability
- Other feelings such as fear, confusion, anger, frustration, boredom

⇒ **77 % of people**

Associate the COVID-19 pandemic with anxiety symptoms

[36 Click here](#)

##### Insights

The capacity of achieving an **optimal work life balance on par with the strengthening of resilience** seems to be the best path to overcome COVID-19.

Whereas many constraints have emerged, the pandemic has also opened up more opportunities and extra time for new type of activities.

⇒ Due to the pandemic, there is some additional time which can be devoted to activities which could not be carried out in “normal conditions” and with the potential involvement of families and friends.



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport@iliasvanbambostphotography



## The Theory Behind

### Anxiety

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future.

Anxiety is a natural human response when we feel that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations.

### Signs of Anxiety

- Restlessness
- A sense of dread
- Feeling constantly “on edge”
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Worrying that you’re losing touch with reality
- Low mood and depression
- Rumination – thinking a lot about bad experiences

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 7: A well-being protocol during COVID-19 to prevent anxiety

We are living an unprecedented situation. The global pandemic has produced direct negative consequences in mental well-being with many having to experience losing a friend or a close relative. The new normality conditions such as home office, social distancing, and limitations to do outdoors activities, have brought additional hardships. Sport coaches in particular have been one of the most affected groups, as many clubs have been closed and competitions discontinued.

#### 1. New normality rituals:

With this context, we propose a set of tips and alternatives to lockdown that will contribute to the coaches', and indirectly to athletes', mental well-being:

[Click here](#) to read more

#### 2. Defining what you can and cannot control

Although the pandemic means your choices may be limited, try to focus on the things you can change. It might be helpful to list the things you can change on a piece of paper and all the things you can't on another one.

[Click here](#) to see the full checklist

### To reflect

- ⇒ It is up to us to decide how we want to face this critical period:
  - ⇒ One option is to stay positive and resilient
  - ⇒ Another, though less recommended, is to let ourselves suffer of anxiety and stress without emotional control
- ⇒ Focus your energies and effort to make choices to control the things that you can.

### Additional recommendations for coaches

#### Encourage

- Speaking with others
- Taking advantage of technology
- Finding an online/offline balance
- Respecting your schedule, especially sleeping and eating times
- Devoting reasonable amounts of working time

#### Avoid

- If you have been confirmed as in need of isolation, [watch out for:](#)
  - ⇒ Signs of locking down your mind
  - ⇒ Spiral into negative thoughts. Anxiety can produce additional adverse effects to your health
  - ⇒ Never saying yes when help is being offered to you
- When supporting an athlete or a person that is either infected or has suffered a loss, [please be considerate and restrain from:](#)
  - ⇒ Tell someone to “snap out of it” or to “get over it”
  - ⇒ Adopt an overprotective attitude toward someone who is depressed
  - ⇒ Use nonverbal expressions that shows an extreme look of concern
  - ⇒ Ignore, disagree with or dismiss the person’s feelings by attempting to say something positive like, “You don’t seem that bad to me.” [38 Click here](#)

### Additional resources

#### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

##### ITTF Foundation

##### Using table tennis from home

This toolkit and Master Class will give you a set of options to use your time with a powerful purpose and at the same time to creatively overcome the difficulties that can come with being forced to stay at home for a prolonged period of time.

[Click here](#) to get the toolkit

[Click here](#) to attend the Master Class \*\*Only available in Spanish



## Other resources

### Coping resources during COVID 19

How to mentally cope with a COVID-19 diagnosis [Click here](#)

How to support someone affected by coronavirus [Click here](#)

Helping children cope with stress [Click here](#)

Coping with stress [Click here](#)

**Apps and other virtual games to keep contact with your athletes and friends** [Click here](#)



## Module 6: Inclusion

Resources that develop mental well-being in groups coming from vulnerable backgrounds.

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### Key message

**Leave no one behind.**



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Mental Capability



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Appendixes

# Key Lesson 17:

## Coaching the Elderly or Persons Suffering from Dementia

### Mental capability

### PERSONAL DIGNITY

### Why it matters

#### Risks to mental well-being:

##### Elderly

- Regular engagement in physical activity decreases with age
- Physical abilities are lost at a rapid rate due to sedentary lifestyle
- Common barriers are: lack of knowledge, information and access to adapted exercise due to isolation and cultural exclusion of elderly in physical activities



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport  
@iliasvanbambostphotography

##### Effects

- Loss of muscle, balance, and overall cardio vascular health
- Decreased vision of a healthy and strong self
- Reduction of healthy and fun promoting social interaction spaces
  - ⇒ **46 million people worldwide** have Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia.
  - ⇒ **Expected to double every 20 years** due to population aging tendency and increasing life expectancy [39 Click here](#)
  - ⇒ **Dementia can now be diagnosed earlier**  
Dementia is being diagnosed as early as 30 40 years of age

#### Insights

- Physical activity is a valuable resource to boost the vitality and overall well-being of the elderly. From a mental perspective, working on hand eye coordination is highly valuable to ensure the brain continues to function and could contribute to slow down and attenuate the effects of the disease.
  - ⇒ **Profound effects**  
were found among people who dance (memory consolidation) [41 Click here](#) and play table tennis (Alzheimer's)
  - ⇒ **45 minutes of physical activity**  
can significantly boost brain power in people aged 50 and over [40 Click here](#)
- Coaches should be aware of the benefits of their activities as a tool to postpone and reduce symptoms of mental diseases.
- Peer support is one of the key resources to support these target groups.
- Community members can contribute to the recovery and social inclusion of individuals with mental health challenges.
- Two factors that can improve adherence are: availability of structured exercise programmes for the elderly and peer mentoring.



## The Theory Behind

### Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that slowly impairs memory and thinking skills, and, eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. [43 Click here](#)

### What happens with your brain as you start aging? [42 Click here](#)

- Loss of balance is one of the first physical abilities we lose with age
- Difficulty learning something new: Slower cognitive processing
- Multitasking becomes more difficult
- Difficulties recalling names and numbers
- Forgetting appointments
- Increased levels of depression
- Risk of isolation
- Lack of physical stimulation and dementia

## Tips and Activities



### Activity 20: Adapting training sessions for the elderly to strengthen mental faculties: an example from table tennis

[Click here](#) to get to the activity

### To reflect

The use of table tennis and other sports can bring important benefits to mental well-being such as:

- ⇒ Sense of self
- ⇒ Potential for development and training
- ⇒ Sense of social involvement
- ⇒ Potential involvement of caregivers offering a new space for interaction
- ⇒ Hand eye coordination stimulating the brain
- ⇒ Quick decision making
- ⇒ Could slow down and delay the effects of the disease

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Balance exercises
- Focus on adapting exercises towards their abilities and challenging them a bit more every time

### Avoid

- Planning sessions without seeing their abilities and energy on that day
- Coaches starting without being prepared for the target group

- Realising they may regress, or their abilities may differ from one week to the next
- Getting the caregivers involved
- Creating a safe environment of fun and encouragement but also challenge
- Not having specialised partners or consultative advice for working with specific groups
- Close feedback loops

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Tackling Alzheimer's

##### Levallois Club: France

Levallois club developed adapted table tennis sessions targeted towards persons with the disease. Table tennis offers a drug free, fun, social treatment that can help slow the progression of the disease and improve quality of life. The focus is on welcoming caregivers to also take part and develop a relationship, but also balance exercises and socialising with others while physically active.

#### Well-being through group sports

##### Taiwanese rugby union club

An overwhelming 'sense of nostalgia and pride' and provided them with 'lifelong friendships' and 'a sense of belonging'. Moreover, all those interviewed held firmly to the perception that playing rugby well after being considered middle aged was a 'pure joy and passion'. Secondary themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the data included a strong desire among the group to remain 'mentally and physically active', while keeping up an involvement in 'a real man's sport'. Maintaining a sense of one's 'self-identity' through continued involvement was valued by the players with feeling 'a sense of responsibility and commitment' to their peers and their chosen sport more generally.

[Click Here](#) to read more about rugby and mental well-being



### Other resources

#### Health Harvard: Mind and mood in aged people.

[Click Here](#) to read more

# Key Lesson 18:

## Time to Walk in Their Shoes: Refugees, Social Inclusion and Mental Well-being

### Mental capability

### SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT

### Why it matters

#### Risks to mental well-being:

- ⇒ **Over 13 million youths** currently live as refugees [44 Click here](#)
- ⇒ **Trauma episodes**  
Stressful migration process, brutal violence, war

#### Challenges on mental well-being for these groups:

The mental health state of refugees differs from those of host country

- Post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD)
- Decreased self-confidence and self-efficacy
- Depression and anxiety disorders
- Sleep problems
- Intrusive memories
- Social isolation
- ⇒ Main stressors in host countries
- Language and cultural differences
- Insecurity, uncertainty
- Pressure for residence permits
- Discrimination experiences

Photo: International Table Tennis Federation Foundation

#### Insights

Sport is most likely to lead to **resilience** in supportive climates [45 Click here](#) that emphasise:

- Effort
- Skill mastery
- Cooperation

⇒ Crucial role of the sport leaders and coaches and the creation of a supportive environment



Sport programmes bring additional **positive mental health effects** of sport participation of refugees and asylum-seekers [46 Click here](#)

- Interact with peers from similar situations
- Receive emotional support
- Distraction from problems
- Positive affect
- Flow experiences
- Coping strategies and self-efficacy
- Restorative effects
- Reducing depression and anxiety symptoms
- Social inclusion

## The Theory Behind

### Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

A mental health problem one may develop after experiencing traumatic events. [48 Click here](#)

- **Delayed-onset PTSD:** symptoms emerge more than six months after experiencing trauma
- **Complex PTSD:** trauma experienced at an early age or it lasted for a long time
- **Birth trauma:** trauma developed after a traumatic experience of childbirth

### Common symptoms of PTSD

- Reliving aspects of what happened
- Alertness or feeling on edge
- Avoiding feelings or memories
- Difficult beliefs or feelings
- Flashbacks

### Social capital theory [47 Click here](#)

Social relationships are resources that can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital.

⇒ E.g., a sports club can support educational attainment and development of life skills

### Attentional focus

The focus of an individual's attention at a particular moment. This focus may be internal (i.e., attending to cognitive, emotional, or pain cues) or external (i.e., attending to environmental cues).

[49 Click here](#)

### How can it be directed away?

- Providing a distraction effect
- Towards bodily sensations which is likely in sport and physical activity.

## Tips and Activities



### Checklist 8: Coaching tips to create more supportive environments for marginalised groups

Refugees and other marginalised groups carry trauma episodes on their shoulders. The adaptation process in new host countries can add pressure due to language constraints, lack of legal documents and certain barriers created in communities. Sport takes an extraordinary role to facilitate the integration of these groups and to strengthen the capacity of resilience. In this sense, the supportive role of coach is key to create changes that bring additional positive mental health effects of sport participation of refugees and asylum-seekers. This checklist seeks to shed light on coaches and effective ideas to create more supportive environments for marginalised groups.

[Click Here](#) to get the checklist

## Additional information: Have a look on other related resources to supportive coaching

[Key Lesson 6](#): The Keys for Supportive Training: Fostering Your Athletes' Potential

[Key Lesson 8](#): A guide to perceive and control emotions

[Activity 9](#): Tearing down stereotypes

[Activity 13B](#): Improving confidence in others



### Activity 21: Reflecting on a situation of trauma

#### Instructions:

- Split your group into 2 teams. Each of them is going to participate in a role play about the following case study: **Rashid: A refugee from a South Asian country**
- Now each player should imagine that they are a part of this team. Reflect on the following questions:
  - **What can you do to support this participant?**
  - **Do you have the knowledge and capabilities to be supportive in a situation like this?**

[Click Here](#) to read more about Rashid

## Additional recommendations for coaches

### Encourage

- Using trauma-sensitive approach, responding to the extreme and often traumatic experiences of many refugees from conflict regions
- Good observation skills
- Continuously adapting the activities to the current situation and needs of the individuals/ group
- Feedback and encouragement from coaches, facilitators or leaders as well as from other participants may endorse the development of self-efficacy beliefs
- Encouraging and empowering refugees to take on an active role, to be coaches, facilitators and leaders in sport and physical activities

### Avoid

- Working with refugees without having a basic notion of the current situation and needs of these groups
- A coach should be aware of own limitations and work in the frame of their own capacities. E.g., a well-experienced trauma expert should support detecting possible triggers for distress in severe crises interventions
- Aiming to direct the main focus on trauma but rather to a wider approach of sport programmes



- Coaches should consider the individual motives and goals of refugees to practice sport
- Support participants in planning actions (e.g., when to exercise where and with whom) and coping with their individual barriers

## Additional resources

### Best practices: Learning from other expert organisations

#### Equal chances and support

##### TanssiDans: Finland

TanssiDans' activities seek to take care of every child and young person who comes along. All children and young people are equal and are supported and encouraged regardless of their skill level.

#### Values and social inclusion

##### HJK: Finland

Among other things, HJK runs extensive and award-winning afternoon club activities. In addition, HJK has a team for the mentally handicapped HJK Special and a team for the CP disabled HJK BlueStars. More information on the club's social responsibility [Click Here](#) (in Finnish).

#### Football: a tool for social inclusion

##### Concordia Football Club: Rome Italy

Social inclusion of children and young people from vulnerable groups, incl. marginalised Roma communities, migrants and refugees.

#### Believing in the power of each individual

##### Les Gazelles de Bruxelles, Belgium

Les Gazelles de Bruxelles seeks a social and cultural mix in which meeting and exchange are created through sport. We want to build bridges between disadvantaged and privileged groups while running.

Les Gazelles de Bruxelles believes in the power of each individual and uses running to increase one's own strength and capacities. The basic martial tradition has never made gender discrimination, in the broad context of the word.

## **Everyone is welcome**

### **OpBoksen Genk: Belgium**

OpBoksen Genk has a “Sport +” vision. In addition to the sporting aspect, meeting new people also plays a key role during training sessions. Participants can get to know each other in a spontaneous, accessible way. It is therefore important that everyone feels welcome and safe here.



