



2024 PACIFIC
NORTHWEST STUDENT
SPORT AND EXERCISE
PSYCHOLOGY
SYMPOSIUM
(PNWSSEPS)


PULLMAN, WA
26-27 APRIL 2024

WELCOME!

Explore this guide to learn more about the experiences that you will have during this conference.

 The Spark: Academic Innovation Hub
1270 NE Washington St,
Pullman, WA 99164

 Friday, April 26: 5PM-8PM

 Saturday, April 27: 8:30 AM-3PM



For more information scan to visit our website

Link to our website

www.education.wsu.edu/events/inwsseps/



**Students
Presentation**



**Keynote
Speakers**



**Professional
Workshops**



**Professional
Panel Q & A**

Friday
Apr 26th

The Spark: Room 339
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

5:00 PM-5:30 PM

Check-In/On-Site
Registration Third floor WSU
SPARK Building Room339

5:30 PM-5:50 PM

Welcome

5:50 PM-6:20 PM

Keynote speaker:
Connor Hartley

6:20 PM-6:35 PM

Student Presentation:
Charissa Kirby (WWU)

6:35 PM-6:50 PM

Student Presentation:
Alex Walker (WSU)

6:50 PM-7:05 PM

Student Presentation:
Ryan Hudgins (WSU)

7:05 PM-7:45 PM

Dinner

7:45 PM-8:00 PM

Candlelight Chair Yoga



8:15 PM-10:00 PM

Social Activity: Paradise Creek
Brewery - Trailside Taproom

**Saturday
Apr 27th**

**The Spark: Room 339
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

8:30 AM-8:50 AM

Breakfast/On-Site
Registration Third floor WSU
SPARK Building Room339

8:50 AM-9:00 AM

Welcome

9:00 AM-9:30 AM

Keynote speaker:
Trisha Nash

9:30 AM-9:45 AM

Student Presentation:
Claire Baker (WWU)

9:45 AM-10:00 AM

Student Presentation:
Jose Flores (WWU)

10:00 AM-10:40 AM

Workshop Session I:
James L. Branham

10:40 AM-10:50 AM

Break

10:50 AM-11:20 AM

Professional Panel Q&A

11:20 AM-11:35 AM

Student Presentation:
Rich Nodarse (WWU)

**Saturday
Apr 27th**

**The Spark: Room 339
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

11:35 AM-11:50 AM

Student Presentation: Kyle Schwartz, Casey Skinner, & Heather Van Mullem (LCSC)

11:50 AM-12:30 PM

Lunch

12:30 PM-1:10 PM

Workshop Session II:
Dane Anderson

1:10 PM-1:25 PM

Student Presentation:
Sara Thompson (WSU)

1:25 PM-1:40 PM

Student Presentation:
McKenna Zanelli &
Reese Small (WSU)

1:25 PM-1:40 PM

Break

1:45 PM-2:45 PM

Workshop Session III:
Anne Cox & Trymaine Gaither

2:45 PM-3:00 PM

Closing



Connor Hartley

**Mental Health Counselor
WSU Athletics**

Friday, April 26 | 5:50 PM-6:20 PM

Utilizing Growth Mindset through Early
Career Stages



Trisha Nash

**Director of Student-Athlete Mental
Health Services
Gonzaga Athletics**

Saturday, April 27 | 9:00 AM-9:30 AM

Resilience is in the Eye of the Beholder

Session I:

