

Stress a
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Stress In Athletics In the Journal article by Mark H.

Anshel, entitled Qualitative Validation of a Model For Coping With Acute Stress In Sports. Explains how stress affects athletes, and how they can go about to deal with the problem, or cope with the problem. The author breaks this down into four categories. First, they want to perceive a stimulus or experiencing an event, secondly, appraising that event as stressful, thirdly, using either approach or avoidance coping strategies each consisting of either cognitive or behavioral strategies, and finally enacting post-coping activity that consists of either remaining on task, reappraising the stressful situation, examining the effectiveness of the coping strategy, or disengaging from further sport participation. Stress itself is a widely studied characteristic; it is defined as an interaction between an individual and the surrounding environment.

Most research on stress is just new, but has been a topic for the last 20 years. But most new studies on stress have to deal more with the coping process. "Coping is the person's conscious attempt at reducing or managing the demands of a stressful event or expanding the person's resources to deal with the event (Anshel, 2001)." Previous research by Gottlieb (1997) explained "how coping strategies related to acute forms of stress differ from chronic stress, and that many contexts of chronic stress do not end themselves to an event-centered strategy of measuring coping (pg, 12)."

While coping research is a more popular study, qualitative research is disregarded. With knowing qualitative research on stress, you can discover the factors causing coping efforts. In one study done by Patton (1990), he took the responses of college athletes about drug behavior among

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teammates, and why these student athletes would take them (competitive, control weight, overcome boredom) and used these statements to compare to original interview transcripts.

There are many studies and views on this topic and with these studies comes new hypothesis and new information, which can be used to explain a person's reaction to a stressful situation in a sport. To prove their point, a simultaneously qualitative research study was used. A sport psychology consultant was sent to a Pro Rugby Team in Australia. He was to become the " mental skills coach" and stay with the team for 2.

5 years. He would interview 28 players 3 days of the previous game. Each athlete was interviewed by disclosing two stressful events that happened in the previous game. The data was recorded on 4 tables. The dependant variable was how much stress occurred in the game and the independent variable was how well the coped with that stress. The interview averaged 43 minutes, and " the athletes were asked questions that identified their thoughts and actions immediately following the stressful event (Anshel, 2001).

" Only 5 questions were thought to be necessary, each had two elaboration and probing questions, which would ask for clarification, examples, or other information. 1. To identify two game stressors; " reflect back to a particular game and think of a situation that was stressful? And then rate them on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest, 10 the highest). 2. To assess the appraisal. 3. To identify use of coping strategies.

4. To assess the post-coping process. 5.

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If a coping strategy was used, was it effective or ineffective? The results of this study showed, in Table 1, was the athletes thought of acute stress, this was ranked (2 questions, 56 stressors total) and showed which event the majority thought was more stressful. While Table 2 tested Lazarus and Folkman (1984) appraisal model of 3 categories, harm/loss, Threat and Challenge. The results were harm/loss (34% appraisal), Threat (48% appraisal) and Challenge (18% appraisal). Table 3, studied coping strategies split into categories, approach and avoidance, each including cognitive and behavioral sub-categories.

The last table, or Table 4, asked the athletes to answer questions after they had implemented the coping strategy. They discovered that the most stressful objective (55%) was staying on task. They believed that coping in sports consists of a group of thoughts, emotions and actions that can be described by the stressed person. Basically what happens to the individual in a game, win/loss, injury can cause acute stress.

They also believe that coping is a conscious process, not an automatic