## **Other resources**

### **Inclusive toolkit: Make sport everyone's game**

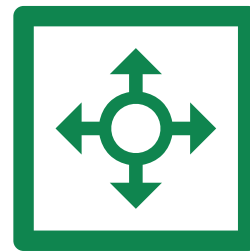
#### **Stonewall: United Kingdom**

Complete toolkit [Click Here](#)

More information about this network [Click Here](#)

## **To reflect**

- ⇒ It's important for sport to be inclusive of LGBT+ young people, as physical activity contributes to a young person's health, well-being and development.
- ⇒ 72 % of lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents said they would be more likely to participate in club sport if the club was marketed as inclusive of LGB people (or 'LGB-friendly') [26 Click here](#)



**E.**  
Club  
Management

Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport @iliasvanbambostphotography



# Module 7: Supportive Environment for the coach

Alternatives to solve certain issues that affect athletes' well-being.

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## Key message

An opportune response can prevent irreversible consequences.



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Appendixes

## Topic 1: The Need to Create Supportive and Safe Climates

- Performance directors, head coaches and other employers of coaches should allow coaches the freedom to express their ideas and work in accordance with their values and beliefs.
- This can be achieved by providing choices and avoiding strict regulation of management and leadership strategies.
- Health and performance costs of psychological stress to sports coaches are significant. Having a mental well-being approach can reduce these kinds of costs and enhance coaching performance.



Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

## Topic 2: Additional Recommendations for Club Managers

### DIMENSION

### RECOMMENDED ACTION

#### Stress coping

- Provide self-awareness and emotional regulation.
- For coaches who are challenged by the demands and pressures of their job, or organisations who employ or support them, focusing on building mindfulness could be a powerful strategy for improving and maintaining well being.
- Primary intervention is a preventative approach for stress management that attempts to alleviate the overall demand placed upon coaches by eliminating, or at least reducing, the quantity, frequency, and/or intensity of stressors.
- Put special focus on the following areas:
  - **Duties** (including issues such as workload, work patterns, and the working environment)
  - **Relationships** (includes promoting positive working practices, to avoid conflict with athletes, support staff, managers, administrators, officials)
  - **Role** (coaches understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the coach does not have conflicting roles)
  - **Change** (how organisational change is managed and communicated and that procedures are fair and transparent)
- Several strategies [80 Click here](#) can help facilitate change in these areas, including:
  - Skills assessment and development, educational workshops
  - Time management training, communication

## Stress coping

- Skills training (such as assertiveness training, active listening strategies, awareness of coach communication, and athletes' preferred learning styles)
- Formal and informal group discussions, and active management of the organisational environment
- From a sport management standpoint, it may be more convenient to focus on coach behaviours rather than organisational change. Such an approach is likely to be less costly and easier to implement than major alterations to organisational practices and procedures.

## Emotional balance

Coaches and instructors are obliged to train, support and develop knowledge and skills for the formation of mental health. The focus is on regulating and managing emotional balance, balance between feelings and emotions, (attention, fear, aggression, restraint, concentration and adequacy of motor response). Forming a sense of personal dignity, collectivism, mutual aid and friendly relationships in the training process and in personal life of athletes.

## Integral approach

TanssiDans identifies all “Five Steps to Strengthen Mental Well-being” levels in its operations.

## Supportive training

Gymnastic club “Lahjan Tytöt” has chosen a development project for 2020: responsibility. It is managed and carried out in all the activities of the club through many support activities. Parents and all club members have been informed about the project through internal awareness campaigns.

The premise is that Lahjan Tytöt is a safe and joyful club for everyone. The main goal is that the club has quality instructors and outstanding coaching and that every enthusiast experiences joy and success with the group.

Responsibility in the context of a club means all of these: good governance, a safe operating environment, equality and non-discrimination, the environment and the climate.

More information on responsibility (in Finnish): [Click Here](#)

Programmes for the mental health promotion in grassroots sport should be implemented at various levels, including: supporting coaches, peer leaders and athletes in the promotion of mental health literacy and well-being among athletes



## Supportive training

(e.g., through providing knowledge, reducing stigma, improving attitudes and help seeking behaviour, establishing social support)

## Policies and charters

Les Gazelles de Bruxelles signed the Charter 'Geestig Gezond Sporten' (= 'Mental health in sports') of the Federation Parantee-Psylos. We are committed to create a safe place, to work with confidential advisers and to take time for conversation during or after sports activities.

More information about the Charter: [Click Here](#)

In the legal registration of any sports organisation in Bulgaria (sports club, sports federation, sports association or union), it is mandatory to have a statute which describes the goals, rights and obligations of members, as well as all requirements for representation, accountability, responsibility and election of staff and subsidiary bodies. They must reflect the humane principles of sport, the UNESCO Charter of Sport, the International Olympic Committee and the European Union, as well as the specifics of the respective international and national sports federations.

## External support and volunteerism

To involve children and young people in the project, we also have extensive volunteer work. Here we use young people to support the general operation. In this way, they learn to take responsibility and can positively be part of the project.

There is a team of vulnerable members that has a meeting every month. They decide which activities are planned, what is to be discussed in the board of the club, and they organise club activities. Also, the club works with volunteers and half of them are vulnerable. Everyone is welcome as a volunteer and can contribute where possible.

UFEC include teamwork, sincerity, empathy and effort. We understand that in order for us all to move forward, we have to move together. We created a network with other professionals and entities. Other stakeholders to consider:

- Psychologists and doctors
- Third sector
- Social organisations
- Local poverty organisations
- Refugee shelters
- Mental coach
- Nutrition coach
- Educators, kindergartens and schools
- Administrative persons
- Federations that help us developing the projects, mentoring the kids with the help of educators
- Parents
- City leisure facilities

## Empowering

- The self-speech app has been developed with the help of the expertise of the club's officers and volunteers in 2017-2020 and the work continues.
- Once a month a steering group comes together: next to the coaches (social workers and sportive coaches), there are always two players who attend. This steering group talks about issues surrounding the team in transparency: we talk about budget, calendar, incidents, etc. of course, also players can put topics on the agenda.

## Sexual harassment

- Importance of treating CASRs as a complex and multifaceted social phenomenon, and not as a moral vice that can be "regulated away."
- Therefore, sport organisations should:
- First, acknowledge CASRs as a complex and multifaceted social phenomenon, and not as a moral vice that can be "regulated away."
- Second, we suggest that there is merit in engaging sport leaders, coaches, and athletes in discussions about ethical dilemmas in sport, including but not restricted to CASRs. Such discussions could contribute towards building and retaining critical awareness of the potential for abuse of power in sport. They could sensitise athletes to the possibility of exploitation.
- Include definitions of what constitutes team building compared to hazing activities
- Develop and encourage a reporting system and reliable, severe disciplinary actions for any improper behaviour, sexual harassment and abuse
- Prepare and implement codes of ethics and conduct for coaches, whether they work with adults or children
- Monitor the implementation of these policies and procedures
- Evaluate the impact of these policies in identifying and reducing sexual harassment and abuse
- Provide training on how sexual harassment and sexual relationships can negatively influence coach-athlete relationships
- Develop complaint procedures that ensure privacy
- Protect legal rights of athletes and coaches, and protect against retaliation
- Screen all applicants for coaching staff and volunteer positions
- Foster strong partnerships with parents/caregivers in the prevention of sexual harassment and abuse
- Promote and support research on these issues
- Foster a climate of open discussion about the issues of sexual harassment/ abuse, so that athletes with problems feel confident enough to speak out
- Develop athlete autonomy wherever possible, including adopting coaching styles which give optimal autonomy and responsibility to athletes [25 Click here](#)

## Safeguarding

- Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport. [Click Here](#)
- Reporting safeguarding concerns in the FA. [Click here](#)
- Training kits to prevent and react to situations of potential sexual violence against children and young people in sport. [Click here](#)

## Burnout

Teamwork among co-workers should be supported at all levels, including by the individual, HATs and administrators. This strategy by far, along with having a strong support network, was most important in giving ATs the ability to manage their career demands and personal responsibilities. Athletic administrators and HATs should also explore possibilities to allow ATs to have more control over their schedules.

Flexible working schedules and control over one's work schedule are effective strategies to help employees meet their responsibilities both at work and at home. Flexible work schedules in the athletic training environment may be more structured (e.g., choosing a particular time of day to accomplish tasks, rather than working from home) than in other working environments but can still allow the AT to accomplish nonwork tasks on certain days.

The coaching environment has also implications on the well-being of the coach, and thus on their behaviour and consequently on athletes' well-being. Opportunities for professional development, job security and work-life balance are important to facilitate coaches' need satisfaction and well-being.

Coaches' working environment could be examined to be supportive to the eudaimonic well-being of the coach as well, e.g. by promoting integration of the group. [80 Click here](#) [81 Click here](#)

Coaching needs continuous development and a wide range of support measures. The coaching culture of the club is influenced already in the coach's recruitment phase, as well as through training, evaluation and, among other things, mentoring. The company must allocate time for such development.

## Refugees and other marginalised groups

Work managers may wish to include refugees in the planning of youth sport programmes, thus enhancing the influence component of SOC. Programmes that honour the shared history of participants in both the sport league and as refugees could expand on the shared emotional connection. In addition, sport programmes may wish to provide opportunities for safe space within programmes (e.g., trusted coaches, role models and social spaces for participants to interact), thus meeting the need of emotional safety of youth participants.





F.

Wrap-up: Skills of a  
Supportive Coach

Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

# Mental Well-being Oriented Coaches

## Autonomy supportive:

- Acknowledge athletes' preferences
- Try to take their perspective
- Provide meaningful choices in training and matches
- Welcome their input into decision-making
- Demonstrates support and positive feedback with athletes that have underperformed

## Socially supportive:

Cares for and values each player, as an athlete and as a person

## Adaptative/versatile:

- Identify their group needs and potential
- Have the capacity to adjust the coaching style according to these demands

## Assertive:

Afford opportunity and choice when needed and constraint and control when needed according to these demands

## Creative:

Have the capacity to use a wide range of

resources: metaphors, analogies and examples they use and the way they give instructions

## Foster empowering behaviour:

- Create a sport environment that is conducive to promoting psychosocial competence and well being
- Seek to produce motivational climate

## Work with peers and mentors:

- Work together with parents
- Have the support of other experts

## Acknowledge importance of mental well-being:

- Provide mental health education to athletes (mental health literacy/awareness)
- Reduce stigma in certain areas such as depression
- Offer support when possible and are open to refer to other professionals

## Task involving:

Place value on players working hard and working together to do their best



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List of Resources by Key Lesson and Mental Capability



A. SPIRIT Framework in a Nutshell



B. How to Use This Toolkit



C. Understanding Mental Well-being



D. Sport Coaching for Mental Well-being



E. Club Management



F. Wrap-up: Skills of a Supportive Coach



G. Measurement and Evaluation

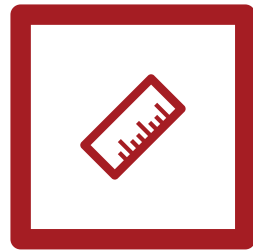


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Appendixes





**G.**  
Measurement and  
Evaluation



Photo: Minor-Ndako Sport

# G. Measurement and Evaluation

## Applicability:

Ideally, when coaches go through the complete toolkit, following the straightforward approach. This means, applying at least

- Module 2: Coach Behaviour (Lesson 1-5);
- Module 3: Coach Athlete Relationship (Lesson 6-10)
- Module 4: Managing Threats to well-being (Lesson 11-13)

## Overall impact:

- United Nations Sustainable Development-Goal 3: Good health and well-being. Target 3.4: By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and **promote mental health and well-being**.
- European Framework for Action on Mental Health and Well-being

## Primary impact:

- Coaches: Better training skills with focus on mental wellbeing
- Individuals: Increase capacity and skills of coaches to deliver healthy, safe and welcoming sport at the grassroots level

- Communities: Protect and nurture well-being in grassroots sport's athletes, club members and other people involved in the sport activities

## Outcomes of the toolkit:

- Knowledge: The need for coaches to be aware of the benefits and consequences of promoting and protecting mental well-being
- Abilities: Coaches are in the capacity to deliver well-being training resources
- Attitudes: Coaches reflect on their own attitudes (and behaviours) and might adapt their attitudes (and behaviours)
- Behaviours in communities: Increased awareness on the importance on mental well-being




Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

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**Outputs (numbers as indicators):**

- 13 sessions
- 2 sessions per month, within 6 months to 1 year (recommended duration)
- More than 50 hours of mental health care and promotion activities
- Each coach should deliver mental health skills to at least 10 athletes/club members

**Activities and inputs:**

- Training sessions using different sports and contents.
- Resources: equipment, support material, tests, among others

**Instruments:****The Coach–Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) [79 Click Here](#)**

This scale has been effective in evaluating courses, modules or programmes for improving coaches' mental health literacy, including the knowledge on mental health and illnesses, less stigmatising attitudes, confidence to be able to help others, and referral and support seeking intentions.

No.	Coaching behaviour	Score (1-3)
1	I feel close to my athlete/coach	
2	I feel committed to my athlete/coach	
3	I feel that my sport career is promising with my athlete/coach	
4	I like my athlete/coach	
5	I trust my athlete/coach	
6	I respect my athlete/coach	
7	I feel appreciation for the sacrifices my athlete/coach has made in order to improve their performance	
8	When I coach my athlete/When I am coached by my coach, I feel at ease	
9	When I coach my athlete/When I am coached by my coach, I feel responsive to their efforts	
10	When I coach my athlete/When I am coached by my coach, I want to do my best	
11	When I coach my athlete or I am coached by my coach, I adopt a friendly stance	
Points in total:		

**Your results:**

28 to 33:

Excellent job! You are probably already applying most of the resources of this toolkit.

23 to 28: Good CAR. You are performing well.

12 to 22:

Regular CAR. You should work hard to improve your supportive/empowering training styles.

0 to 11:

Deficient CAR. You are probably having serious difficulties in leading your group. We advise following this programme closely.