James L. Branham

Character Strengths and Resilience: A Nexus for Personal Growth and Well-Being

Saturday, April 27 | 10:00 AM- 10:40 AM

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity and contributes significantly to an individual's overall well-being and success in life. For the last two decades, positive psychology has focused scientific attention on understanding the influence of character strengths on resilience. The Values in Action (VIA) Project focused on identifying character strengths that contribute to personal development across different stages of life and how to assess related positive traits such as creativity, courage, kindness, perseverance, love of learning, fairness, and teamwork (Park & Peterson, 2009). The workshop aims to review the research on character strengths, practice identifying character strengths in self and others, and develop a plan to cultivate character strengths personally and professionally. Through interactive discussions, participants will explore the significance of character strengths in resilience-building and learn how to identify character strengths in self and others (e.g., strength spotting). Each participant will be given a worksheet listing the 24-character strengths along with definitions, facilitating the Three Dot activity to identify their signature character strengths, and the back of the worksheet will have the Golden Mean for each character strength, prompting discussion about the shadow side of each character strength. Utilizing the Golden Mean framework, participants will develop personalized plans using WOOP Goal Setting to cultivate and apply signature character strengths in personal and professional contexts. To ensure comprehensive discussion and completion of workshop activities, sixty minutes is requested. By the end of the workshop, participants will understand the significance of character strengths in fostering resilience and the importance of strengths spotting in developing strong social support networks. They will also begin cultivating their character strengths to navigate challenges with greater confidence and efficacy.

Session II:

Dane Anderson

Deconstructing Diagnosis

Saturday, April 27 | 12:30 PM-1:10 PM

Athletes experiencing psychological challenges will likely encounter the subject of mental health diagnosis at some point in their careers. Whether exposure to diagnostic information comes directly from mental health professionals or through internet searches, athletes often learn the language necessary to identify their experiences. Fluency in the language of mental health is essential for sport psychology professionals, though it can be a difficult task. Academic literature has chronicled the stigma of mental health conditions for many years now (Hazell, et al., 2022). Many people seeking treatment have experienced shame surrounding mental illness and their attempts to seek support. On the other hand, mental illness may present an opportunity for secondary gain, presenting as either an unconscious motivation to maintain a symptom complex, or a conscious endeavor to gain an external reward (Egmond, Kummeling, & aan Balkom, 2005). Both shame and secondary gain highlight the need to articulate mental health diagnosis with hope and clarity. In addition to diagnostics, another opportunity for change lies within the urge many athletes, coaches and parents feel to label patterns of performance. Statements like, “He has anger,” or, “She gets nervous before games,” can unintentionally function as barriers rather than directions for progress. Even without discussing mental health conditions, such labels can interfere with an athlete’s ability to identify challenges for growth purposes. The purpose of this workshop is to help sport psychology students and professionals navigate conversations with athletes, coaches, and parents regarding diagnosis and similar labels. Attendees will be invited to interact with each other by working through case studies in small groups to apply key principles. By the completion of this workshop, attendees will learn how to utilize diagnostic and other descriptive terms within the broader context of problem identification and treatment.

Session III:

Anne E. Cox & Trymaine Gaither

Practicing Self-Compassion and Sitting with the Discomfort of Self-Kindness

Saturday, April 27 | 1:45 PM-2:45 PM

Common responses in the face of failure or pain are to self-criticize, “numb out”, avoid, or give up. Self-compassion offers an alternative approach. Self-compassion is a strategy that can be used in the face of challenge, pain, failure or struggle. In this workshop, participants will learn about the three components of self-compassion: mindfulness, self-kindness, and common humanity. That is the ability to hold painful or difficult experiences in equanimity, offer kind words or actions to the self, and acknowledge that struggle and suffering is a universal human experience. Research on the role of self-compassion in predicting general well-being, body image, and experiences in the context of sport will be presented. Then, participants will be invited to explore self-compassionate practices and common experiences or reactions that accompany practicing self-compassion. These include thinking about how one would respond to a friend and then contemplating turning that kind response towards the self, exploring uncomfortable or distressing feelings that might emerge when applying self-compassion, and practicing various examples of supportive touch as a form of self-soothing and kindness. Participants will walk away with examples of ways they could apply self-compassion in their own lives, insights as to how to address some of the common barriers or challenges to using self-compassion, as well as ideas for how it might be applied when working with athletes or other clients.

