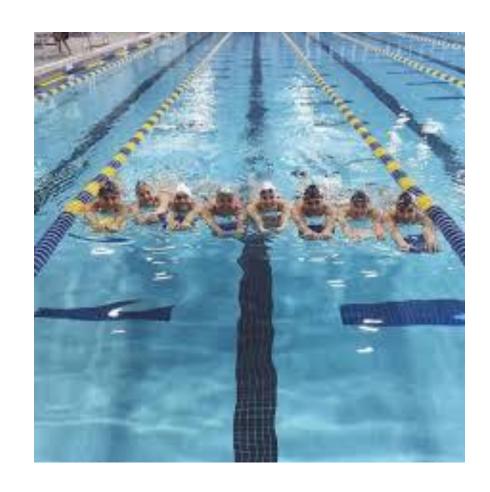
# Working towards mental wellness for athletes and coaches in 2020

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# How do we manage stresses so large, chronic and disruptive to our world?

We have to admit, this is really hard
And it is unprecedented.



#### What's the data on how people are doing?

- University of Wisconsin Study out this week
  - 3,000 High School Athletes
  - Experiencing disruption of sports and school during pandemic
- 2/3<sup>rds</sup> experiencing significant symptoms of depression and anxiety
- 1/3<sup>rd</sup> experiencing moderate to severe mood and anxiety issues
- Reported physical activity levels 50% lower than last year



#### What are the factors impacting mental health in athletes?

 LOSS- of structure, socialization, physical activity, achievement, selfidentity, focus, opportunities for success and self-esteem

- UNCERTAINTY-
  - When and If?
  - Health
  - Financial
  - School?
- COMPROMISE- in most cases, quality of training and life is lower



#### **Special Issues Creating Stress For Coaches**

- Stress of "responsibility" without knowing what is possible
- Uncertain timeline with pools, competitions, and virus
- Worry about balancing proper virus response and preparation
- Worry about our loved ones and their health
- Worry about ourselves and our health
- Worry about jobs and finances



### Behavioral strategies that impact your brain

- Maintain sleep discipline- may be harder with less training but try to maintain bed and wake times.
- Maintain enough physical work to regulate your mood.
- Develop a structure for your day- schedule your cross-training



### **Emotional, and cognitive strategies**

- Don't beat yourself up for grieving if you are. Don't have to be a model of resilience all the time. Permission to feel.
- Do something to build yourself as a human being every day. Its tough when your identity is solely tied to your sport.
- Focus attention on your own situation, your own building plan, without worrying about what others are doing. You have time.



### Purposeful Attention Strategies

- Mindfulness work- 5- 30 minutes a day is enough to reduce stress.
  - (reach out to me if you would like to do a structured 2 x weekly session)
- Make worrying a conscious decision
  - Purposeful, goal directed
  - Time limited focus of your attention- not always running in background



## **Social Strategies**

- Maintain social connections- group chats, #swim-on, face-time, Netflix Party, Mario-Kart. Stay connected to get out of your head.
- Reach out to talk. Use any/all resources you need to reduce stress and recover effectively from this disruption.
- Rest from social media if you want- take a break if necessary



#### What can coaches do for their athletes?

- Never underestimate your importance.
- Finding ways to maintain contact, even if nothing new.
- Help facilitate social connections
- What do coaches do for their athletes?
  - DIRECTION FEEDBACK SUPPORT



#### What can coaches do for themselves?

- Stay Healthy
- Focus more on recovery
- Re-build, create, or maintain, social networks
- Be kind to yourself- its not being weak- it's the key to resilience



#### **Thanks Everyone- Any Questions/Discussion?**



