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WHAT IS PEM?

The Performance Excellence Movement (PEM) is a newsletter designed to increase awareness of sport and exercise psychology topics. PEM also provides insight into applying these concepts to a number of different domains, including business coaching, medicine, the military, music, and elite athletes. PEM has historically consisted of one annual issue; however, we are excited to announce that two issues have been published by the 2016 PEM team!

This issue includes a theme on Olympics after being inspired by the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. In our "Committee Corner" section, current PEM committee member Angel Brutus reflects on her observations of Olympics by relating to her personal and professional growth during her transition from student to early career professional.

We also published two interviews, one with a sport psychology professor Dr.

Alison Pope-Rhodius at John F. Kennedy University, and one with a national team sport psychologist Dr. Henry Li from Hong Kong. Both of them have experiences working with Olympians and shared their words of wisdoms with us about their consulting work and advice for students.

Last but not least, we have two student articles in the field of sport and performance psychology. In the first contribution, Nile Brandt from Ball State University discusses how he gained entry to work with collegiate musicians on mental skill training. In the second contribution, Tim White from the University of Missouri introduces the mental skills that he has used to work with injured athletes by incorporating his previous training as an athletic trainer.

We hope you can learn from some of the experiences shared in this issue, and that you enjoy reading the PEM newsletter!

How to contribute to the PEM in 2017:

Do you have evidence-based consulting or applied experience other students can benefit? Do you want to obtain experience in a peer-review process? Then consider submitting to PEM!

We are always looking for students who are willing to share their experiences and help others improve their consulting expertise. Please contact us if you are interested in submitting an article (contact information on final page). We would like you to be part of the process for the 2017 newsletters!

How can I get involved with PEM?

- Contact the current editors to learn more: Alan Chu (Alan.Chu@unt.edu) and/or Carra Johson (cgjohnson@alumni.usc.edu)
- Read the newsletter and spread the word
- Attend an AASP regional conference in the spring to meet PEM committee members and/or article writers

Mental Skills Training and the Budding Sport Psychology Practitioner: The Post-Performance Transition

Angel L. Brutus

University of the Rockies

The amount of rigor associated with completing doctoral training has some parallel to the rigorous quest of elite-level sport. When pursuing the development and retention of sport expertise, many athletes receive guidance on ways to demonstrate elite performance behaviors by managing factors such as: decision-making and its relative speed, response selection, consistency, anticipation, perceptual accuracy, attentional focus, concentration, and strategy development (Janelle & Hillman, 2003). Olympic hopefuls participate in years of training with an unwavering commitment to the pursuit of excellence for the opportunity to compete at a high level. Researchers have identified several factors that have contributed to Olympic success: using psychological skills training, having high confidence, blocking potential distractions, maintaining high commitment to excellence, applying relaxation techniques, focusing on the process and not the outcome, and developing strategies in anticipation for adversity (Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001). By no means am I comparing the level of intensity of Olympians and other elite performers employ to that of doctoral students, as the amount of sacrifice such performers endure is immeasurable. I do however notice a

parallel to my own pursuit of excellence while obtaining a professional degree. Many of the aforementioned factors employed by Olympic athletes in the above-referenced study served as the foundation for my quest to complete my degree.

As I find myself making the transition from a student who spent countless hours of dedication to perfecting my craft, to a professional who is now faced with the reality of life after training; I wonder how such elite level performers successfully handle the transition to post-competition after devoting so many years to preparation. I could not refrain from posing this self-reflective question: Do we pursue the profession of sport psychology for accolades and recognition, or do we commit to this level of training for the love of it and opportunity to make significant impact in the lives of clientele? Does the answer to these questions hold critical keys to successfully cultivate retention of high level motivation to continue learning? How does the ability to cope with such a transition parallel to the post-training transition that elite athletes face once their competitions are complete? It is my hope that this commentary resonates with many current and future students as they pursue professional degrees in sport psychology. I trust this observation provides practical considerations for students to ponder, as their own end of training grows closer and the transition to early career professional becomes inevitable.



“Do we pursue the profession of sport psychology for accolades and recognition, or do we commit to this level of training for the love of it and opportunity to make significant impact in the lives of clientele?”





