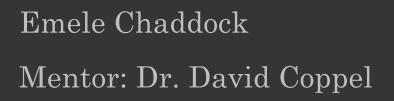
# Assessing Athletic Psychological Readiness When Returning to Sport





## Background

- A lot of research on psychological factors on injury & recovery, not a lot on psychological readiness
- Psychological measures / testing for readiness to returning to sports after major injury
- Tackling a different concept: 'unreadiness'
- What would we want to know that would stop us from letting someone return
- Link between the psychological factors and their importance when returning to sports
- Developed a structured interview and then a scale based Questionnaire
- Questionnaire developed around 'red flags'
  - Qualities that predict negative return to play

### Importance and Applications

- Psychological readiness is important and not talked about enough
- Components of psychological readiness are not often explored by trainers or doctors
- All major physical injuries to athletes are also psychological injures
- Have a clinical sport psychologist can play a major role on the sports medicine team
- May be something used to alert trainers and physicians
- College and pros trend: mental health issues and psychological factors in athletes are becoming more and more acknowledged and a concern
- Psychological readiness to return to work or other activates
  - Interview and scale may be implicated for individuals with non-sports related injures (i.e. surgeries)

## Research & Difficulties

- Scale question example: "I feel as if I lost myself during recovery"
  - Correlated interview question: "During the recovery process, did you feel like you lost any part of yourself in regards to your identity as an athlete?"
- Major model: Podlogs et. Al Qualitative Research Study
  - Touched upon topics we developed as our 'red flags' e.g. fear, anxiety, confidence
- Rephrasing questions (reverse) & role playing
- Many factors associated with positive return to play outcomes, none with negative outcomes
- Context of adolescence (developing brain), high school, college (drinking, parties), or pros
- Athletes can easily produce 'white flags' saying they're ok
- If we find one red flag, we don't know if they are 'no-go' signs they are just areas we use to probe further into the topic and if it can become problematic

Podlog, Leslie & Heil, John & Podlog (née Schulte, Stefanie. (2014). Psychosocial Factors in Sports Injury Rehabilitation and Return to Play. Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Clinics of North America. 10.1016/j.pmr.2014.06.011.

"cognitive and affective factors influence behavioral responses (e.g. adherance, behavioral coping, social support seeking behaviors,) which in turn impact physical and psychological social recovery outcomes" -Podlog

#### **Personal Connections**

- Former D1 college athlete and have had personal experience with major injuries and recovery
- Have seen teammates mentally struggle with returning to play after a major injury
- Personal experience with a sport psychologist was extremely helpful in my recovery
- Was not asked anything like this during my rehab
- Want to help spread awareness and spark a discussion

### Plans For The Future

- Pilot the questionnaire to see if it has clinical or predicted value in athletes
- Using the interview on athletes to probe the importance of these issues
- Work with Dr. Coppel to produce a program to respond to the red flags
- Work in progress
  - Create different versions, tackle different aspects (culture, gender, sport)
- Explore how people respond based on their culture
  - Subcultures: Sports culture, gender influences (i.e. males more dishonest opposed to females), ethnic or cultural influences (i.e. how they perceive pain or emotional issues)

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