Abstracts

Presenter 1: Charissa Kirby, WWU

The Effects of Superstitions on Competitive State Anxiety and Sport Performance Under Pressure

Friday, April 26 | 6:20 PM-6:35 PM

Superstitions, which are performed by many athletes across sports and cultures, are defined as irrational beliefs that lead an individual to engage in actions that they give magical significance (Basiaga-Pasternak, 2019; Schippers & Van Lange, 2006). Hallmarks of superstitious behaviors (SBs) are that they are sequential and repetitive (Allen et al., 2020); they have no explicit technical function and any perceived effects are baseless but present an “illusion of control” (Brevers et al., 2011, p.4). Examples of SBs include eating certain foods, sitting in the same place, and using lucky charms (Brevers et al., 2011). Studies indicate that over half of athletes have SBs (Sasveri et al., 2019; Brevers et al., 2011). Due to their high prevalence in sport, the effects of SBs merit further examination. Multiple researchers have explored the relationship between anxiety and SBs. While there are inconsistencies regarding the strength of the relationship, findings indicate that SBs are utilized as a coping mechanism to reduce sport-related anxiety, specifically when the outcome is uncertain and of high importance (Todd & Brown, 2003; Basiaga-Pasternak, 2019). Notably, there has been limited research on superstitions in athletes from the United States, and little is known about the effects of superstitions on anxiety on actual performance outcomes. To fill these gaps, the purpose of this proposed study is to examine the effects of SBs on competitive state anxiety and closed-skill sport performance under pressure. This study will include athletes with and without pre-existing SBs to create two comparison groups. Participants will execute a closed skill under low- and high-pressure conditions. Participants in the SB group will utilize their SB in each condition. It is hypothesized that participants with SBs will report lower competitive state anxiety and better performance while under high pressure than those without SBs.

Presenter 2: Alex Walker, WSU

Investigating the Effects of an Acute Mindfulness Session on a Musician’s Performance and Anxiety

Friday, April 26 | 6:35 PM-6:50 PM

Performance-related anxiety is an obstacle for many musicians and occurs in many different contexts. It can negatively affect their mindset and even performance quality. Mindfulness is a popular form of meditation that can help reduce anxiety, however there is little understanding of how mindfulness can be used in the context of music. In this study, we compared the effects of mindfulness to a control group of basic meditation (e.g. breathing techniques). Participants were recruited from the WSU School of Music and were required to have four years of experience playing a brass instrument (e.g. trumpet, trombone, etc.). Participants were exposed to a challenging excerpt of music and were assigned to listen to either a 15-minute mindfulness or meditation audio using a yoga mat and headphones. Afterwards, they played and recorded the excerpt five times, and chose the best recording to be submitted to a panel of judges to assess the quality of the performance. Anxiety ratings were collected before the audio and after the performance. Currently, we are wrapping up the data collection phase, and are about to send the audio recordings to the judges, who are experienced students in the School of Music. So far, the data has shown trends of mindfulness being slightly more effective at reducing performance-related anxiety than meditation. There is also a trend of participants in the mindfulness group having less concern about the ratings they will receive from the judges, and an increase in concern in the meditation group. These results can be used to decrease the anxiety of young musicians in the professional world and possibly increase their performance quality.

Abstracts

Presenter 3: Ryan Hudgins, WSU

Pre-Competition Anxiety and Ironman Triathletes: A Possible Mechanism of Sudden Cardiac Death

Friday, April 26 | 6:50 PM-7:05 PM

The Ironman-distance triathlon is a three sport ultra-endurance event consisting of swimming (3.9km), cycling (180.2km), and running (42.2km). Triathlon has grown substantially in popularity over the past three decades, with less than a thousand members in major organizations in the early 1980s to now with hundreds of thousands participating in triathlons each year. Since the first Ironman competition held in 1978, relatively little research has been conducted on the sport. What we do know clearly from empirical work, press reports, and anecdotal accounts, is that death does happen in triathlon. Harris (2010) conducted research on 2,971 triathlon sanctioned events from January 2006 to September 2008 and revealed that 13 participants died during the swim portion of the race. In a follow up study, Harris et al., (2017) reported 135 race-related deaths from 1985 to 2016, of which 90 (cardiac arrests) occurred during the swim portion of the race. Pre-competition anxiety is a proposed catalyst to sudden cardiac death in these athletes and includes both cognitive and somatic anxiety. Additionally, past research suggests that cold shock response (water temp 10-15°C) can increase the magnitude and duration of somatic anxiety responses (Barwood et al., 2012). Our upcoming project seeks to elucidate the magnitude of change in pre-competition anxiety over time, the impact that type of training (indoor vs outdoor) and experience level have on pre-competition anxiety, as well as the impact of past adverse experiences. This project will utilize a survey-based methodology implementing the CSAI-2R scale to gain an understanding of pre-competition anxiety among Ironman triathletes and its origins.