Looking back on the number of hours devoted to studying, training, practicing and preparing for this moment in which I currently find myself — a moment of transition from student to early career professional, it seems surreal! Upon completing relevant coursework and embarking on the dis-

sertation journey, I was privileged to secure referrals that led to contract work, which enabled me to bridge the gap between theory and practice, to see things from the field and to apply them in such a way that shaped my research interests. The invaluable timing of the combination of applied work, coursework, and seeking relevant research gaps is quite difficult for me to articulate. During the process, my ultimate goal was to successfully progress through my training and conduct research that was meaningful and could contribute to our field.

I would like to believe that a number of factors contributed to a robust experience that not only helped to solidify my efficacy-beliefs, but also confirmed the applicability of many mental skills techniques we teach our performance clientele. I began with “the end in mind” (Covey, 2004). Throughout my journey, I set long-term goals with objectives that made the tasks I faced manageable. Time management and purposeful engagement with other students proved to be very beneficial in gaining various perspectives. During times when I hit my “motivational wall”, I trusted my training and always embraced a learner’s mentality by seeking guidance from those who have experienced success, such as my mentors and dissertation committee members.

How do athletes who have spent years of preparation to compete at an elite

level, representing their country, deal with the post-performance transition? Similarly, how do doctoral students who spend years of training and grinding to successfully defend research they have literally lived and breathed for years make the transition to early career professional? What are some of the techniques and strategies used to prepare for performance? Are those same preparation strategies used in the transition? Emotional regulation and psychological skills have assisted athletes during preparation and performances (Janelle & Hillman, 2003). Engaging in techniques that provide opportunity to monitor and exert emotional control as well as influence emotional readiness are critical skillsets for optimal performance. In sport, a range of emotions can emerge during any given moment from elation to sheer exhaustion. In the domain of psychological skills, motivation, efficacy-beliefs, confidence-building, goal-setting strategies, imagery, and coachability are developed in preparation and employed throughout performance. But what about after the performance has taken place, and all that one has worked for has now been completed?

As I look back over my educational career, I can see how the aforementioned emotional regulation and psychological skill components played significant roles in my ability to stay the course during training and successfully defend my dissertation, all the while remaining ever confident in my fieldwork. I am not quite sure how other professionals dealt with the transition from student to early career; however, I will commit to being intentional about continuing to employ traditional and contemporary approaches to support my emotional and psychological needs as I embark on this new chapter.

“During times when I hit my ‘motivational wall’, I trusted my training and always embraced a learner’s mentality by seeking guidance from those who have experienced success, such as my mentors and dissertation committee members.”

INTERVIEW WITH A SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR

The PEM professional interviews serve the purpose of helping audience understand how different professionals in the field apply sport and performance psychology in research and practice. Thanks to Noelle Menendez for connecting us with Dr. Pope-Rhodium, AND Alan Chu for connecting us with Dr. Henry Li with his interview on p. 8.

What is your background as it relates to sport and exercise psychology?

All of my formal training was in the U.K. (Liverpool John Moores University for graduate school), then I came to the U.S. in 2000 and have been learning “on the job” at JFKU ever since! I have also consulted in applied sport psychology for quite a while now, being fully qualified to do so since 1996 via BASES (British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences) accreditation and then AASP certification once I moved to the U.S.

In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?

In terms of mental skills training, I use meditation a lot. It helps keep me grounded and present-focused, especially when I have a busy plate taking me in lots of directions. I got a mindfulness coach to help teach me and reinforce the ideas on how to use it well for both well-being and high performance moments.

I know that you created a podcast called “Wee Chats”. How did it come to fruition?

My Wee Chats are literally short conversations with Brilliant People. It’s one of the first podcasts in sport psychology that existed, created in 2011. I came to the idea five minutes before I was about to interview my good friend, Lesley Paterson, who had just won her first World Championship (her first of 3) in off-road triathlons. The name came about from knowing I wanted to keep the podcasts short (wee), Lesley’s Scottish nationality, and the fact that she is a person of small stature (only in height). “Brilliant” is a word I use a lot as a Brit, hence Wee Chats with Brilliant People was born. You can check it out at www.WeChats.com and follow @weechats. The interviews are with high-level performers including top athletes, top coaches, entrepreneurs, musicians, business executives and actors. The focus of the series is on elite performers and the mental preparation that they do on a daily basis.