# G. Measurement and Evaluation

## How do I apply this scale?

- Cross sectional study that should be conducted to your athletes and also as a selfassessment and the start and end of the programme
- Use the following standards to assess your results at the very beginning
- Apply this same questionnaire at the end of the programme or after a certain time to see differences and the overall evolution

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS


- Permanent tracking of participants: attendance lists, personal diaries. This is important to get an overall impact of the implementation of this tool in terms of number of athletes that improved their mental well being
- We highly encourage to apply Activity 2A and Activity 3 as a mean to follow up your athletes
- Directed focus groups or in-depth interviews with participants, parents, other colleagues in your club, etc.
- Records of direct observations



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## APPENDIXES: SUPPORT MATERIAL

uhlsport Photo: Sports Federation Union of Catalonia (UFEC)

## Activity 1: Assessing your coaching style

The following statements describe coaches' behaviours during trainings. Please indicate how common these attitudes have been for you during the last 3 months by using the following criteria:

3: I always think like this

2: I occasionally think like this

1: I never think like this

Item	Coaching behaviour	Score (1-3)
1	At the end of each session, I ask the participants what they want to do next week, and I plan the session around their choices.	
2	My athletes/players participate in decision making.	
3	I normally answer athletes/players' questions fully and carefully.	
4	When I ask athletes/players to do something, I try to explain why this would be good to do so.	
5	I am supportive with players when they are not training and/or playing well.	
6	I pay the same amount of attention to team members that do not share my views and opinions.	
7	I encourage my participants to share ideas and show leadership ideas for warm ups and cool downs.	
8	I take participants' thoughts, feelings, and ideas into consideration.	
9	I am cautious in shouting at players in front of others.	
10	I provide social support and guidance.	
11	I have used games or drills with mutually agreed rules.	
12	I look for rotating activities where everyone gets to know and interact with everyone.	
13	I have personal conversations with athletes/players to know about their expectations and goals.	
14	I adapt the sessions to meet the needs of everyone.	
Points in total:		



List of Contents and Resources by Module



List of Resources by Key Lesson and Mental Capability



A. SPIRIT Framework in a Nutshell



B. How to Use This Toolkit



C. Understanding Mental Well-being



D. Sport Coaching for Mental Well-being



E. Club Management



F. Wrap-up: Skills of a Supportive Coach



G. Measurement and Evaluation



H. References



Appendixes



### Your results:

34 to 42: You create an empowering climate  
24 to 33: You have a balanced coaching climate  
14 to 23: You create disempowering climates and display controlling tendencies



### Adapted from:

Empowering and Disempowering Motivational Climate Questionnaire (EDMCQ-C) [51 Click here](#) and Street Games Research Project [52 Click here](#)



### To reflect

#### Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions:

- When was the last time you had an empowering talk with any of your team members?
- What was this feeling about?
- Use these items as key strategies to promote empowering climates

## Activity 2A: Your players' DNA



### Instructions

A coach cannot start creating an empowering climate before knowing, exchanging, or running an activity with the group they are leading. The main goal of this activity is to identify areas where empowering climate could be created. Take this quick test to assess your coaching style:



### Tips for collecting the information

- Try to find an informal space, different to the one where you have your training sessions, to meet individually with your athletes: a coffee shop, a park, etc.
- It is important to have a face to face conversation.
- It should not be a one-sided interview but rather a “vis-à-vis” conversation that is also an opportunity for your athletes to know more about you
- You can either collect this information individually or in the group
- Take your time to start a discussion with each of them.
- Suggested time: 30 minutes

### Template

<b>Name of participant</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Time in the club</b>	
<b>Overall performance</b>	
<b>Key sport skills</b>	
<b>Key mental skills</b>	

Opinion regarding the club environment	
Family, kids?	
Main expectation in the club	
Occupation	
Are they studying? - Time devoted to this activity - Field of studies	
Preferences	



### Note:

Feel free to add any other questions or topic.



### To reflect

**Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions:**

- When was the last time you had a group discussion with your team members?
- What was this about?



## Activity 2B: Athlete card templates

- Pass all your findings to one of these templates
- Keep the records always up to date with additional information/attitudes you notice during the trainings

<b>Name</b>		<b>Photo</b>
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Birthday:</b>	
<b>Time in the club:</b>		
<b>Position:</b>		
<b>WhatsApp:</b>		
<b>Email:</b>		
<b>Family</b>	<b>Key achievements</b>	<b>Expectations in the club</b>
<b>Other activities (work/studies)</b>	<b>Main skills</b>	<b>Goals in the long term</b>
<b>Short bio</b>	<b>Main weaknesses</b>	<b>Motivations</b>
<b>Personality:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pain Points</i></li> <li>• <i>Emotional control</i></li> <li>• <i>Feelings</i></li> <li>• <i>Frustrations</i></li> <li>• <i>Personality type</i></li> </ul>		

**Athlete's diary:**

Date	Key moments/situations



**Note:**

Feel free to add and track other information about your athlete. You should inform your players that you are keeping track to assess their degree of development in the club. In case you are managing minors, parents should also know and agree to this procedure.

## Activity 3: In search of our superior goal

Our strongest motivations are rooted in emotions and experiences that lay hidden in our deep subconscious. Your most rooted memories define a superior purpose that will transform your role as a coach.

Conduct this activity to experience a quick travel back into your past that will show you how to construct a superior goal and purpose for your life.



### Instructions

1. In 20 minutes, you and your partner should think about the following situations that have occurred at a certain point in your lives.

Memories	Specific details - <i>Date and place?</i> - <i>What happened?</i>	What was this feeling about?
<b>Story 1</b> The person that you admire most (or have admired)		
<b>Story 2</b> A situation when you felt exhausted but happy and satisfied at the same time		
<b>Story 3</b> Last time you supported or helped someone in need		
<b>Story 4</b> The first happy memory that you can think of		
<b>Story 5</b> A difficult episode that has changed your life		

**2. In 30 minutes, exchange your stories with your partner.**

- Use no more than 3 minutes for each story, then switch roles.
- This should be an active conversation. Write notes summarising their feelings using this template. Your partner should do the same with your stories.

Memories	Brief description of the story	Topic	Contribution to others	Impact in their life
<b>Story 1</b> The person that you admire most (or have admired)				
<b>Story 2</b> A situation when you felt exhausted but happy and satisfied at the same time				
<b>Story 3</b> Last time you supported or helped someone in need				
<b>Story 4</b> The first happy memory that you can think of				
<b>Story 5</b> A difficult episode that has changed your life				

**3. After sharing all these stories and experiences, it is time to propose a superior goal statement for your partner. To achieve this, we suggest you to use this simple equation:**

- It should have a verb at the beginning
- Phrase it in a very inspiring and positive way

Action verb	Effect that the person has the potential to achieve in other people	Impact they can have in the world

**Example:**

Create	new training methods that support people to follow their dreams	for a world with a better mental health
--------	---	---

**Some recommendations:**

- It is highly recommended to carry out this activity with a partner, in a vis-à-vis format. It should be a person that already knows you, for instance your wife or husband, a close friend or a work colleague.
- It is possible to do it virtually, but an onsite interaction will be more effective.
- This is a storytelling exercise. Do not be afraid of sharing your feelings.
- Choose a place that offers a relaxed atmosphere
- Write down all your feelings on a separate paper.
- Be specific: think of the specific place, recall the names of persons and exact times when these moments took place.



**Adapted from:**

AmplusGlobal [52 Click here](#)



## Activity 4: A task-oriented leaflet for your training space



### Important instructions:

- Use these resources to encourage and sensitise your club to the importance of seeking task-oriented goals.
- Use these 10 rules to shift the purpose of your team members, parents and club managers.
- Keep them always visible in a strategic place of your sport facility.
- Be creative, integrate the leaflet into your social media; Tiktok, WhatsApp and other communication spaces such as newsletters, bulletins, billboards, etc., to disseminate this key information.

### 10 Rules

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Rule No. 1: Self-improvement is our ultimate goal      | • Rule No. 6: Comparison between the group members is not permitted |
| • Rule No. 2: Strive to learn and make personal progress | • Rule No. 7: There is no need to show superiority among us         |
| • Rule No. 3: Effort is always rewarded                  | • Rule No. 8: Outperforming others is a low way to get satisfaction |
| • Rule No. 4: Making mistakes is a part of learning      | • Rule No. 9: Do not judge your own ability based on others         |
| • Rule No. 5: You always have a choice                   | • Rule No. 10: All opinions are important and valued                |

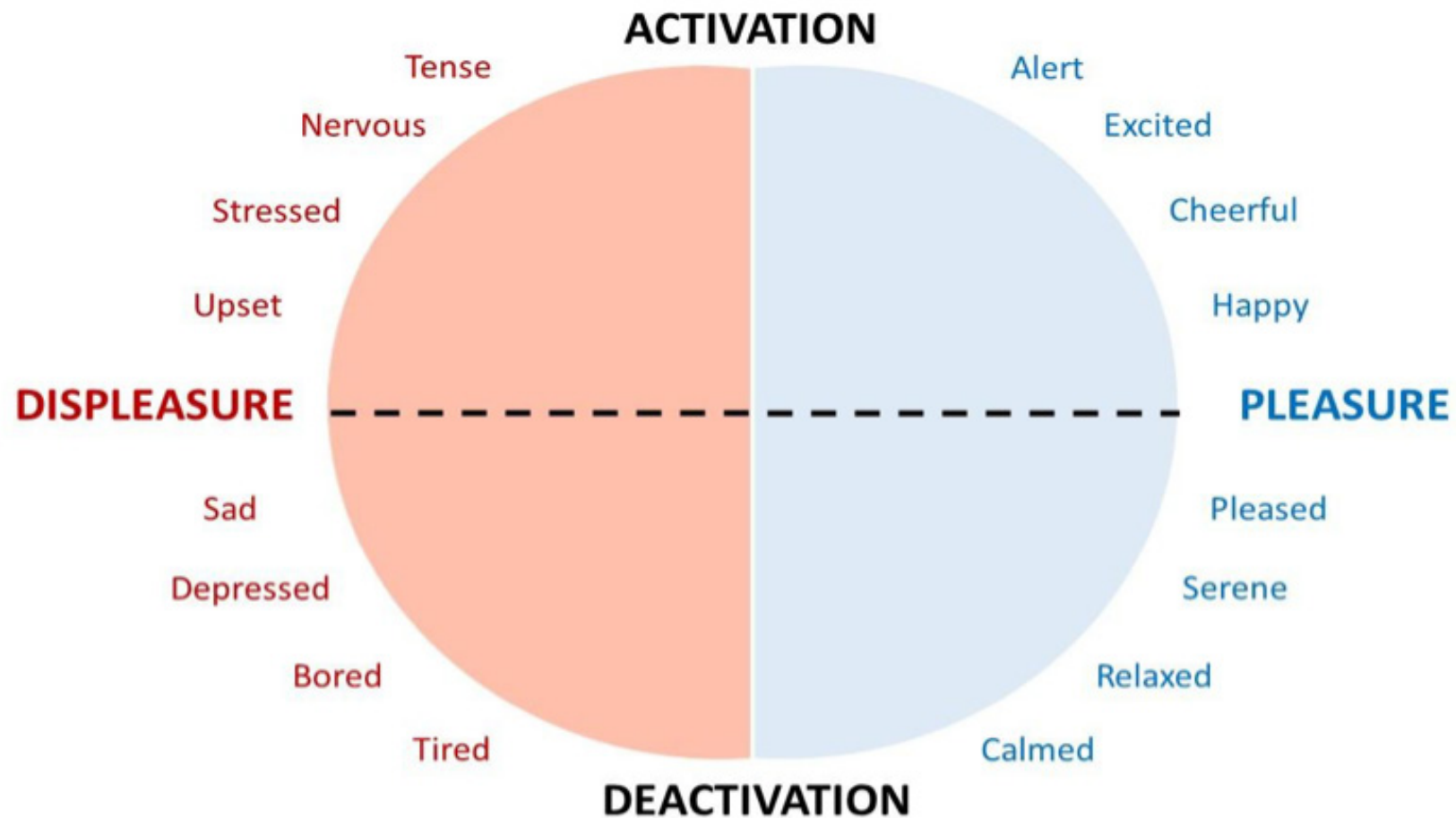


### Adapted from:

StreetGames Research Project [51 Click here](#)

## Activity 5: A quick scanner of your affective state

Use the following mapping tool and instructions to assess your current affective state.





## Instructions

1. Next to each affective state type, please write a number that most describes your current mood on a scale from 1 to 10, being:

A number closer to 1: I don't really feel like this at the moment

A number closer to 10: I very much feel like this at the moment

2. Sum up the total scores for each quadrant

Displeasure Score	
Pleasure Score	

3. Mark the affective state with the most points

Top Negative affect	
Top Positive affect	



## Reflection

- Depending on your results, you should be aware of the negative or positive consequences that each mood can have in the people that are next to you.
- Use Activity 6 to assess the times when these attitudes are most likely to occur and the effects they could have.



## Adapted from:

AmplusGlobal [52 Click here](#)

## Activity 6: Identifying your rush hours



### Instructions

- Imagine a normal, typical day in your life
- Use this affective state matrix to find out when your rush hours are
- Follow these coaching recommendations to act consistently with your affective state:
  - Avoid transferring negative thoughts and feedback onto your athletes
  - Take advantage of your positive hours to inspire and provide autonomy support to your group

Type of moods	Moments in a week or a day when you feel like this	What occurs with these moods
Active Positive mood		<b>Effects:</b> Cheerful and excited mood. State of alertness.  <b>What to do:</b> Use your good mood to provide greater opportunities for athletes to teach them how to express their values and beliefs.
Passive Positive mood		<b>Effects:</b> Relaxed, pleased and serene mood.  <b>What to do:</b> Make plans for the future. Reflect about certain situations.

Type of moods	Moments in a week or a day when you feel like this	What occurs with these moods
Active Negative mood		<p><b>Effects:</b> Maybe more likely to criticise, intimidate, and coerce their athletes more than usual.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Avoid having group interactions. Look for emotional control activities.</p>
Passive Negative mood		<p><b>Effects:</b> Sad, depressed, bored and tired.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Try to do something different and find alternatives to achieve emotional regulation. Seek social support.</p>



## Activity 7A: Burnout and inattention assessment

We suggest taking this quick test to see your current state of burnout. These inputs will later on allow you to evaluate the changes this mindfulness programme has produced.