Presenter 4: Claire Baker, WWU

The Effects of a Small-Group Social Support Intervention on Injured Collegiate Athletes' Stress-Related Growth

Saturday, April 27 | 9:30 AM- 9:45 AM

Injuries are frequent in sport. Common injuries include sprains and strains of the knee and ankle (Kerr et al., 2015). Injuries can cause athletes to miss training and competition for extended periods, with 21.9% of injuries keeping collegiate athletes out for more than seven days (Kerr et al., 2015). For some, injury can lead to serious mental health consequences like anxiety, depression, and anger (Borg et al., 2021). However, researchers have also begun to identify psychological and social benefits resulting from injury (Rhodes et al., 2024), which is commonly called stress-related growth (SRG; Salim & Wadey, 2018). Researchers have found that with the right combination of support and personality traits, injury can lead to positive outcomes, including feelings of gratitude and openness to new experiences (Roy-Davis et al., 2016; Wadey et al., 2019; Barnes et al., 2021). Despite these findings, few interventions have been designed to promote SRG in athletes, and most have only been conducted online (Heaney & Kentzer, 2023). Further, despite research highlighting the importance of psychological need satisfaction in supporting SRG, few interventions have highlighted these needs. Yet, many participants reported relatedness aiding in growth experiences (e.g., Heaney & Kentzer, 2023; Fernandez et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). Therefore, the current proposed research study will test the effects of an in-person, small-group intervention on SRG in a sample of injured collegiate athletes. Due to the impact of social support on SRG (Wadey et al., 2019; Barnes et al., 2021), this proposed intervention will occur in person. The proposed methodology is a pre-post-test design in which treatment group participants will take the stress-related growth scale (Park et al., 1996) before and after a multi-session in-person sharing.

Abstracts

Presenter 5: Jose Flores, WWU

A Relatedness Team-Building Intervention and the Effects on Team Performance and Sense of Belonging

Saturday, April 27 | 9:45 AM- 10:00 AM

Although there is plenty of evidence that the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are associated with positive outcomes in sport (see Mossman et al., 2022), most research focuses on autonomy and competence rather than relatedness. The basic psychological need of relatedness is defined as the need to feel valued and welcomed within a social context, feeling related and securely connected with others; it is often defined as a sense of belonging (Raabe & Zakrajsek, 2017). Relatedness has been positively associated with overall autonomous motivation and performance in non-sport domains (Baard et al., 2004), and with intrinsic motivation (Pulido et al., 2018) and retention in sport domains (Williams et al., 2013). Additionally, relatedness can be influenced positively by teammates (Raabe et al., 2017). Although relatedness and team sports have limited research, a close relationship between relatedness and the widely studied topic of social cohesion has been found (Erikstad et al., 2018; Nascimento Júnior et al., 2019). Social cohesion is defined as team members liking one another; thus, members enjoy being part of the team (Oh, 2023). Moreover, social cohesion has a small positive relationship with team performance (Benson et al., 2016). Team-building interventions have successfully increased team social cohesion in intercollegiate athletics (e.g., Stevens & Bloom, 2003), yet there are limited studies that examine the effects of a relatedness-focused team-building activity on team performance and individuals' sense of belonging. One known intervention targeting relatedness resulted in increased team and teammate psychological awareness and perceived positive performance (Campbell, 2018), but did not measure actual performance. The purpose of the current research proposal will be to measure the effects of a relatedness-focused team-building intervention on a team's perceived basic psychological needs, social cohesion, and performance.

