PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF STRESS IN COACHES

Janja Lavbič, master of kinesiology, Institute for medicine and sports

Slovenia, 25 April 2021

INTRODUCTION

- *Introduce Slovenian coaches expreience with stress;*
- *Identifing stressors and stress response;*
- *Present coping techiques with stress.*

THE MAIN PROBLEMS

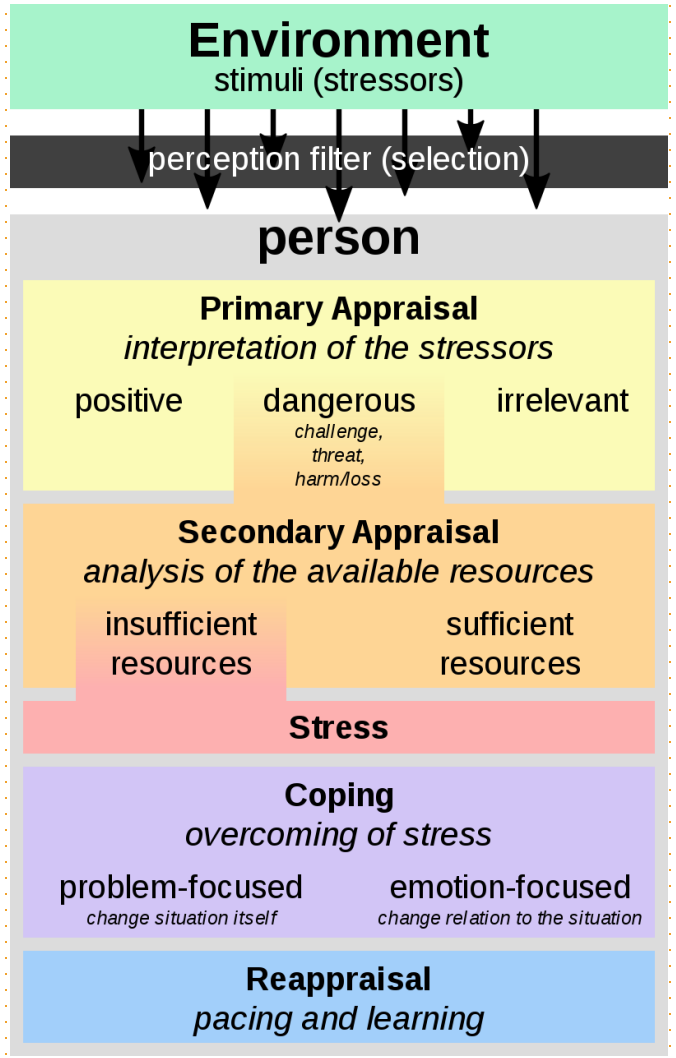
- „Problem solvers“ and not those who can succumb to stress (Frey, 2007)
- Stressful nature of sports coaching (Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf in Chung, 2002);

- Coach-athlete relationship appears to be central aspect of coaching→additional roles to perform;

(mentor, educator, friend, organizer, counsellor, (Lyle, 2002);

- Coaches are judged by success of their athletes (Gould, idr. 2002).

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STRES AND STRESSORS



LAZARUS THEORY

STRES→ *" set of emotional, body reactions in behaviour as a result of evaluating events that are considered to be at risk to the individual".*

STRESSOR→ *stimulus from the environment.*

METHODS - SAMPLE

	MEN	WOMEN	TOGETHER
INDIVIDUAL SPORTS	73	14	87

WORK EXPERIENCE	TOGETHER
Up to 5 years	10
5 to 15 years	22
15 to 25 years	22
More than 25 years	33
TOGETHER	87

METHODS – ACCESSORIES AND MATERIALS USED

- Questionnaire
- Cooperation with the Olympic Committee
- Collecting data from 20th March 2020 to 5th June 2020

Stress category	Stressor	average ± standard deviation
Pressures and high expectations	*Pressures and high expectations from the coach*	3.51 ± 1.01
	Pressures and high expectations from the athlete	3.21 ± 1.10
Competitive environment	*Preparation for major and important competitions*	3.44 ± 0.97
	Unforeseen events in competitions such as sports injuries	3.56 ± 1.08
	Inadequate nutrition in competitions	3.03 ± 1.21
Athlete	*Poor athlete compliance with the sports programme*	3.45 ± 1.06
	Lack of motivation in athletes	3.60 ± 0.97
	Coach's responsibility for the competition result	3.60± 1.07
	Coach's responsibility for the athlete's safety	3.63 ± 1.27
	Athlete's motivational guidance	3.46 ± 1.19
	Influence on the athlete's personal development - education	3.08 ± 1.18
	Working with an athlete whose injury is a potential barrier to competition	3.45 ± 1.31
Finances	*Lack of funding to optimise the training process*	3.86 ± 1.08
	Lack of funding for competitions	3.64 ± 1.23
	Coach's personal income	3.38 ± 1.25
Social environment	*Lack of time for family*	3.93 ± 1.09
	Lack of free time	3.47 ± 1.27
	Coach's work not being appreciated enough by the surrounding community (media, fans, athletes' parents, etc.)	3.41 ± 1.35