### Instructions

The following statements describe coaches' feelings when burnt out and in an inattentive mood. Using the following criteria, please indicate how common they have been during the last 3 months:

**3: I feel like this everyday**

**2: I feel like this on most days**

**1 I feel like this occasionally**

**0: I do not feel like this**

Item	Coaching behaviour	Score (0-3)
1	I feel so tired of my job that I have trouble finding energy to do other things.	
2	I feel overly tired from my training occupation – mentally demotivated.	
3	I feel “wiped out” from coaching – no energy.	
4	I feel physically worn out from coaching – no strength.	
5	I am exhausted from the mental and physical demands of coaching.	
6	The effort I spend in coaching would be better spent doing other things.	
7	I don't care as much about my coaching performance as I used to.	
8	I'm not into coaching like I used to be.	
9	I feel less concerned about being successful in coaching than before.	
10	I have negative feelings toward coaching.	
11	I am not achieving much in coaching.	
12	I am not performing up to my ability in coaching.	

Item	Coaching behaviour	Score (0-3)
13	It seems that no matter what I do, I don't perform as well as I should.	
14	I do not feel successful in coaching.	
15	I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.	
16	I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.	
17	I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.	
18	I tend to walk quickly to get where I'm going without paying attention to what I experience along the way.	
19	I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really command my attention.	
20	I forget a person's name almost as soon as I've heard it for the first time.	
21	It seems I am "running on automatic" without much awareness of what I'm doing	
22	I rush through activities without really paying attention to them.	
23	I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I am doing right now to get there.	
24	I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.	
25	I find myself listening to someone with one ear, while doing something else at the same time.	
26	I drive places on "autopilot" and then wonder how I got there.	
27	I find myself worrying about the future or the past.	
28	I find myself doing things without paying attention.	
29	I snack without being aware that I am eating.	
Points in total:		



### Your results:

73 to 97: Immediate assistance from a mental health professional highly recommended

48 to 72: Consultation with a mental health professional is recommended

24 to 47: A period of rest and recovery is recommended

0 to 23: No apparent signs for concern at present



## To reflect

**Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions:**

- After completing the assessment, which were the main reasons for your burnout feeling?
- If your level of burnout is high, it is likely that your focus has also decreased during your coaching activities. Although the mindfulness programme we propose may contribute to battle these sorts of feelings, we also suggest you have a talk with the club manager or other superiors to whom you depend on.



## Other related activities

If the causes are related to issues related to your players, it might be important to implement any of these activities.

**Activity 12:** Circle of Trust [Click Here](#)



## Adapted from:

ABQ Questionnaire [54 Click here](#) and Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) [55 Click here](#)

## Activity 7B: Express mindfulness programme to overcome burnout and strength focus

### Description

<b>Main Goal</b>	Overcome coaching burnout with an immediate shift in coaches' flow and level of performance
<b>Duration</b>	6 to 8 weeks
<b>Frequency of activities</b>	- 1 session per week - each session lasts 20-30 minutes (duration should be increasing)
<b>Recommendations</b>	We advise completing the programme within 2 weeks, but it can be flexible as well. It depends on your available time. Ideally, athletes should eventually incorporate this practice into their daily lives. It is highly important that you can devote some quality time for each session.

### Contents

Session No.	Name and description
1	Sport Meditation Move to connect with your body. Physical exercise is an opportunity to practise mindfulness. Pay special attention to three aspects: breathing, the postures you adopt and the movements you make, moment by moment.
2	Empty the hard drive Take 10-15 minutes to sit down with just a pencil and notebook. During this time, write whatever comes to mind. By putting pen to paper, transfer the thoughts that swirl on your mind. Get all participants to put images to an idea, thoughts into words helps to clarify it. It is like clearing the forest of the mind. Then it is clearer, and you can discover treasures that the undergrowth hid. Find alternative ways for the group to communicate and express themselves.

Session No.	Name and description
3	<p>Bring positive images to your mind</p> <p>We have a very wide register of sensations linked to certain images, objects, textures, colours, etc., in our mind. Just the act of thinking about something activates the areas related to it in the brain. So, thinking about activities or places, for example, that awaken pleasant and calm sensations will help us bring those sensations to the present.</p>
4	<p>The self-check</p> <p>Pause and assess the state of your body and mind. To learn how to do this, you can use a relaxation technique. It consists of lying down on the floor, closing your eyes, and starting to press each muscle of your body, one at a time. Start with the feet, tense the muscles and then relax them. Continue with the legs, abdomen, arms, hands, neck and even the muscles of the face. This practice helps you to learn to detect which of your muscles are tense and which ones are relaxed. It can let you know which part of your body to focus on.</p>
5	<p>Breathing exercise</p> <p>This exercise is short and easy. Don't tell me you can't take five minutes for yourself. Breathing is a necessary process to stay alive. Sounds obvious, right? However, when we are anxious, what do we do? We stop breathing, or we don't breathe as regularly and deep as we should.</p> <p>Yogis count life not in years but in the number of breaths they take. Certain apps, such as Spire <a href="#">Click Here</a>, were designed for that purpose: to help you track your breathing. However, the best way to improve your breathing is to practise paying attention — you don't need an app for that. Find a comfortable position. You can either be seated on a chair or the floor. Keep your back upright (but don't force it). Notice your body and relax. Take a deep breath and focus on the experience.</p>
6	<p>A seated meditation focusing on the breath, your body, and sounds</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here</a></p>
7	<p>Attentive listening</p> <p>In at least one conversation a day, with whomever you interact with, make a point of listening with your full attention. It could be the coach during training. When she or he addresses you, breathe, ground yourself in the present and open your sense of hearing. Listen without interrupting, without giving your opinion, without self-completing your interlocutor's sentences. This exercise is fundamental to transform relationships.</p>
8	<p>Musical practice</p> <p>Music can also be a useful tool for mindfulness practice in everyday life. Ideally, choose a song you have never heard before and press play. Don't give way to the thoughts that arise by assessing the style of the performer or the lyrics if you understand them. Let all those ideas that come to you pass and listen with an open mind and open senses.</p>





## To reflect

**Based on these results, please reflect on the following questions:**

- Learning to focus “mindfully” on the present moment develops control of attention, a useful skill for individuals who have a hard time completing important tasks because they are distracted by worries, memories, or negative moods.
- When you stop reacting to discomfort and manage to stop controlling everything that happens to you, your energy has another focus: the sporting task itself.
- Remember: Fewer distractions will have positive consequences, resulting in more flow and more joy for what you do.



## Adapted from:

Mindfulness training (Zadeh and Kisely, 2019) [56 Click here](#)  
(Lundqvist, Ståhl, Kenttä and Thulin, 2018) [57 Click here](#)

## Activity 7C: Other exercises to work on self-efficacy



### Objective:

The objective is to show participants to value their abilities when facing a challenge or a problem, and learn that they can overcome a challenge even if they believe they cannot.



### Activity development:

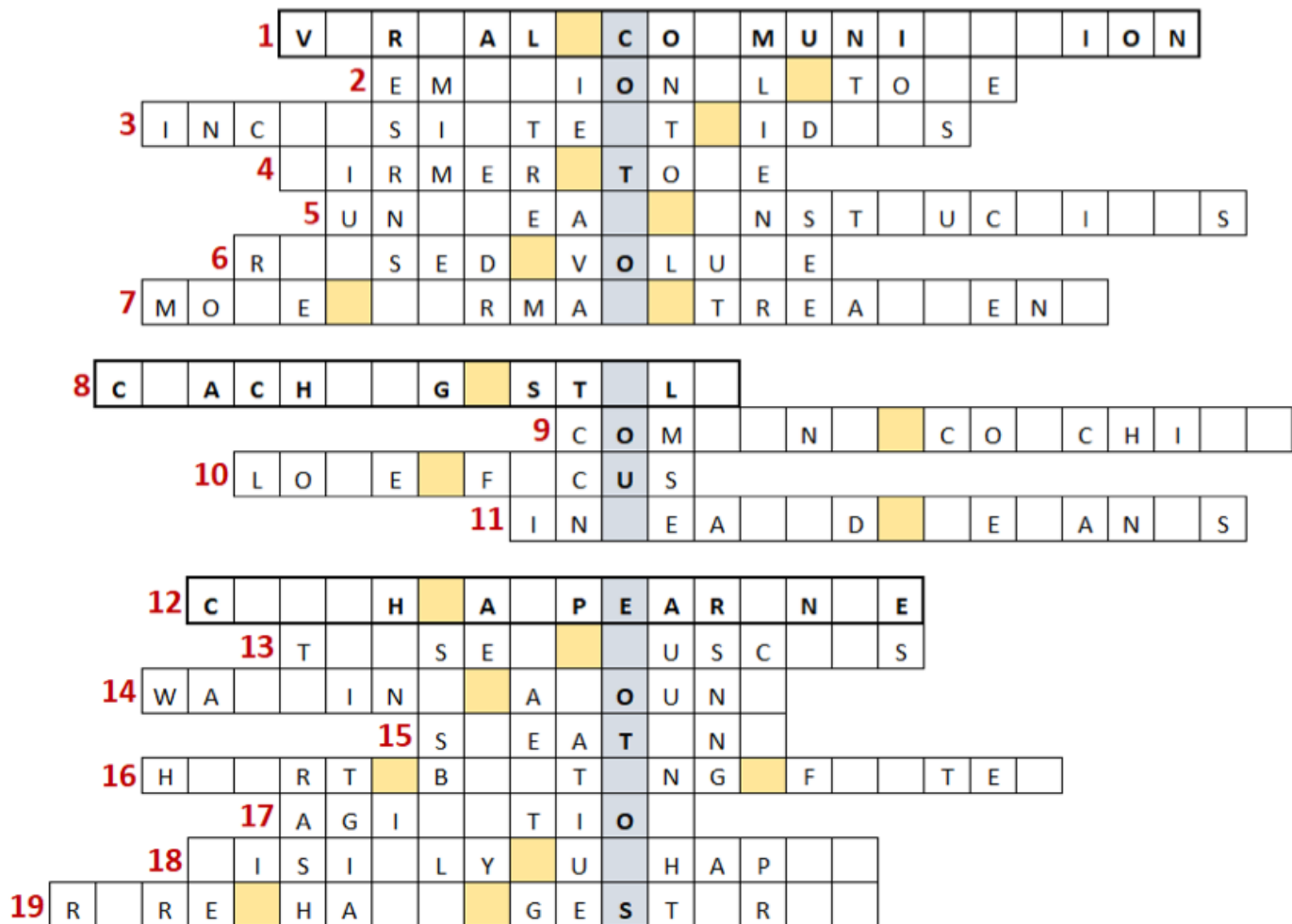
As a trainer, start by using yourself as an example, analysing two situations in which you have faced a problem. One in which you have decided to face it and succeeded, and one in which you have decided that you were not able to face it and asked for help.

Afterwards, prepare an exercise in which the participants have to face an obstacle. For example, a circuit in which they compete with themselves or against a partner. Before starting the circuit, ask participants to rate on a scale of 1 to 10 how likely they think it is for them to overcome the obstacle.

After the circuit has been completed, ask participants if they think their previous beliefs influenced the outcome of the exercise. You can also ask those who thought they would not pass the exercise and how many have passed it. So that they see that no matter how difficult an obstacle may seem to them, they should not give up before even trying.

## Activity 8A: A stress radar crossword puzzle

- Relax your mind by solving this crossword puzzle and learn more about the key signs of stress.
- The words are formed horizontally.



### Some hints:

- 1 A way to express to others
- 2 How your voice sounds
- 3 Disconnected thoughts
- 4 A tone that shows anger
- 5 Creates misunderstandings
- 6 Loudness
- 7 Opposite of familiar talking
- 8 Related to the way of training
- 9 Opposite of supportive coaching
- 10 Opposite of increasing concentration
- 11 Opposite of normal routines
- 12 Related to the physical expression of a trainer
- 13 Related to your muscles
- 14 Senseless speaking
- 15 State of producing a body fluid
- 16 Related to the muscle that pumps blood
- 17 Opposite to relaxation
- 18 When someone is not cheerful
- 19 A type of body expression

Can you guess the key word?

[\\*\\*See answers here](#)



### To reflect

- How often do you have this kind of feelings?
- What are your reactions to them and how you have responded?

## Activity 8B: Working on frustration and tolerance



### Objective:

To work on lowering frustration tolerance. Making participants understand that, on many occasions, both in life and in sport, they are going to feel frustrated, but even so they should not give up and instead continue to strive to overcome adversity.



### Activity development:

Prepare an exercise that is very difficult or almost impossible to do. Start by using yourself as an example, as this will encourage the participants to try it. For example, in the case of table tennis, a good exercise could be that participants have to put 10 balls with the paddle into 10 different small cups, placed on the opposite side of the table.

Observe how they behave when faced with the frustration of not being able to achieve the goal, and explain a situation in which you have felt frustrated in the past but have overcome it thanks to effort and dedication.



## Checklist 1: Self-regulation alternatives to cool down and reach an optimal level of stress

Tip No.	A normal routine ritual	Was it useful? How did you feel after applying this alternative?
1	Creative expression: Writing, painting or singing Offers coaches both a therapeutic modality that can be used for stress management through reflection upon emotional events in the coaching context (or beyond).	
2	"If-then" plans Has been shown to be an effective self-regulation technique to minimise the effects of athletes' anxiety	
3	Mastering key mental relaxation Imagery Pre-performance plans and refocusing routines Relaxation strategies centred on breathing techniques Self-talk	
4	Social Support Upper-level management, Coaching staff, a sport psychologist Family and friends	
5	Escaping the stressful environment Days off Distancing Goal setting	
6	Music Music can promote relaxation. When this happens, your muscles, body, and mind relax, which can help you to reduce plenty of tension and stress that you may not even have realised you were carrying. <a href="#">62 Click here</a>  Relaxation playlist: This <a href="#">Spotify play</a> list will definitely free you up from negative and stress charged thoughts. <a href="#">Click Here</a>	

Tip No.	A normal routine ritual	Was it useful? How did you feel after applying this alternative?
7	<p>Breathing techniques</p> <p>Breathing is a necessity of life that usually occurs without much thought. When you breathe in air, blood cells receive oxygen and release carbon dioxide. <a href="#">63 Click here</a> Thus, your brain has more oxygen for a better functioning.</p> <p>Breathing tutorial  <a href="#">Click here</a></p>	
8	<p>Other routines from your experience</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>	

## Activity 9: Tearing down stereotypes

A first step to win someone's trust is by getting to know them deeply: **Emotions, hobbies, dreams.**

Make sure that you will get a point of connection with the other person at a certain point.