Presenter 6: Rich Nodarse, WSU

To Switch or not to Switch: An Examination of Imagery Perspective and Preference on the Performance of a Sports Skill

Saturday, April 27 | 11:20 AM- 11:35 AM

In the field of sport psychology, there is a considerable amount of research supporting imagery as an effective performance enhancement technique. Imagery can either be experienced through an internal perspective (through the lens of one's own eyes) or an external perspective (as if watching oneself through a video tape). Some sport skills, such as those that rely heavily on the use of form (e.g., rock climbing), may derive greater benefit by imaging through an external perspective (e.g., Hardy & Callow, 1999), slalom sports an internal perspective (e.g., Callow et al., 2013), and in other tasks, internal and external imagery perspectives may be equally efficacious (e.g., Lu et al., 2020). Despite researchers acknowledging that each visual perspective offers unique visuospatial and perceptual information (Hardy, 1997; Roberts et al., 2010), and fMRI revealing differential brain activation between internal and external visual perspective use (Jiang et al., 2015), there have been no known studies that have investigated the effect of switching between imagery perspectives on sport performance. Moreover, although studies have shown small to moderate correlations between imagery perspective preference and imagery ability (Callow & Roberts, 2010; Liu et al., 2019), there has been a scarcity of studies that have examined how perspective preference may moderate performance outcomes. Thus, the proposed research will employ an experimental design to compare differences between internal visual imagery only (IVI), external only (EVI), and visual imagery perspective switching (VIPS) on a sport motor task, while holding imagery perspective preference constant. In addition, the relationship between perspective preference and sport performance will be assessed. The results could advance applied recommendations for mental performance consultants and athletes.

Abstracts

Presenters 7: Kyle Schwartz, Casey Skinner, & Heather Van Mullem, LCSC

Anxiety in High School Sports: Athlete Realities & Coach Responsibilities

Saturday, April 27 | 11:35 AM-11:50 AM

Stress is a part of our everyday lives and is often perceived as a negative presence. However, there are two major categories of stress: eustress, which results in a positive impact, and distress, which results in a negative impact (Stromajer et al., 2023). Post-COVID, high school students express experiencing stress and anxiety at increasing rates (Flannery, 2019), resulting in a negative impact on school and their relationships (Prothero, 2022). Certain things, like exercise (Klaperski, 2017) and social support (Ryska & Yin, 1999), can serve as a buffer to stress. Coakley (2016) articulates that sport, if conducted in safe and healthy environment, can result in many positive outcomes for participants. Additionally, Ryska & Yin (1999) found that perceived support from a coach can result in lower anxiety levels in athletes. As pressure to excel increases in high school sports for student-athletes, does exercise lose its buffering quality? As coaches feel increasing pressure to win, does their communication with student athletes convey support for their mental health or the pressure coaches feel to win? This study will explore high school student-athlete's perceived anxiety levels, identify student-athlete coping techniques, if any, and explore coach's perceptions of their support of student-athlete mental health. Proposed subjects are high school boys basketball players and their coaches. This interactive presentation will: 1) identify factors contributing to increased stress and anxiety levels in adolescents, 2) explore sport participation and coach behavior as a buffer to stress and anxiety, and 3) outline this proposed study design. Session participants will be encouraged to provide suggestions to improve the proposed study methodology.

Presenter 8: Sara Thompson, WSU

Manipulating Attentional Strategies during Isometric Exercise: Does Attention Matter to Affect and Exercise-Induced Pain?