RESULTS

The most common and powerful stressors for coaches of elite athletes

Stress category	Stressors	%
Organizational environment	*Conflicts within the sports association*	56.3
	Lack of cohesion within the sports association	56.3
Pressures and high expectations	*Pressures and high expectations from the parents of the athletes*	65.5
Competitive environment	*Unforeseen events at competitions as technical shortcomings*	56.3
	Timing of competitions	63.2
	Inadequate living conditions	54
	External factors (e.g. weather conditions)	54
	Unclear qualification rules	50.6
Athlete	*Assistance in the development of the athlete's social competences*	57.5
	Working with the athlete at a late stage of rehabilitation	60.6
	Athlete-coach conflicts	64.4
Social environment	*Absence of a 'financial reward' for coaches in the event of high placements*	61.7

RESULTS

Experiencing and effects of positive and negative stress

- **58.6 %** of the coaches answered that stress can be a stimulus and an additional motivator, **41.4 %** of them answered opposite.
- **Positive stresors:**

❑competitive success (19.5%)

❑being underestimated by their surroundings and the competitiveness of the opposing team (4.6%)

RESULTS

Experiencing and effects of positive and negative stress

Stress response to positive stress:

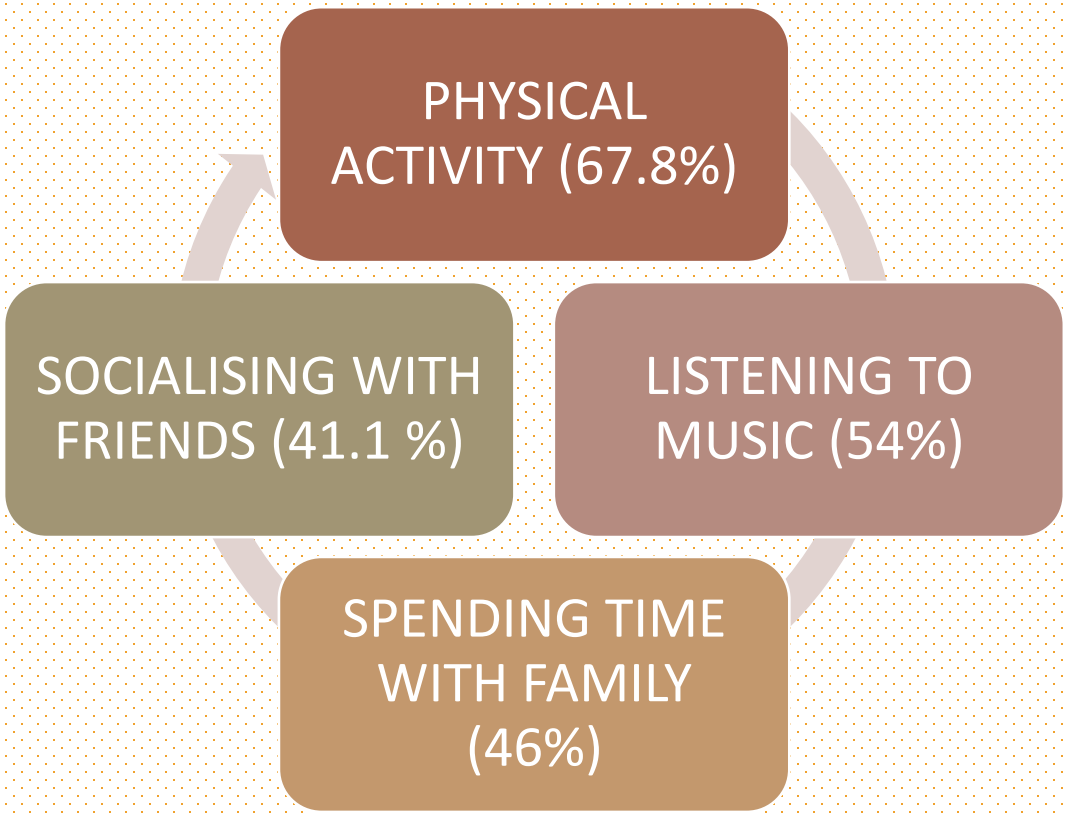
- **Behaviourally** - creating a positive and motivating atmosphere in the team (75.9%); feeling an increased amount of energy in themselves (54%);
- **Psychologicaly** - feeling more satisfaction (63.2%).

Stress response to negative stress:

- **Behaviourally** - increased sleep deprivation (50.6%);
- **Psychologicaly** - increased anxiety (63.2%), dissatisfaction (67.8%) and higher levels of irritability (55.2%),
- **Physicaly** - increased physical fatigue (57.5%).

RESULTS

Techniques for coping with stressful situations



It turned out that more than half of the coaches who took part in our research (67.8%) had been elite athletes in the past and 96.6% of these coaches indicated that their own participation in elite sport had helped them to cope more easily with stress in their coaching role.

DISCUSSION

- **Burnout** is more likely in highly motivated individuals with high goals and expectations (Pines, 1993);
- **Strategies to relieve stress:** social suport→ visit sport's psychologist→visualization behavioral strategies→ work-outs, reading, massaging (Frey, 2007).

- Indicating communication skills, developing psychological skills might be important in helping coaches function (Olusoga, idr. 2009).

- *Future research to consider coaching stress in different phases of the competition cycle, different sports disciplines*

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ATTENTION…