You have been able to share a cup of tea with an array of high-level performers during your “Wee Chats”, what are some takeaways you’ve learned from such different backgrounds?

The biggest takeaway is that they leave nothing to chance. Their meticulous preparation is something that they know helps keep their chances of success high. It ensures that their skill level is as good as it can be and it keeps their confidence levels high as well. They are typically humble people who are aware of their team members (social and work-related) who support them in their quest for brilliance.

What are some recommendations you would offer students or young professionals who want to start their own podcast?

Don’t spend too much time worrying about the perfect look, the perfect intro or the perfect vibe, just start “collecting” interviews and take it from there. I would say don’t get bogged down in the nitty gritty of the technical aspects of the podcast. If you don’t know how to make something look or sound good, farm it out to someone who can help you. Otherwise your interviews may stay as recordings for a while. You can find someone who doesn’t cost a lot of money using something like www.elance.com. Out of all the aspects of podcasting, I LOVE doing the interviews. So if you’re fortunate enough to interview amazing people, just be curious, use your counseling skills, and go for it. Try to make yourself sound interesting and don’t have a script. I have about 5 broad areas to touch on and then no agenda after that, I go with whatever they give me. The only limit I put on the conversation is time. I aim for around 15-20 minutes, some go over.



Alison Pope-Rhodium, Ph.D.

Professor, Chair of the Sport Psychology Department
John F. Kennedy University

INTERVIEW WITH A SPORT PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR

How have you been professionally involved with the 2016 Rio Olympics and/or past Olympic games?

I have been involved with helping athletes for the Olympics for a while and I have directly helped prepare elite athletes for the games since 1996 until 2012. I traveled with elite archers including the USA team, the Indian team and the British number one archer in 2004. That was a highlight of my career. I have always loved the Olympics and wanted to be a part of it, so it was an honor to get to be there with teams. It took its toll though, and I think it's important for sport psychology practitioners to also get support before, during, and after they go to big events.

What educational training do you recommend students seek in order to apply sport and exercise psychology in a position that is similar to what you do?

If you want to practice in the field, a doctorate isn't necessarily essential (depending on how you wish to work), so I would highly recommend you choose a grad program that enables you to accumulate lots of internship hours under the direct supervision of qualified faculty who also practice in the field. If you want to be an academic, then both a master's and a doctorate are preferable; mine are in sport science and sport psychology respectively. Education and training that covers both psychology and sport science is preferable, not one over the other.

What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the applied field?

Be part of an amazing graduate program that will help get you ready for doing the real-life work in the field. A great program for budding practitioners should get you ready in terms of the academic aspects of course, plus the AASP certification requirement and many, many hours of supervised applied work. It's also important to network, so talking to people in our field at your current institutions, at conferences and contacting people if you like what they have said in social media or books, etc. (Almost) everyone would welcome the opportunity to talk to you about what they do and how they got there!

“Believe it or not, it’s actually been ‘be the ball’”

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to sport and exercise psychology?

Believe it or not, it's actually been “be the ball”:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWH811TcckU>.

Also, self-care is key to success. I use the analogy of the oxygen mask advice on a plane; put your own on first in order to be able to help others best.

What should current students be doing to prepare themselves in finding a job/being a young professional in the field?

If you want to work in the field, it is vital to get applied experiences whilst being supervised. That's something you should not just learn on the job; it's a disservice to yourself, the field, and more importantly, the clients. If you're in a clinical program, don't assume that you have the skills to be able to transfer into working with performers; you also need training in that aspect too.

What specific tools (research and practice) do you suggest students develop in terms of working in the field?

In terms of research, I would recommend that students focus on being curious and having a niche. Don't be afraid of research, it's your main source for what's credible out there. It's good to specialize in an area so you can become an expert in that topic, even if it's just doing a project on something for a few months rather than a whole thesis or dissertation. That gives people who write about you (when that time comes) something to focus on and it also gives you confidence that you know what you're talking on this topic (one hopes!).

For applied work, it is vital to get a good combination of counseling skills and sport-specific training that teaches you how to build rapport, listen, and direct people whilst knowing how this all combines to help performers who are also trying to train their mind. Once you graduate, peer support is very important, so you don't feel alone, you can get much needed social support from people who know what you're going through and so you can problem solve with others.

Good luck! Please feel free to contact me with any questions: arhodius@jfk.edu.