Saturday, April 27 | 1:10 PM-1:25 PM

Maintaining regular exercise is difficult for many individuals. Strategies are needed to help overcome barriers to exercise, such as pain and discomfort. During isometric contraction exercises, pain during exercise through interoceptive feedback is a common reason individuals stop the exercise. One strategy tests associative and dissociative attention during exercise. Dissociation leads to more pleasant exercise experiences compared to associative attention in untrained individuals. However, recent evidence suggests mindful association can also be a pleasant experience. Therefore, this study tested if a mindfulness (associative) strategy during isometric contraction exercises differed from a mental math (dissociative) strategy on core affect, pain severity, pain tolerance, mindful reappraisal of pain, and remembered and forecasted affect. An active sample (N = 52, M age = 21.06, 53.8% female) participated in a between-subjects experiment consisting of a randomly assigned attentional strategy (either mindfulness or mental math) to use during a plank and wall-sit exercise. Participants were taught the strategy in a baseline session and asked to practice the strategy before returning to the experimental session 2-3 days later. Results reveal those who used the mindful strategy during a plank had lower pain severity ($p = .02$) compared to those using the mental math strategy. Participants in the mindful strategy condition were also more detached from negative thoughts and feelings associated with pain during a wall-sit ($p = .03$) and a plank ($p = .03$), compared to the mental math condition. Experimental manipulation was supported with higher ($p < .001$) state mindfulness and higher ($p < .001$) internal attentional focus in the mindful compared to the mental math condition. Results suggest the use of a mindful associative strategy can lead to decreased pain severity during a plank and the ability to be more mindfully detached from the pain compared to using a dissociative distraction strategy.

Abstracts

Presenter 9: McKenna Zanelli and Reese Small, WSU

Cognitive Strategies During Isometric Contraction

Exercises: Adapting a Lab Experiment to a Fitness Class

Saturday, April 27 | 1:25 PM-1:40 PM

Strategies to use during exercise that may enhance experience have implications for long-term engagement in physical activity. Exploring how strategies can be applied in a real-world activity setting increases external validity and application. A previous lab-based experiment was conducted to test the cognitive strategies of mindfulness (associative) and counting (dissociative) attention. Our goal was to replicate this experiment in a naturalistic group fitness setting with a population that was adequately experienced with the isometric exercises. The purpose of the current study was to determine the effectiveness of a mindfulness (associative strategy) and a cognitive counting task (dissociative strategy) during isometric contraction exercises on affective responses, pain tolerance, and mindful pain reappraisal in healthy, trained adults aged 18 and older. Using data from the previous studies, we hypothesize that the mindfulness (associative) strategy will promote more positive affect, higher pain tolerance, and a higher mindful pain reappraisal than the dissociative and control conditions in a group setting. Transitioning from an individualized lab setting to a group fitness setting required the lab-based experimental protocol to be modified. Participants worked in pairs, in-task measures were removed, and surveys were collected using a paper format. Classes, rather than individuals, were randomly assigned to one of three conditions, each with two sessions. Conditions included a control condition given no cognitive strategy ($n = 18$), a condition given an associative strategy ($n = 26$), and a condition given a dissociative strategy ($n = 21$). Altogether, sixty-five undergraduate students enrolled in a university activity course completed both sessions. Data collection has been completed but analyses have not yet been conducted. Lessons learned about adapting a lab experiment to a group fitness setting will be discussed.

Our Team:

Sarah Ullrich-
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KINESIOLOGY

Edward R. Murrow
College of Communication
HEALTH COMMUNICATION



Location Information:

CONFERENCE VENUE & PARKING

INFO:

The Spark: Academic Innovation Hub
Washington State University
1270 NE Washington St, Pullman, WA
Click here to open the map:
["Location of the Venue"](#)



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS:

- Explore the [Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art WSU](#) (Open Friday & Saturday 10 am-4pm)
- Visit the [WSU Bear Center](#)

PARKING INFORMATION

- Parking is free after 5 o'clock Friday in the parking lot in front of The Spark building



Pullman Information:

LOCAL COFFEE SHOPS:

- Starbucks at The Bookie
- Zoe Coffee & Kitchen
- Roost Coffee & Market
- Tommas Hammer Coffee Roasters
- Neill's Coffee & Ice Cream
- Crybaby Cafe



TRY COUGER ICE CREAM AND CHEESE!

- Visit Ferdinand's Ice Cream Shoppe & try natural cheese and ice cream produced by WSU Creamery! (Open on Friday 9:30 am- 4:30 pm)

ENJOY NATURE:

- Sunnyside Park
- Kamiak Butte
- Bill Chipman Palouse Trail
- Sunshine Crafts and Flowers