Put in practice this fun activity to get to know more about the thoughts and feelings of your athletes and vice versa. This game will be a unique chance to show your most authentic side.



### About the game

- Participants: This game should be played in a group of 4-6 people. In case your group is larger, you can form a number of groups of that size.
- Duration: 60-90 minutes
- Mode: Virtually or face to face
- It is mandatory that the coach is part of the game



### Materials

- 10 pieces of cardboards folded and cut into
- Rectangle playing cards of 10 cm x 7.5 cm \*See Instructions, point 2
- 4 Small squares of 5 x 5 cm
- Pens or markers
- A sheet of paper



### Instructions

1. Mark each small square with letters A-B-C-D. Each player should have their own set of 4 cards.
2. Use the rectangular cards to write a hypothetical situation that implies some decision making. For each situation, write down 4 possible choices the person may decide on (A-B-C-D).
  - Each person should think of at least 6 situations.
  - The situation should not be related to a person in particular, but rather a situation that did occur, could have occurred or could occur with any of the players.
  - Be creative with these decision-making moments.

Example:

Imagine you have found a EUR 500 note on a bus stop. What would be your first instinct?

A. Put in on your bank account to increase your saving  
B. Buy a gadget or some other thing for you  
C. Give it back to the office of lost objects  
D. Invite your couple to dinner or party together

A

B

C

D

1 set of A-B-C-D small cards for each participant

Each participant should prepare at least 6 cards like this

3. Shuffle all the cards and put them upside down.
4. Choose a person that will be responsible of keeping scores for all the participants.
5. Define the order. We recommend a quick starter game that includes a question asking dates. E.g., When was the first time you travelled abroad? Besides getting to know more about each other, this warm up will help to find a way of sorting the order of participants.
6. The person who starts picks a card and reads the situation to the whole group with the 4 possible answers.
7. Using the small A-B-C-D squares, the player decides on how they would choose, while the other players try to guess what decision the player who read it will make. After they have made their choice, all the participants keep their card hidden until everyone has made their choice.
8. Everyone reveals their card, starting with the participant whose turn it is.
9. The number of cards that matched the choice made by the participant on turn will be their score. All the other players that guessed correctly also get a point each.
10. Repeat the same instructions with the second participant and so on with the other players.
11. The first player who reaches 40 points wins the game.



### To reflect

- When sharing an activity with another person, just like when in a training session or a working space, we create mental images about our partners. At a certain point, these perceptions turn into prejudices that are difficult to shift.
- Give yourself an opportunity to discover incredible people and stories and give your partners and team members the same chance. You are a unique being.

## Activity 10: The art of good communication

This communication booster will show you that people have different ways of seeing and interpreting things. One of the most effective tools to prevent and even resolve an interpersonal conflict is assertive communication.



### About the game

- Participants: Unlimited number, but should be a par number since this activity is in pairs.
- Duration: 60 minutes
- Mode: It is possible to play virtually or face to face
- The coach should take a role of observer



### Materials

- 10 cardboards
- Colours or markers



### Instructions

First part: The art of a good conversation

1. Divide the group using affinity questions. E.g., Who has visited Machu Picchu? Who does not like cucumbers? Who loves them? Who thinks lemon cheesecake is the best dessert? Etc.
2. Each pair should have a pen and a two pieces of paper.
3. Each time somebody answers the same, those two people form a pair. In case you have more than 3 people that matched the same question, keep using questions to form pairs.
4. Once you have all the pairs, start random 2-minute conversations with these variants:
  - Step 1: Participant A tells a memory about the topic that was chosen. Participants B listens attentively and asks questions about that recall.
  - Step 2: Participant B now shares a memory without speaking but just using non verbal communication. The other player pays attention and interest to what has been said without speaking.
  - Step 3: Participant A is going to explain about their most vivid travel experience. This time, Participant B will listen without any eye contact or asking any questions.

- Step 4: Switch roles. Participant B shares the travel experience. In this case, Participant A will try to listen attentively while also using their cell phone at the same time.
  - Step 5: Using the piece of paper, participant A and B will write a message to share how he or she felt about being listened to attentively or not.
5. Now is time to have a quick reflection on what occurred during the different conversations.



### To reflect

- Non-verbal communication accounts for more than 90 % of the success and effective transmission of a message. In a conflict situation, the way a situation is expressed is even more decisive than the potential solution.
- The activity will in addition reinforce the level of cohesion of your group. Your players will be more likely to share their feelings in a sincerer, opportune and assertive way. Many conflict resolution techniques lose their potency when separated from visual emotional cues.
- As a coach, learn the importance of active listening to create supportive environments.
- Using your cell phone or any other distractor should be avoided as it shows lack of interest in what another person is trying to share or express.



## Activity 11: Assessing attachment styles

A key step to build a better coach-athlete relationship is understanding the attachment styles that dominates the attitudes between athletes and coaches. Once you have this key information, you may design and strategy to approach more effectively a potential interpersonal conflict situation.



### Instructions

- The following statements describe athletes' or coaches' attachment styles.
- This test should be taken by coaches as well as athletes.
- Please indicate how if any of these attitudes are true for you regarding your relationship with your athletes/coaches:

**Please mark all the statements that are consistent with what you think with a 1. Mark 0 if you completely disagree.**

Item	Coaching behaviour	Score
1	I do not usually discuss my problems or concerns with my coach/athlete.	
2	I do not turn to my coach/athlete for reassurance.	
3	I avoid discussing personal issues with my coach/athlete.	
4	I do not rely on my coach/athlete when I have a problem to solve.	
5	I do not turn to my coach/athlete when I need to get something off my chest.	
6	I do not ask my coach/athlete for advice and help.	
7	I do not seek out my coach/athlete when things go wrong.	
8	I often wonder if my coach/athlete cares about me as an athlete.	
9	I often worry that my coach/athlete does not value me as much as I value them.	
10	I worry a fair amount about my coach/athlete leaving me to coach/to be coached elsewhere or somebody else.	
11	I am concerned that my coach/athlete will find another athlete/coach that they prefer.	
12	I often worry that my coach/athlete does not want to coach me/be coached by me anymore.	

Item	Coaching behaviour	Score
13	Sometimes I worry that my coach/athlete is not as committed to me as I am to them.	
14	I worry that my coach/athlete does not respect me as much as I respect them.	
15	I know that my coach/athlete is loyal to me.	
16	I feel confident that our coach-athlete relationship will last.	
17	I find it easy to interact with my coach/athlete.	
18	I know my coach/athlete likes me.	
19	I know I can rely on my coach/athlete.	
	<b>Points in total:</b>	

<b>Anxious attachment</b>	<b>Avoidant attachment</b>	<b>Secure attachment</b>
<b>Total points 1-7</b>	<b>Total points 8-14</b>	<b>Total points 15-19</b>
<b>Score:</b>	<b>Score:</b>	<b>Score:</b>

#### Tips for coaches to manage interpersonal conflicts for each attachment style:

<b>Anxious attachment</b>	<b>Avoidant attachment</b>	<b>Secure attachment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop more secure attachment strategies</li> <li>- Act as you were their caregiver</li> <li>- Show proximity and intimacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliberately create situations that provide opportunities to connect with the athlete</li> <li>- Create an environment that is genuinely and constantly nurturing, supportive, and caring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People with this style have already developed the capacity to use constructive resolution skills and maintain effective and successful relationships to resolve conflictual issues</li> <li>- Give them just a quick reminder that they have these capabilities</li> </ul>



## To reflect

### Based on your results, please reflect on the following:

- A coach who is a sensitive and responsive provider of support and reassurance allows the athletes to broaden their mindset by making them part of their own sporting attitudes and endeavours and in turn allows athletes to “build” quality relationships or connections with the coaches who are capable of generating positive emotions, including interest, excitement, happiness, and zeal.



## Adapted from:

Coach-Athlete Attachment Scale (CAAS) [58 Click here](#)

## Activity 12: The Circle of Trust



### Purpose

- This activity is helpful for coaches working with large groups. On occasion, internal conflicts put the whole team against the coach or vice versa. We recommend using it to overcome internal conflicts among players or when the coach is part of the problem. It is also a good mechanism to strengthen a supportive environment that leads to a better group cohesion.
- Situations that affect coach-athlete relationship from a group standpoint and may require some treatment could be:
  - Inconformity with coach attitudes
  - Unwillingness to accept new training methods
  - Negative results or group decreased performance
  - Disagreements with coach's goals and expectations
  - Internal quarrels between two or more sides of the club



### Instructions

- Ask all the team members to stand in a circle. Describe this inner zone as an almost sacred space where anyone else besides the group is allowed to enter.
- Players should be confident and not frightened to say what you want or believe. Everything said is kept in private, just for the group.
- It is highly recommended to do these create the Circle of Trust at least once a week

#### ***Dealing with an internal conflict***

1. It is important that the coach knows the team members' attachment styles, in particular of those that lead the group, e.g., captains.
2. Before starting a conversation in the Circle of Trust, it is highly important that everyone is on the same page and the group interests are put above individual interests. We recommend recalling some of the good moments or anecdotes that the group went through. It is also important to highlight what the key objectives of the club are.
3. Now that the group is standing in a circle, it is time to identify and discuss the issues: Through active listening, everyone is allowed to have a voice and state their opinion. Each person that wants to say something should stand in the middle of the circle. The coach should let the players know that they are putting themselves in their position. Player's intervention should:
  - Be as brief as possible
  - Use a personal form: I feel like/I disliked...

- Without neglecting your emotions, stick to the facts rather than judgments and emotions. E.g: A traffic jam, millions of cars on the road every day and yet without changing either how we react to the traffic jams or doing something about the hours we use a car, the traffic jam itself remains as a fact and we have to learn to direct our frustrations towards constructive solutions not anger against an unknown enemy, as often we are part of the problem (we are in the jam).
4. Now it is the coach's turn. Players are asked to put themselves in the position of a coach.
  5. Switch roles. Both parties should say what they would do.
  6. Gather ideas from the trainees for a possible solution to the problem.



### To reflect

- These kinds of discussions lead to a shared culture with common beliefs and values.
- It is normal to have disagreements among players or between players and coaches.
- Respect, trust, and appreciation are key features of effective and successful coaching.

## Checklist 2: Key alert symptoms and coping strategies to regulate athletes' emotions

Use this simple checklist as a roadmap to offer the most adequate support to your athletes recognising key symptoms, factors influencing emotions regulations and diverse coping alternatives:

Signals of emotional imbalance in athletes	Coping strategies to support athletes	Factors influencing emotion regulation
Stress / Anxiety / Nervousness  *See Checklist 1	Distraction Relaxation Concentration Music Use different situations: routines, competitions *See Checklist 1	Athlete performance  Group size  Performance expectations  Competition vs practice  Injuries  Personal life  Type of sport
Depression / Lack of motivation /Burnout - Lack of concentration - Irregular participation in trainings - Decreased flow - Smelling like alcohol/drugs - Strange behaviours - Burnout/Tiredness - Decreased performance	Reappraisal Humour Positive reinforcement Goal setting	
Anger / Aggressiveness - Tone of voice - Annoying comments	Acknowledge your irritability Take a few deep breaths Take a break Cut some paper with scissors Try different physical activities	
Loneliness / Shyness - Isolation	Acknowledge that you feel lonely Join a group or club Learn something new Engage in a hobby or read a book Perform an act of kindness	





### To reflect

- Take all factors into consideration.
- Coaches' emotions influence athletes' emotions.
- Facilitate active communication with their athletes to ensure athletes are able to effectively regulate their own emotions if coaches are not present.
- In some cases, acute emotional conflicts should be dealt with through the support of professionals.