The Road (Even) Less Traveled: Psychological Skills Training with Collegiate Musicians

Nile Brandt

Ball State University

Research has revealed a host of challenges routinely faced by musicians at the collegiate and professional levels (Abel & Larkin, 1990; van Fenema et al., 2013; Wristen, 2014). Musicians, particularly those who aspire to reach professional status, may begin playing between the ages of three and four (Clark & Lisboa, 2013). Their practice routines are rigorous and require absolute devotion, talent, and the will and means to be perfect when placed in high-stakes environments such as auditions and concerts (van Fenema et al., 2013). Early entry into this rigorous field puts musicians at risk of developing physical complications such as musculoskeletal injuries, overuse disorders, or problems with hearing. Additionally, student musicians are prone to stress-related problems, most notable of which may be performance anxiety that arises during studio class performances, jury examinations, ensemble performances, and studio lessons (Yoshimura, Fjellman-Wiklund, & Paul, 2010).

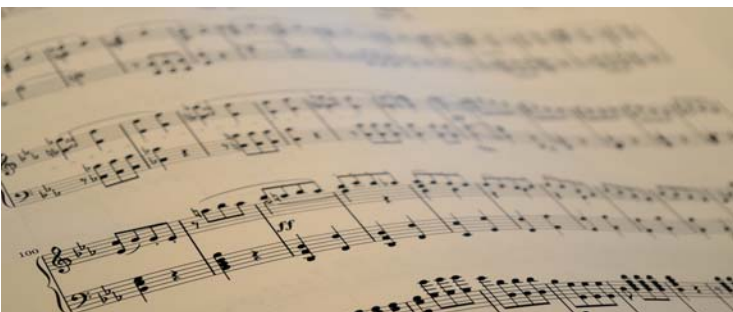
As a method to ameliorate the stress-related problems that threaten musicians, sport and performance psychology researchers and practitioners have developed and implemented mental skills training interventions with this population (Clark & Williamson, 2011; Hoffman & Hanrahan, 2011). Considering the limited job opportunities in the highly desired NCAA and Olympic levels among developing sport psychologists, graduate coordinators are encouraged to offer applied training in a diverse range of settings (Fitzpatrick, Monda, & Wooding, 2016). However, Fitzpatrick and colleagues report few students who acquire experience with performers outside of the sport realm in the course of their graduate training. Thus, the purpose of this article is to detail my experiences with collegiate musicians as part of a sport and exercise psychology graduate



program and to highlight implications for other graduate students.

Gaining Entry into the School of Music

Being raised by professional classical musicians played a significant role in my seeking of practical experience in this particular setting. My mother's colleague recommended that I contact a music instructor that they knew of at my institution. E-mails were sent between myself and the studio instructor with whom the two-month intervention eventually took place. During this time, the ambitions, rationale, and expectations were discussed, eventually serving to generate the basis of a positive consulting relationship between the instructor and myself. As Sharpe and Hodge (2013) propose, the consultant is able to facilitate a positive relationship with a coach when the consultant can (a) convey their knowledge of the sport as well as sport psychology theories, (b) develop trust through outlining boundaries and outlining confidentiality, (c) immerse themselves in the team culture and, (d) display flexibility in format and consulting approach. It is surmised that this positive, collaborative relationship made the novelty of a consultant being introduced to the students easier and more comfortable to grasp.



The Intervention: Progression Through Adaptation

Based on previous literature and the consultant's experience with musicians, an initial mental skills program was developed prior to the first session. I first conducted a needs assessment with the musicians, which was used to modify the initially developed training program. Initial mental skills training topics included performance profiling, goal-setting, confidence, centering, imagery, and coping with distractions. As an initial activity, the students were asked to think of what it takes, mentally, to be a great musician. Some of these qualities included concentration, motivation, confidence, and enjoyment. We integrated these qualities and skills into a performance profile, a target-like chart on which students assessed themselves on these components. The performance profiles were then used as a tool to monitor progress between sessions in terms of their development of mental skills. As the sessions progressed, I took note of how the experiences of musicians and athletes compared. I observed clear similarities in areas of self-criticism. While an athlete may engage in self-talk consisting of "How could I have not laid off that pitch, I am an idiot," a musician in the class may disclose situations where "I played

that so out of tune, the audience could totally tell I messed up." Facilitating the opportunity to become aware of and normalize their experiences amongst peers and relative athletic counterparts was an aspect I perceived particularly comforting for these musicians.

Through discussion with the instructor, we chose to focus the second mental skills program on preparing students for a "mock audition." We again began the program with the construction of performance profiles, with a particular focus on what mental skills would

who were unfamiliar with the audition process, the instructor described the experience as being intimidating, and sometimes dehumanizing, as musicians may be one among hundreds taking part in an audition. At this time, the challenging aspect of having an outcome goal of winning an audition was reinforced. Helping the students to focus on aspects they could control within this process, such as stress management and pre-performance routines, appeared useful in preparing for the mock audition.

For the third program, students were active participants within sessions, integrating mental skills training as they prepared for a recital at the end of the semester. Beyond active participation in activities and discussion centered on topics like practice zones (practice structuring), confidence, courage, and resiliency, students were asked to consult a scholarly article related to sport and performance psychology. To aid this, I opened a shared Dropbox account that contained relevant performance psychology peer-reviewed articles for students to access. The topic of resiliency stood out as particularly relevant during this second phase. Musicians, similar to athletes, are prone to make mistakes in practice and performance. Psycho-education around what our mind and body defaults to when a mistake does occur (e.g., what we think about, where our attention goes, where we tighten up) and how we can productively accept a mistake and return to the present moment were seen as beneficial topics by the students.

Conclusions Drawn: Implications for Developing Sport Psychology Practitioners

At a time in which practical sport psychology experiences are of the essence for students in graduate programs, these presented experiences shed light on a promising avenue for student consultation. Student musicians welcomed an additional support system because, aside from their studio instructors, they are not often afforded the supports that are common for student athletes (e.g., tutoring, advising, life skills curriculum, scholarships/aid, etc.). Graduate students in sport psychology programs are encouraged to explore this receptive and appreciative population to apply their knowledge, which could benefit all parties involved. Furthermore, consultants must continue collaborating with musicians, faculty, and administrators housed in the music performance departments in college settings to determine the unique needs of this population.

"...opportunity to become aware of and normalize their experiences amongst peers and relative athletic counterparts was an aspect I perceived particularly comforting..."

seem vital for preparing for an audition. For students

INTERVIEW WITH A NATIONAL TEAM SPORT PSYCHOLOGIST

What is your background as it relates to sport and exercise psychology?

I have a doctoral degree in applied psychology (sport and exercise). I am a registered psychologist of the Hong Kong Psychological Society (HKPS) and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). I've been working at the national sport institute with elite athletes as a sport psychology officer for 8 years.

In what ways do you use sport psychology in your professional life?

I use sport psychology knowledge in my daily work. In other words, I do sport psychology consultation (individual and group), provide on-field support, and do applied research.

What educational training do you recommend students seek in order to apply sport and exercise psychology in a position that is similar to what you do?

A postgraduate study in applied psychology or sport psychology, both with sufficient supervised practicum would be able to equip one to deliver sport psychology service to clients.

How have you been professionally involved with the 2016 Rio Olympics and past Olympic games?

I have worked with Olympians by offering onsite sport psychology consultation for qualification and Olympic preparation. Also, I worked with Olympians via online tools during the actual Olympic period.

How was your work different in preparing athletes to compete in Olympics as compared to other international events?

Olympics is a multi-sport games held every four years. Its value in athletes' heart is very different from any other international events. Athletes' perceptions may create different expectations among athletes and coaches. Sport psychologists can enhance their awareness and make proper adjustment. The overall scale of the Olympics is much bigger than any other international events. Once the athletes enter the village, they may easily be occupied by various things including the village activities, gathering with athletes from other sports, and media interviews, etc. Sport psychologists have to be more flexible in scheduling.

How does culture influence your consulting philosophy? Given the fact that most education and research in sport psychology are done in the Western culture, is there anything you have to adjust in your work with athletes?

Sport psychology is not very popular nor well established in my culture. Nobody will deny the importance of athletes' mental quality nor sport psychology as an issue, but the role of sport psychologists may not be clearly defined. Also, continuous communication without crossing my professional boundary with coaches is very important at my work. As we are dealing with athletes who are also young adults training in a highly disciplined or even authoritative atmosphere, empowering them is very important in my working relationship with them.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in regards to sport and exercise psychology?