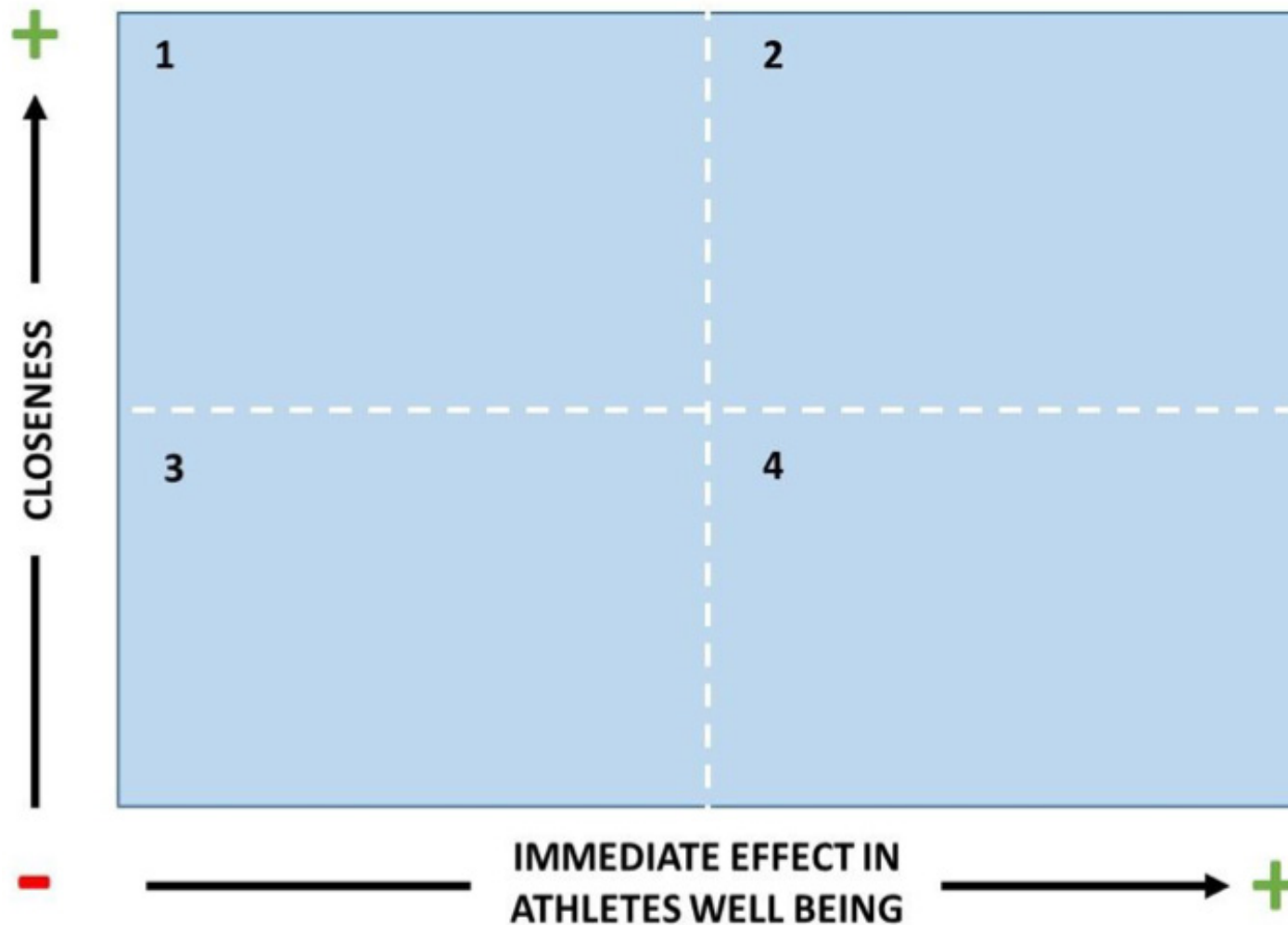


### Adapted from:

Integrated model of athlete and coach emotion regulation in the context of the coach-athlete relationship [59 Click here](#) Coping strategies for loneliness and irritability [60 Click here](#) and [61 Click here](#)

## Activity 13A: Building a stakeholder map of your club or community

1. Use this matrix to identify potential supporters for your coaching role. Fill in specific details about each person.



Key stakeholders to map:

Directly involved in children and youths	Other external potential supporters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School teachers</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Teammates</li> <li>• Other relatives: cousins, aunts, grandparents, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychologist</li> <li>• Other players from the community</li> <li>• Influencers</li> <li>• Work/school colleagues</li> <li>• Older players</li> </ul>

2. According to the zone where these allies were mapped take on of the following actions:

Zone	Actions
1	A person that is quite close to your athlete but cannot influence their mental well-being. <b>What to do: You should look up mechanisms to gain more insight on how this person can support athletes' mental well-being.</b>
2	A person that is close to your athlete's environment and has a lot of influence on their mental well-being. <b>What to do: Include them in regular activities, maintain an open communication.</b>
3	A person that stays away from the coaching environment and has no influence on the athlete. <b>What to do: Do not spend energies in this quadrant.</b>
4	A person that has the capacity to influence the player but is not much involved in the training process. <b>What to do: Find spaces to integrate this person more in the training activities.</b>



### To reflect

- Social support is a vital component to foster mental well-being.
- Parents' involvement is one of the most effective sources of support for a coach.

## Checklist 3: Ideas to involve parents

We propose several activities that may increase the level of involvement of close relatives in the coaching outcomes and thus in their increasing athletes' mental well-being.

Item	Tips
1	First step is to know the basic details of parents: names, occupation, did they have a former sports background, are there siblings, etc.
2	Do not forget to share the Supportive Coaching leaflet to all of them, highlighting the importance of developing supportive environments <a href="#">Click here</a>
3	Arrange individual meetings with your athlete's parents. Explain to them what the expectations are for that season. As an outcome, invite each parent to write a support letter for each player or to record a short video. Do not forget to introduce yourself, not only as a coach, but as a teacher and a mentor. Do not forget including all this information in your <a href="#">Players DNA</a>
4	Organise an open house session that includes team building activities: parents-players and between the different parents. We gathered some resources for you with this <a href="#">Pinterest link</a>
5	Invite parents to training sessions so they can see their children in action, yet not interfering in the normal course of activities. It is vital to explain them certain specificities of the sport
6	Promote an open channel of communication with all the parents. Let them know that you need to work together when a difficult situation arises and when an accomplishment has been made
7	Empower parents as part of the training process. You should assign parents certain responsibilities such as identifying the emotions or looking for the improvements and giving you feedback or trying the same skill.
8	Encourage parents to assist matches and competitions. For an athlete, it means a lot to feel this support during these times.
9	At the end of the season or during other important times, organise a family celebration that acknowledges the support of everyone during the season.
10	Promote communication between players and their parents. One idea is to play a creative playing cards: Each parent should write 4-5 questions of topics they would like to know about their child and vice versa. Example of questions: - When you were my age, what was your biggest dream? - Which sport did you play in your youth?



### To reflect

- Our strongest connections come from our family and parents.
- Strong family involvement contributes to athlete's mental well being, but also to their athletic performance.

## Activity 13B: Improving confidence in others



### **Objective:**

The objective is to enable participants to develop and improve their ability to have confidence in others. That they value their feelings in a situation where they depend on trusting the other, where they put their health and chances of achieving the goal in the hands of the other.



### **Activity development:**

To start off, use a simple example so participants understand how the exercise works. Ask one of the participants to fall into your arms with their eyes closed, catch them before they fall to the ground.

Then ask the participants to split into groups of 3 or 4, have one person blindfolded. Everyone will take a turn at this. The participants who are not wearing the blindfold have to successfully guide the blindfolded person through a circuit without getting hurt. Then, together, they have to try to get them to put a ball in the goal or basket, depending on the sport. This exercise also includes work on cooperation and teamwork.

Finally, ask the participants how they have felt in each of the different roles.

## Activity 14: Show your passion through story telling



### Instructions

- Pick one day to do something different and creative with your group.
- Ask each of your players in advance to bring an object that symbolises the passion they have for a certain activity. This could be something related to sport or any other hobby  
*E.g., collecting sport magazines or producing electronic music.*
- Arrange the order of interventions using an assorting game.  
*E.g., who was the first person to get their driver's license?*
- The person that starts should explain why that object was chosen. Do this by telling a story that tackles the following questions:
  - Do you remember when was the last time you felt passionate about something?
  - How was this feeling about?
  - When was the last time you counted down the minutes to start doing your favourite activity?

Be specific in the details: exact times, dates, places, people that were together.

- Once a participant has shared their object, the person will appoint another person
- Finally, use a table to lay out all the objects
- Be sure to take a group photo with all the objects. Even better if you prepare a banner in advance with a phrase like this:
  - A group full of passion
  - Passion is what moves us forward
  - Our passion, our success.

### Tips: How to share a good story

Have a look on this great Master Class [Click Here](#)



### To reflect

- This activity strengthens the coach-athlete relationship, but also the group cohesion itself, as each player has learnt a bit more about their peers.
- This can be done virtually or in person.
- Storytelling is an outstanding resource for coaches to develop athlete's attentiveness and therefore to achieve better sporting results, as well as more openness from the athletes.



## Checklist 4: Detecting hazardous behaviours on time

Use this observation tool to prevent certain risk behaviours that may end up in a more complicated situation later on which can affect other participants' mental well-being.

Type	Indicators
Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raised voice</li><li>• Words expressing threats – including swearing</li><li>• Argumentative and belligerent</li><li>• Responding with minimal words during important discussions? (E.g., “Mm-hmm”, “I don’t know”, “Fine”, and “Whatever.”)</li><li>• Responding sarcastically</li></ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aggressive body language/actions – throwing magazines, pens or other objects, slamming doors in frustration</li><li>• Use of excessive force in practices</li><li>• Directing their aggression – clenched fists, hitting things</li></ul>
Body language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pacing up and down – rapid movements</li><li>• Staring – frowning – rubbing forehead or temples</li><li>• Huffing and puffing</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Threatening glance</li></ul>



### Tip

The following acronym S.T.A.M.P. can be used to best describe the behaviours exhibited by a 'person who is becoming agitated and potentially aggressive and violent:

**S – STARING:** Prolonged glaring at staff

**T – TONE:** Sharp, sarcastic, loud, argumentative

**A – ANXIETY:** Flushed face, heavy breathing, rapid speech

**M – MUTTERING:** Talking under their breath, criticising staff or others, mimicking staff

**P – PACING:** Walking around in confined spaces, walking into areas that are off-limits



### To reflect

Act on time and never stop learning from your athletes:

- If the level of aggressiveness is manageable, you can try influence these behaviours using emotion regulation techniques from [Checklist 1](#).
- In case you are dealing with a very difficult case, seek the support of a psychologist or another expert.
- Do not underestimate the harm an aggression can produce for another person's mental well being.



### Adapted from:

Youth tool box [64 Click here](#)

## Checklist 5: Tips for preventing dissatisfaction with one's body

Use this observation tool to prevent certain risk behaviours that may end up in a more complicated situation later on which can affect other participants' mental well-being.

Item	Tips
1	Help participants focus on their own progress and personal accomplishments, not comparing themselves to a societal ideal.
2	Assist your athletes in changing their beliefs about physical appearance: deemphasizing body image and interiorise self-worth
3	Educate men and women about the importance of quality of life (i.e., improved sleep, higher energy level, ease of daily activities) vs. appearance.
4	Participants need to feel good about themselves, feel comfortable in a setting.
5	Prepare them beforehand to deal with feelings such as anxiety and embarrassment in various physical activity situations.
6	Support your athletes by promoting facets of positive body image, as opposed to only attempting to decrease feelings of body dissatisfaction.
7	Increasing motivation and enjoyment related to physical activities.
8	Being physically active should be a core priority in their lives.
9	Facilitating the use of self-regulation strategies when anxiety and other factors that cause or accompany discomfort



### To reflect

- Activities that support awareness and attentiveness to the appreciation of one's physical appearance, functionality, and competence could contribute to a closer and more connected relationship with the body. [21 Click here](#)

## Checklist 6: Preventing sexual harassment in coach-athlete relationships and between team members

Situations to be avoided in coach-athlete relationships:

### *Instructional*

**Direct**

- Coach touches hand/arm/shoulder while giving instruction
- Coach stands/sits close to athlete while giving instruction
- Coach shows more attention to an individual athlete

**Indirect**

- Coach comments on physical appearance
- Coach gives massage on the back side of the body
- Coach gives massage on the front side of the body
- Coach asks female athlete about menstruation

### *Non-instructional*

**Contextually dependent**

- Coach gives a lift to one athlete
- Coach becomes a surrogate family
- Coach showers with athletes of the opposite sex
- Coach sleeps in the same room as athlete(s) during tournaments

**Sexism**

- Coach is telling dirty jokes
- Coach calls athletes by petnames

**Potentially threatening**

- Coach is flirting with one or more athletes
- Coach comes in to the locker room before time
- Coach feels emotionally/sexually attracted to the athlete
- Coach invites athlete home under pretext of sport matters

**Verbal physical advances**

- Coach is staring at athletes' attributes
- Coach has an intimate relationship with an athlete over 18 years of age
- Coach has an intimate relationship with an athlete below 18 years of age

Situations to be avoided between team members:

Item	Tips
1	When travelling, define beforehand what the accommodation and room situation will be.
2	Identify 'hotspot' areas in your venue where abuse could happen.
3	Set clear boundaries, particularly around sexual conversations.
4	Define secure and private channels where participants can report harassment.
5	Explicitly ban inappropriate use of social media, such as sharing intimate photos or material.

## Activity 15A: Collaborative reading reflecting about CASR situations



### Instructions

- Split your group into 2 teams. Each of them is going to represent one of the two case studies through a role play.
- Now each player should imagine that they are part of this team. Reflect on the following questions:
  - What could help an athlete like Helga or Sheila?
  - Knowing that she has a right to be protected, what could Helga's teammates do when they are worried about her?
  - What can you do to protect yourself from sexual abuse in sport?
  - As a coach, what could I do to help Sheila or Helga?



### Note:

See answers [Here](#)

### Case studies:

#### CASE STUDY 1: SHEILA

Sheila is a 17-year-old woman. She is a talented 1500 m runner and hopes to make the Olympic team this year. She is selected for the qualifying squad and moves to another city to be near the training facility and her coach, Tom.

Tom praises her performances, saying that if she follows his directions, he will make her dreams come true. It is obvious that the coach likes Sheila, giving her encouraging comments and praise. Initially, she was happy with how her coaching relationship is going. But as time progresses, Tom gives her special attention which her teammates notice and comment on.

Sheila is not doing well at school and one day Tom offers to tutor her for her schoolwork in his office after practice. He drives her home after the tutoring session and buys her dinner on the way. After a few weeks, Tom moves the tutoring sessions from his coach's office to his home in the evenings.

The night before the 1500 m qualifying race, Tom calls Sheila to his hotel room for a "special pre competition talk". While sitting on the bed together, he puts his arm around her. She begins to feel uncomfortable as he places his hand on her thigh. He says that if she performs special favours for him, he will ensure her success tomorrow.

As Sheila leaves the room, she passes by the team manager and her teammates. Although visibly crying and upset, they turn around and walk away.

**CASE STUDY 2: HELGA**

Helga is a 16-year-old discus thrower on the national youth team. Helga just recently travelled to the national training centre from her hometown for a training camp to prepare for an important competition. Trond, 17 years old, is a hammer throw athlete also on the national youth team. Since they are both throwing athletes, Helga and Trond are scheduled to train together both in the weight room and on the field. At first, they are friends, and she accepted his friend request on Facebook. But every day during the stretching session, Helga notices that Trond repeatedly stares at her breasts, making her feel uncomfortable. He starts to send her lots of inappropriate text messages and posts sexual comments about her on his Facebook site.

One day, as he passes her on the way into the weight room, Trond comments in passing, “Let’s work out hard today – keep that butt nice and firm!” Helga feels herself turn visibly red.

During the next training sessions, Helga tries to keep her distance from Trond. One evening however, as she leaves the stadium to go the subway, Trond surprises her as she passes by a wall. He had been waiting for her to walk by. When Helga passes by, Trond says, “My parents are away – come to my house and we can play. I know that you want to.”