"Be curious and stay with the moment".

What specific tools (research and practice) do you suggest students develop in terms of working in the sport and exercise psychology field?

CBT and mental skills training; mindfulness knowledge and personal experience; basic sport science and coaching understanding; research design and statistical knowledge in social sciences; empathic and self-exploring attitude (also a good idea to go through some counselling sessions yourself too).



**Hin Yue (Henry) Li,
Ph.D.**

Senior Sport Psychology
Officer,
Hong Kong Sports Insti-
tute

"Be curious and stay with the moment."

MENTAL SKILLS WITH AN INJURED ATHLETE

An Introduction to the Use of Mental Skills with an Injured Athlete

Tim White

University of Missouri

In an instant, an injury can drastically change an athlete's season. At the collegiate level, it is estimated that NCAA athletes sustain 210,000 injuries per year (Kerr et al., 2015). Of these injuries, approximately 22% require a week or more before returning to full participation, and roughly 4% require surgery. The potential for injury and subsequent extensive physical rehabilitation comes with the territory when participating in athletics. However, what is often overlooked, is the fact that recovery from injury includes a significant psychological component in addition to the physical rehabilitation.



“However, what is often overlooked, is the fact that recovery from injury includes a significant psychological component in addition to the physical rehabilitation.”

Upon initial injury, the need to regain their physical abilities and skills is obvious, but many athletes are unaware that recovery from injury includes a psychological component. The need for mental recovery represents a great opportunity for sport psychology professionals. As part of the larger sports medicine team, sport psychology professionals can positively influence an athlete's rehabilitation experience and overall rehabilitation outcomes. The remainder of this article will provide a conceptualization of mental recovery within sports, followed by examples of psychological skills training with an injured athlete.

experience. Examples of each component include injury severity and coping skills (personal factors), level of competition and social support (situational factors), adherence to rehabilitation and risk taking behavior (behavioral responses), and fear of the unknown and positive attitude (emotional responses). One of the strengths of this model is that it accounts for the ongoing nature of the psychological recovery following injury, at the time of surgery, throughout the rehabilitation process, and even into the “return to play” phase of recovery. This further illustrates the importance of recovering psychologically in addition to physically.

Research has indicated that the fear of re-injury is one of the psychological factors that negatively influences return to sport following injury (Heil, 1993; Kvist, Ek, Sporrstedt, & Good, 2005; Podlog & Eklund, 2005; Poglog, Dimmock & Miller, 2011). Fear, regardless of the source, has the potential to be a powerful motivator for or against an action. In the studies mentioned above, fear hindered athletes in their attempt to return to sport at any level, and had even greater negative consequences on their return to competitive sport. In addition to the stress that occurs with fear of re-injury, injuries themselves are stressful and anxiety provoking (Monsma, 2008). Thus, between the injury itself and the fear of re-injury, a sport psychology consultant has two very distinct opportunities to intervene on behalf of an injured athlete.

Integrated Model of Response to Sport Injury

Wiese-Bjornstal, Smith, Shaffer, and Morrey (1998) created a model that presents a comprehensive approach to athletic injury. This model illustrates the interaction of cognitive appraisals (made up of personal factors and situational factors), behavioral responses, and emotional responses that influence the psychosocial and physical outcomes of the recovery

MENTAL SKILLS WITH AN INJURED ATHLETE

Psychological Skills Training During Recovery

Recognizing and controlling different levels of stress, anxiety and fear can be achieved through various techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) and rhythmic breathing that target an athlete's level of arousal. I have used them with injured athletes in order to promote relaxation and thus reduce their levels of stress and anxiety. These techniques have been particularly useful as those athletes reported a state of greater calm, awareness, comfort, and a sense of control. I have also observed increased gains in their range of motion as well as reductions in muscle tension and pain when implementing these techniques. A brief explanation of each method is offered below.

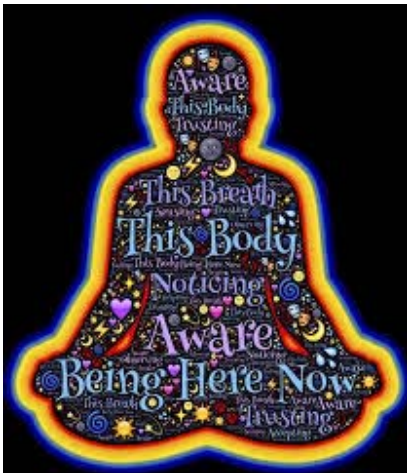
PMR is useful for general relaxation as well as reducing muscle tension. It involves the sequential contraction and relaxation of various muscle groups (K. Henschen, personal communication, October 15, 2006). An athlete may start at the feet (or head/face) and work their way up (or down) through different regions of the body. Each contraction is performed bilaterally, is held for approximately three to five seconds, and is followed by a three-to-five second period in which the muscles are allowed to fully relax. The same region or muscle group is then contracted a second time, followed by another complete relaxation before moving on to the next area of the body. Throughout the exercise, an athlete is encouraged to observe the sensations present during each muscle contraction as well as during moments of relaxation.

Rhythmic breathing utilizes a counting pattern in conjunction with an individual's inhalation and exhalation to promote relaxation and general awareness (K. Henschen, personal communication, October 29, 2006). An athlete inhales for a 4-count and then exhales for a 4-count. One variation of this activity includes a 4-count hold between the inhale and exhale, creating a rhythm of 4-count inhale, 4-count hold, 4-count exhale. The rate of counting and breathing can vary, determined by the athlete performing the exercise. In addition to specific relaxation techniques, I have found it useful to

openly discuss the fears of an athlete, particularly during the "return to play" phase of recovery when the fear of re-injury can be the greatest. Suggestions for managing fears include: (a) recognizing and acknowledging the presence of fear, (b) understanding that fear is a normal emotion, (c) accepting the fearful state, and (d) positively reframing the fear provoking situation.

As students and practitioners of sport psychology, we recognize the connection between the mind and body. Subsequently, we aim to assist athletes in their attempts toward many different goals, which may include an enhanced sport experience and improved competitive outcomes. Much of our work targets the competing athlete. However, our field has applied its knowledge and skills to other performance domains, and thus there are opportunities to apply them to an athlete recovering from injury. The form of performance (rehabilitation) is changed, and the arena in which they perform (athletic training room or physical therapy office) is different, but the relationship between psychological perceptions and approaches, and their performance experience and outcomes still exists. Simply put, the mind influences the body and its physical performance regardless of an individual's status as a healthy competing athlete or an athlete recovering from injury. Our ability to apply mental skills training to this setting allows us to fully serve the athletes with whom we work regardless of their participation status. This also provides us with an opportunity to contribute to the sports medicine team, which affords an injured athlete a more comprehensive and holistic experience when recovering from injury.

"The form of performance is changed, and the arena they perform in is different, but the relationship between psychological perceptions and approaches, and their performance experience and outcomes still exists"



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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

As editors of the 2016 PEM Newsletter, we first want to thank the students who have contributed their experience to this year's first newsletter. Additionally, we would like to thank all who have made the final product possible. This includes the AASP Executive Board and Student Representatives, former PEM Initiative Leaders, and the professionals in the sport and performance psychology field who so willingly participated in our interviews. The PEM Newsletter would not have been possible without their helpful contributions and support. We would also like to send special thanks to the AASP Student Representatives for giving us the opportunity to serve as PEM editors as well as make changes to the newsletter format from previous years. We decided to increase publication from one to two newsletters this year, in August and December, respectively. The newsletter also completely becomes an online publication this year. This has been a learning experience for us, from the initial planning and recruitment to the process of editing and newsletter design.

We would also like to reinforce the thoughts shared by the past editing teams. The current team of editors also believes that the PEM Newsletter is an excellent student publication that can increase student, practitioner, and public awareness of the applied techniques in sport, exercise, and performance psychology. We also believe that it is crucial for AASP student members to have a venue through which they may publish articles in this field. As PEM editors, we have tried to create a best product that reaches these goals and serves the diverse interests in our field. Looking to the future, we invite AASP student members to become more involved in the PEM Newsletter and to help this initiative grow!

Please email any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the newsletter to PEM Committee Co-Chairs Alan Chu and/or Joanna Foss as we continue to improve. Newsletters from previous years are available on the PEM Initiative Website: <http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/>

Thank you,
—The 2016 AASP PEM Team



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