## Activity 15B: Working on personal safety



### Objective:

For participants to learn to distinguish which behaviours can and which do not infringe on personal safety. They also learn how to manage how to act if they find themselves in a situation where the personal safety of a person or group is violated.



### Development of the activity:

The activity consists of two parts. Before you start though, the trainer should demonstrate and make clear how the activity works, thus stimulating the participants' imagination and taking away any fear or embarrassment of acting.

In the first part, form groups of 2 or 3 members. These groups will be given 10 to 15 minutes to prepare a theatrical performance or dramatisation of a situation in which they believe that personal safety of one of them was violated. For example, a possible role play could be an enactment of one of the partners pretending to hit the other.

The second part of the activity will consist of each of the pairs or trios acting out in front of the whole group, and the rest of the group will have to respond why personal safety was violated in that example. They will then have to join the pair or trio and act out how a person who encounters this situation should act in order to solve it correctly.

## Activity 16: Organising your time with work-life balanced planners

A quick tool that examines your work-life balance. Use this tool to assess the activities you have done in a certain day:

Work-Life Balance Assessment			
Date:			
Describe how your day was in this section. Be specific with the activities and times.			
5 AM		4 PM	
6 AM		5 PM	
7 AM		6 PM	
8 AM		7 PM	
9 AM		8 PM	
10 AM		9 PM	
11 AM		10 PM	
12 PM		11 PM	
1 PM		12 AM	
2 PM		1 AM	
3 PM		2 AM	

Total hours devoted to family:		
Total working hours:		
Total hours devoted to personal activities:		
Main highlight of the day:		
One thing you are grateful for:		
Total resting/recovery hours:		
Total hours devoted to physical activity:		
	Time wasted: Activities	
	Hours	
	Describe your meals: Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
Balance Score:	Happiness score:	

A daily organiser that gives importance to what really matters:

Balanced Organiser planner	
Activities that cannot be omitted	Check
Exercising or other physical activity	
Hobbies or things you like to do	
Sharing quality time with family	
Balanced nutrition	
More than 6 hours of sleep	
Practising gratitude	

<b>Date:</b>			
5 AM		4 PM	
6 AM		5 PM	
7 AM		6 PM	
8 AM		7 PM	
9 AM		8 PM	
10 AM		9 PM	
11 AM		10 PM	
12 PM		11 PM	
1 PM		12 AM	
2 PM		1 AM	
3 PM		2 AM	
Goal for this day:			

Now use this annual or 6-month planner to set and follow up on personal goals that contribute to a balanced lifestyle.

**Very important:**

- Be specific when setting your goals.
- Do not write more than 2 goals for each subject.

Subject	Goal	Description	Due Date	Status
Spouse				
Family				
Other relatives				
Work				
Sport/exercise				
Nutrition				
Other Hobbies				
Acquaintances				
Charity				
Other Hobbies				
Spiritual				
Other				
Other				

**Statement:**

I declare these activities to be the most important complements of my life and a powerful source of happiness, well-being and an important path to become a better person. Thus, I commit myself to accomplish all these goals within these dates:

Signature	Date
-----------	------



### **Tip: Smart questions can stimulate a better balance among your participants**

- Developing a good work-life balance should also be an aim to achieve with your participants. The more positive outlook on their lives, the more engaged they will be in their sport activities.
- Encourage them to apply these tools.
- Remember to always pay attention to daily choices of your group related to general well-being.
- Ask questions like these once or twice a week:
  - Did you have time to take a brake during the day?
  - What brought you joy?
  - Did you enjoy your meal?
  - Is your time distribution for work, studies, hobbies, and leisure balanced?



### **Additional information:**

Take a look at [Activity 18](#) and [Activity 19](#) to learn more about the importance of recovery and nutrition.



## Activity 17: The endorphimeter

Endorphins are chemical substances that help your body cope with pain and make you feel good overall. [61 Click here](#) They are connected with the “pleasure centres” in the brain [60 Click here](#) and produce a sense of well-being.



### Instructions

- This is a fun way to identify the activities that make you produce more endorphins and therefore the bring you more well-being.
- Check out these alternatives to naturally increase endorphins: meditation, social support, laughter and other positive ideas [Click Here](#)
- To use this tool, please rate the following activities based on this scale:
  - 3 = Happiness boosters: high in endorphins
  - 2 = Medium happiness: basic dose of endorphins
  - 1 = Normal happiness: low in endorphins

The Endorphimeter



Type of activity	Score
A great workout	
Eating a piece of dark chocolate	
Having a good laugh with a friend	
Listening to music	
Dancing	
Having a glass of wine	
Getting a massage	
Take a sauna	
Having sex	
Eating something spicy	
Trying some aromatherapy	
Meditating	

### The Endorphimeter

	Type of activity	Score
	Volunteering	
	Talking to an old friend	
	Other (1)	
	Other (2)	
	<b>Average</b>	



#### To reflect

- Take the time to make plans with family and friends. It's the little things that count: a lunch date with your wife or meeting up with a close friend for a beer.
- Compare these results to what you are actually doing on a normal day. Are these activities leading you to happiness and well-being?



#### Additional information:

[Activity 19](#) provides additional information on foods that produce endorphins.

## Activity 18: Rituals to improve your nutrition and your overall recovery capacity



### Instructions

- Analyse your typical week.
- If you have followed any of these negative habits, mark them with a 1 on the respective day.
- Sum up the total results:
  - Total score per habit**
  - Total score per day**

### 1. Recovery capacity

No.	Tips	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	Total
1	Excessive use of laptops, cell phone or other screens before bed (more than 30 minutes)								
2	Bedroom temperature is below 69 °F/20 °C								
3	Ate no later than one or two hours before bed								
4	Went to bed later than 12 AM*								
5	Went sleep at different time (more than 2 hours of difference versus your normal bedtime)								
6	Got up at a different time every day (more than 2 hours of difference compared to your usual wake up time)								
7	Stayed in bed after waking up								
8	Forced waking up using an alarm								
9	Netflix marathon (more than 30 minutes before bedtime)								
10	Drank alcohol or coffee one or two hours before bed								
Points in total:									

\*Assuming a standard season where sun comes up at 6 AM

### Scale interpretation (Total score habit)

0-15	16-30	31-50	51-70
You are probably sleeping well	Sporadic troubles to sleep	Eventual troubles to sleep	Serious troubles to sleep

If your score was above 30, you are probably having a sleep deficiency and find it difficult to rest. We recommend following these tips:

- Exercise outside in nature supports other healthy lifestyles, such as restorative sleep.
- Try blackout curtains if light from street lights or neon signs is always on outside your window.
- Relax before bedtime: a warm bath is always effective.
- Try reading a book for 10-20 minutes instead of watching TV or using other screens.
- Try some exercise in the middle of the afternoon and not late at night.
- Practice meditation and any other relaxation techniques provided in [Activity 7B](#)



#### To reflect

- Blue light emitted from screens and other devices is going to trick your brain into thinking it's still daytime.
- It only takes two days to throw off your sleep pattern.
- Finally, if you use an alarm clock to wake up, your first few hours of the day aren't as "good" as they would be if you were in a pattern where the body woke up naturally.



#### Additional information:

Things every athlete needs know about sleep and recovery [64 Click here](#)

## 2. How well are you eating?

No.	Bad habit	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	Total
1	Not eating within three to four hours								
2	Drink little fluids or liquids (less than 2 l/70 oz per day)								
3	Not having breakfast								
4	Eating a large lunch and dinner								
5	Eating foods which make your blood sugar rise and fall rapidly, such as candy, biscuits, sugary drinks								
6	Caffeinated beverages (more than 1 cup or glass)								
7	Drinking alcohol, more than a glass of wine/beer*								
8	Not eating any of the following during the day: protein, fruit, vegetable, vitamins, fibres								
9	Not eating breakfast, lunch and dinner or did it at different times (more than 2 hours of difference versus your usual eating time)								
10	Drank alcohol or coffee one or two hours before bed								
Points in total:									

*\*Not considering a party or other social meeting.*

### Scale interpretation (Total score habit)

0-15	16-30	31-50	51-70
You are probably eating well	Sporadic eating disorders	Eventual eating disorders	Serious eating disorders

**If your score was above 30, you are probably having an eating disorder that is affecting your nutrition and your overall recovery capacity. We recommend following these indications:**

- If you're feeling stressed and you think it is affecting your gut, try some relaxation techniques or breathing exercises. It might take your gut some time to get used to a new eating pattern, so make changes slowly to give yourself time to adjust.

- If you drink tea, coffee, or cola, try switching to decaffeinated versions.
- Try to avoid anything that lists 'trans fats' or 'partially hydrogenated oils' in the list of ingredients (such as some shop-bought cakes and biscuits).



### **To reflect**

- Anxiety afflicts us and we tend to entertain the mind by eating.
- Eating every three to four hours is good to prevent your energy levels from dropping as a result of dipping blood-sugar levels.
- Try eating smaller portions spaced out more regularly throughout the day.



### **Additional information:**

Mind.org [35 Click here](#)

## Activity 19: We are what we eat: the types of food that contribute to a better mental health



### Instructions

Combine these foods to create healthy meals that secure your mental well-being

	Carbohydrates	Proteins and fats	Vitamins and minerals	Fibres	Hydration
Purpose	Sources of energy	They do most of the work in cells and are required for structure, function, and regulation of the body's tissues and organs.	Give the necessary supplements to ensure vitality and well functioning of the different systems. Can prevent situations such as depression, tiredness, drops of energy, among others.	Benefit your digestion and reduce your risk of chronic disease. Certain types of fibre can help you lose weight by reducing your appetite	
Sources	Pasta, rice, oats, wholegrain bread, cereal, nuts and seeds, fruit, vegetables, potatoes	<b>Proteins:</b> Lean meat, fish, soy products, legumes and pulses (peas, beans, lentils), poultry	<b>Iron:</b> Red meat, poultry, fish, legumes and pulses, fortified cereals	Whole grains, legumes, pulses, live culture yoghurt and other probiotics, fruit, vegetables	



	Carbohydrates	Proteins and fats	Vitamins and minerals	Fibres	Hydration
Sources	<b>Important:</b> Consume foods that are slowly released like oats, cereals, nuts and seeds	<b>Healthy fats</b> Nuts, seeds (especially walnuts and almonds), fatty fish, avocados, eggs, olive and sunflower oil, milk, yoghurt, cheese	<b>B vitamins (B1, B3 and B12)</b> Animal proteins such as meat, fish, eggs; fortified cereals  <b>Folate:</b> Green vegetables, citrus fruits, liver, beans; fortified foods like marmite  <b>Selenium:</b> Brazil nuts, seeds, wholegrain bread, meat and fish  <b>Important:</b> Eat different foods to collect all the nutrients needed for a good functioning		
Quantity			Make sure you're getting at least <b>five portions of fruits and vegetables</b> every day		6-8 glasses per day (approx. 2 l/70 oz)
Other advices	<b>Foods to avoid</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple carbohydrates/sugar, sweets, biscuits, cakes, pastries and high sugar drinks: blood sugar levels which can exacerbate anxiety and depression</li> <li>Caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee, fizzy drinks, etc.) act as a stimulant which can also exacerbate anxiety and depression</li> <li>Alcohol: Even one glass of beer or wine can have an adverse impact on mental well-being</li> <li>Processed foods – ready meals, etc.</li> </ul> <p>▪ Ironically, we often reach for many of the foods listed above when we are feeling stressed, depressed or anxious. Whilst they may feel comforting and give us a short-term boost, they contain very few vitamins and minerals and can actually increase our symptoms once the initial effect has worn off.</p>				

	Carbohydrates	Proteins and fats	Vitamins and minerals	Fibres	Hydration
Other advice	<p><b>Smart foods: What foods could we be reaching for instead?</b></p> <p>There is a whole host of foods that are high in vitamins and minerals, which are exceptionally good for our health, and particularly our mental health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Asparagus:</b> is one of the top plant-based sources of tryptophan and actively boosts serotonin levels in the body. It also contains high levels of folate (vitamin B12), a vitamin many who suffer from depression have a deficiency of, as research has shown.</li> <li>• <b>Avocado:</b> is packed with vitamin B3, a serotonin-boosting vitamin. It also contains omega-3 fatty acids which have been shown to support brain health and mood regulation.</li> <li>• <b>Cherry tomatoes:</b> tomato skin contain the phytonutrient lycopene, and due to the increased amount of surface area on cherry tomatoes (as opposed to larger varieties), these provide a more concentrated amount of lycopene which prevents the build-up of pro-inflammatory compounds that researchers have linked to depression.</li> <li>• <b>Dark chocolate:</b> is rich in antioxidants which means that it naturally boosts mood. The presence of N-acylethanolamine chemicals stimulates the brain to release endorphins.</li> <li>• <b>Nuts and seeds:</b> all nuts and seeds contain tryptophan, a precursor for serotonin, they also deliver antioxidants, which have been shown to lower the risk of depression.</li> <li>• <b>Fruits:</b> contain high amounts of serotonin, giving us a natural mood boost.</li> <li>• <b>Salmon:</b> is rich in tryptophan and omega-3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA as well as vitamins B12 and B6. Thus, it helps the body produce serotonin, giving us a mood boost and reduces inflammation, protecting the nerves in our brain.</li> <li>• <b>Spinach:</b> contains magnesium, which helps boost energy, and phenylethylamine, which can reduce monoamine oxidase break down in the same way that pre-Prozac anti-depressants do</li> </ul>				
Rich in endorphins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine, dark chocolate</li> <li>• Spicy food</li> <li>• Nuts</li> <li>• Pasta</li> <li>• Fruits: bananas, grapes and strawberries</li> <li>• Ice cream</li> </ul>				

#### Keep this in mind:

- When we aren't fuelling our bodies with nutritious foods, we can become more susceptible to stress-related symptoms.



#### Adapted from:

Nutritionist resource [65 Click here](#)  
and Mental health in the workplace [66 Click here](#)

## Checklist 7: A well-being protocol during COVID 19 to prevent anxiety

We are living an unprecedented situation. The global pandemic has produced direct negative consequences in mental well-being with many having to experience losing a friend or a close relative. The new normality conditions such as home office, social distancing, and limitations to do outdoors activities, have brought additional hardships. Sport coaches in particular have been one of the most affected groups, as many clubs have been closed and competitions discontinued.

### 1. New normality rituals:

With this context, we propose a set of tips that will contribute to coaches' and indirectly to athletes' mental well-being:

Tip	A normal routine ritual	How did you feel about it?
1	Keep in touch digitally with friends and family	
2	Get as much natural light and time outdoors as you can	
3	Try breathing exercises	
4	Distract yourself with games and puzzles	
5	Peer support / talk to someone you trust	
6	Expressing how you are feeling about changes in lockdown (this could be by writing, drawing, painting or any other creative way that feels helpful to you)	
7	Practise mindfulness and yoga (can decrease symptoms of depression or anxiety)	
8	Stick to your normal sleep and eating routines	
9	Do not work too many extra hours and ensure you have rest at home and not constant work	
10	Use WhatsApp and social media as a tool to connect with friends and family, rather than to distract yourself	
11	Allow other people to be supportive with you	
12	Share responsibilities with other family members	



#### To reflect

- It is up to us to decide how we want to face this critical period:
  - One option is to stay positive and resilient
  - Another, though less recommended, is to let ourselves suffer of anxiety and stress without emotional control



#### Additional information:

- Emotional regulation techniques [Click Here](#)
- Balanced work-life planner [Click Here](#)

## 2. Defining what you can and cannot control

Although the pandemic means your choices may be limited, try to focus on the things you can change. It might be helpful to list the things you can change on a piece of paper and all the things you can't on another.

Areas	What I can control	What I cannot control
Family		
Other relatives		
Work		
Sport/exercise		
Nutrition		
Other Hobbies		
Acquaintances		
Charity		
Spiritual		
Other		



### To reflect

- Focus your energies and effort to make choices and control the things that you can.

## Activity 20: Adapting training sessions for the elderly to strengthen mental faculties: an example from table tennis

Session length: 60 minutes

Group size: 10-15

Equipment: table tennis rackets, balls, and two tables

Step	Action	Purpose
Start with a meet and greet (10 min)	Try to keep a routine and always use the same method. Examples: "Hello song"; all of the equipment in one basket and they must pass it on to each other; everyone says one good thing that happened to them this week	Focus on and acknowledge all the individuals present, go over what you are doing there and what you are going to do today
Name and pass the ball (5 min)	Have the group in a circle. Start giving the ball to one person and as they have it, they must say their name and the name of the person they are giving it to. "I am XX and I give the ball to XX"; encourage the group to help if needed.	Time to establish each individual's current state
Warm up (10 min)*	Balancing exercises, standing on one leg, then the other, walking following a line, etc.	To work on their balance and stimulate the brain
Skill session (10 min)*	"Roller ball": in pairs of two on opposite sides of the table, they roll the ball towards their partner with the racket and go back and forth, forehand and back hand. Make it a race: first to complete 20 exchanges.	Interaction and hand eye coordination exercises where they can see improvements
Skill sessions (10 min)*	Hitting and catching the ball: at the table or on the floor, each 2 meters apart, one person hits the ball with the racket and the other person tries to catch it with their hands, then switch	Stimulate hand eye coordination
Close socially (15 min)		Opportunity for participants to socialise



### Note:

\*The warm up and skills sessions can be done as stations, depending on the number of people present.

### Visual representation



### Key Lesson 6: The keys for supportive training: Fostering your athlete potential



### To reflect

The use of table tennis and other sports can bring important benefits to mental well-being, such as:

- Sense of self-efficacy
- Sense of social involvement and
- Focus on their limitations or skill reduction, i.e., balance
- Hand eye coordination stimulating the brain
- Quick decision making
- Could off-set and delay the effects of the disease
- Ensure they have fun and laugh together
- Get the caregivers involved as it gives them a nice break and fun exchange in the relationship

## Checklist 8: Coaching tips to create more supportive environments for marginalised groups

Refugees and other marginalised groups carry trauma episodes on their shoulders. The adaptation process in new host countries can add pressure due to language constraints, lack of legal documents and certain barriers created in communities. Sport takes an extraordinary role to facilitate the integration of these groups and to strengthen the capacity of resilience.

In this sense, the supportive role of coach is key to create changes that bring additional positive mental health effects of sport participation of refugees and asylum-seekers. This checklist seeks to shed light on coaches and effective ideas to create more supportive environments for marginalised groups.

Tip	A normal routine ritual
1	Keep in touch digitally.
2	Peer supports / talking to someone you trust.
3	Expressing how you are feeling about changes in the new country. This could be by writing, drawing, painting, or any other creative way that feels helpful to you.
4	Mindfulness and yoga can be good practices to decrease symptoms of depression and anxiety.
5	Giving each participant equal attention and positive feedback.
6	When possible, arrange mixed groups to reinforce individual and group interaction.
7	Be sure that everyone in the groups learns, grows, and feels heard.
8	Low threshold in sports should be the basis in early interventions: focus on inclusive participation and enjoyment.
9	Nobody is excluded, everyone plays equal time.
10	Educate your assistant coaches, as well as volunteers and other supporters, about the refugees' background and the struggles that come with that.
11	Meet people in similar situations or who share the same fears.
12	Community spirit: Promote experiences that create a sense of belonging/involvement in the community.
13	Preferably work in pairs in order to be able to observe and react to the momentary experiences of each participant.
14	In the club, a culture of openness means, for example, that other members of the club can also participate in the hobbies of different target groups, for example adults in groups of young people. WhatsApp groups are also open to everyone.





## Additional information

**Have a look on other related resources to supportive coaching:**

[Key Lesson 6: The Keys for Supportive Training: Fostering Your Athletes' Potential](#)

[Key Lesson 8: A Guide to Perceive and Control Emotions](#)

[Activity 9: Tearing down stereotypes](#)

[Activity 13B: Improving confidence in others](#)

## Activity 21: Reflecting on a situation of trauma



### Instructions

- Split your group into 2 teams. Each of them is going to participate in a role play about the following case study.
- Now each player should imagine that he or she is a part of this team. Reflect on the following questions:
  - **What can you do to support this participant?**
  - **Do you have the knowledge and capabilities to be supportive in a situation like this?**



### Adapted from:

Promoting health of refugees in and through sport and physical activity: a psychosocial, trauma sensitive approach [46 Click here](#)

### **Rashid: A refugee from a South Asian** **The Role of Group Experiences in a Single Case Study**

In his home country, Rashid's parents were murdered in front of him, he then escaped and arrived to Austria in the end. At that point, he was still a minor.

He was diagnosed with a complex PTSD and recurrent depression.

According to his therapist, Rashid could not establish any solid relationship or tangible friendship in the sport and exercise group Movi Kune, and also the colleagues with whom he was later going to the fitness club 'were not directly friends; it was more like being in the same boat'.

Yet, Rashid seemed to enjoy the regular contact with the other participants. He even emphasised the sharing of positive emotions as something he most liked about the programme: "Laughing, laughing together with others cheerfully." His therapist highlighted 'his joy when the people came to meet each other; this was something really astonishing'.

Rashid was for a long time introverted and would not make eye contact with anybody. The interaction within the group was determined by doing exercise and sport together, but no further communication took place. In addition, communication with some participants was hindered by existent language barriers.

Yet, the simple fact that the practice of exercise and sport was taking place in a group environment and not individually was much valued by Rashid; when asked what was special about the programme, he answered: "The group, being together, that was good (...). Here you are accepted, you are together.

If you are strong or weak, that doesn't matter." Furthermore, he also got positive feedback from others on several occasions, which helped his sense of belonging, thereby tackling feelings of loneliness or isolation and establishing confidence.

This may seem like a small step, but its meaningfulness is becoming more visible when we consider that Rashid had missed out on stable relationships since his childhood and had an attachment disorder, PTSD and recurrent depression

## Activity 22: Managing impulses



### Objective:

The objective is to show participants how to manage their impulse control, emotions and desires. The aim is developing the ability to reduce their impulsive behaviours and learn to think and reflect on an action before doing it.



### Development of the activity:

Participants should play a game in which they all want to participate in, something that they are passionate about. For example, a game between them. During this game, some of them will be assigned specific, restricting roles, and they will not be able to leave this role. It will be a rotating role. Participants who see their possibilities to participate limited to certain rules will feel the desire to break these limitations and play like the rest. They will have to work on their self-control in order not to do so.

Example: In a football match, limit some of the participants to stay outside the margins, the lines that delimit the field of play, and only be able to receive and give passes from the outside, without being able to enter the field of play. This will mean that they will have to control their desire to enter the pitch to play like the others, and they will have to control themselves in order not to do so.

At the end of the activity, ask the participants how they have felt when they were limited by rules and have had to control their impulses to play like the rest of their teammates.

## Activity 23: Improving self-image and self confidence



### Objective:

For participants to improve their self-image, to be more confident in their abilities, to value their physique and personality more. Self-esteem is a key factor in being able to function normally, to learn and improve.

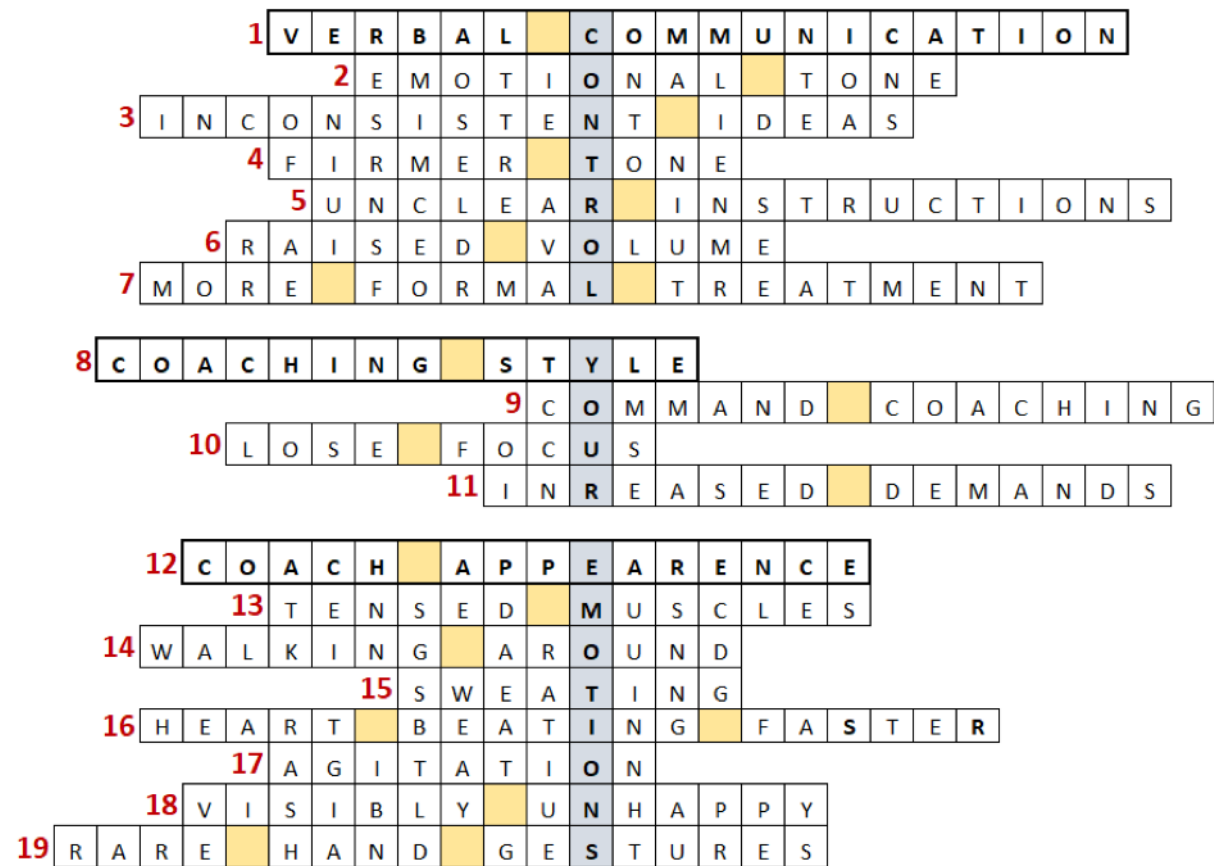


### Procedure of the activity:

The activity consists of an exercise in which participants will stand in a circle and pass a ball to each other. Each time someone receives the ball, they have to say their name and one thing they like about themselves. The trainer could start the exercise to set an example for the participants. The activity will not end until all participants have received passes and have mentioned one good thing about themselves. If someone does not know what to say, they can use the joker from the audience, and have one of their teammates or, ultimately, the trainer, list a good aspect about that person.

## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES:

### Answers Activity 8A: A stress radar crossword puzzle



## **Answers Activity 15A: Collaborative reading reflecting about CASR situations**

### **What could help an athlete like Helga or Sheila?**

- Reassuring her that she has a right to be protected
- Knowing that it is not her fault
- Knowing that she is not alone and that there are people to listen to her/ask for help
- Talking to an adult whom she trusts (such as welfare officer, team doctor, team chaperone, nurse, parent, older sibling, friend or teacher)
- Using a helpline

### **What could Helga's teammates do if they are worried about her?**

- Understand that it is not their fault, and they should not feel ashamed or guilty
- Tell an adult that they trust about their concerns
- Seek help for their own feelings

### **What can you do to protect yourself from sexual abuse in sport?**

- Understand your rights and responsibilities
- Follow your organisation's procedures if there anything like this happens
- Know what to do to prevent and report concerns
- Look out for each other
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour by others
- Share your concerns with someone else

### **As a coach, what could I do to help Sheila or Helga?**

- Listen calmly to her if she wishes to talk
- Tell her that she has a right to be protected
- Tell her that it is not her fault and that she is not alone
- Tell her that you may have to report the problem to someone else who can help
- Learn where and how to report athletes' disclosures of sexual abuse (e.g., the contact for a team chaperone, welfare officer, doctor, nurse, or a helpline)
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour by other coaches or athletes
- Report colleagues or athletes who you suspect or know are maltreating athletes



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