Developing Resilience: From Theory to Practice

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About Today’s Webinar

Today’s webinar is being produced jointly by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) and Human Kinetics.

It is scheduled to last for about an hour, and will be recorded and made available for download and playback.

You will receive an email containing a link to the recording when it is available.

All microphones and phone lines are muted so we ask that you submit questions by typing them into the question box located in the lower right corner of your screen and click “send.”

We’ll collect any questions sent throughout the presentation and we will answer as many as possible during a Q&A segment at the end.
About Today’s Presenters

**Mustafa Sarkar** is a Research Fellow at the University of Gloucestershire. His research focuses on the psychology of sporting excellence in the areas of resilience in high achievers and its assessment in sport performers. Mustafa has worked closely with organisations on creating environments that enable high performance including WorldSkills UK, Loughborough Sport, British Triathlon, the England and Wales Cricket Board, the National Health Service, and the Youth Sport Trust.

**Paul Morgan** is Head of Sport at Buckinghamshire New University. His research focuses on the psychology of sporting excellence in the area of team resilience in elite sport. Paul has collaborated with a number of Olympic, international, and professional teams during his resilience research. He has also worked closely with various rugby clubs in the UK to develop team resilience and is a member of the UCFB College of Football Business Advisory Board.
Structure of the Webinar

- What is resilience?
- A resilience training program for aspiring elite athletes and teams
- Implementing resilience training in practice
“Resilience is the hottest new topic in psychology, medicine and social sciences. Resilience is a critical skill. In a stressful, fast-changing world it can help inoculate against mental illness while boosting achievement levels and productivity” (p. 35)

Arsenal repeat 'special resilience' at West Brom according to manager Arsène Wenger

Arsène Wenger claims Arsenal's “special resilience” will be crucial in their attempt to sustain a title challenge.
Building resilience into business will benefit people and the bottom line.

On World Mental Health Day, Jayne Carrington looks at we look at how employers can help to tackle stress through progressive workplace practices.
US army spends $117m on soldiers' psychological resilience

A scheme to build the emotional resilience of American soldiers has been established as rates of suicide and depression rise.
“More than education, more than experience, more than training, a person’s level of resilience will determine who succeeds and fails. That’s true in the cancer ward, it’s true in the Olympics, and it’s true in the boardroom.” (p. 47)

What is Resilience?

- Resilience = ability to withstand pressure
- Resilience = relatively stable, healthy levels of functioning and performance following a potentially stressful event
- Resilience = process resulting from the interaction of an individual/team and their environment
- Resilience = preventative and proactive approach to managing stress

Resilience ≠ ‘Bouncing Back’

“Resilience is not about responding to a one time crisis. It’s not about rebounding from a setback. It’s about having the capacity to change before the case for change becomes desperately obvious.” (pp. 53-54)

What is Resilience?

- Resilience ≠ rare or special quality found only in certain extraordinary people/teams.
- Resilience ≠ fixed trait
- Resilience ≠ found exclusively within a person
- Resilience ≠ absence/suppression of emotions
A Resilience Training Program

- Resilience (Individual/Team)
  - Psychosocial Qualities
- Interaction
- Resilience (Situation)
  - Facilitative Environment

- Resilience (Process)
  - Challenge Mindset
Psychosocial Qualities – Personal Resilience

- Develop a positive personality
- Optimize motivation
- Strengthen confidence
- Maintain focus
- Recognize the availability of social support


Psychosocial Processes – Team Resilience

- Transformational leadership
- Shared team leadership
- Team learning
- Social identity
- Positive emotions

Mindset – It's how YOU choose to see it!
Challenge Mindset: Learning your ABCs

- A = Activating event
- B = Beliefs about activating event
- C = Consequences of those thoughts

- Work through series of activating events
  - Professional
  - Personal

- Explore how thought patterns influence outcomes.

- Goal is to have athletes and teams distinguish activating events, thoughts, and consequences
Facilitative Environment

Challenge

Support
Original research

What doesn’t kill me…: Adversity-related experiences are vital in the development of superior Olympic performance

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Recent research suggests that experiencing some adversity can have beneficial outcomes for human growth and development. The purpose of this paper was to explore the adversities that the world’s best athletes encounter and the perceived role that these experiences play in their psychological and performance development.

Design: A qualitative design was employed because detailed information of rich quality was required to better understand adversity-related experiences in the world’s best athletes.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 Olympic gold medalists from a variety of sports. Inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

Results: The findings indicate that the participants encountered a range of sport- and non-sport adversities that they considered were essential for winning their gold medals, including repeated non-selection, significant sporting failure, serious injury, political unrest, and the death of a family member. The participants described the role that these experiences played in their psychological and performance development, specifically focusing on their resultant trauma, motivation, and learning.

Conclusions: Adversity-related experiences were deemed to be vital in the psychological and performance development of Olympic champions. In the future, researchers should conduct more in-depth comparative studies of Olympic athletes’ adversity- and growth-related experiences, and draw on existing and alternative theoretical explanations of the growth-performance relationship. For professional practitioners, adversity-related experiences offer potential developmental opportunities if they are carefully and purposely harnessed.

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“I went to trials for the senior team in 1980, 1981, 1982, and 1983 and missed out every time. I can remember being pretty furious missing out one or two times when I thought I deserved to be in. But when I did get the opportunity, I was elevated into the [rowing] crew that had huge potential. There was probably a hell of pressure there, but it was my first time I’d been in a crew like this so everything was just an opportunity to be taken. If something wasn’t right, you’d work hard and listen. These guys had won world titles so it was my job to listen and to learn”.
The Benefits of Challenge – Elite Teams

“Because we’ve been through so many setbacks . . . it’s such a natural response whereas other teams who haven’t necessarily been through all these setbacks might panic and it’s like everything stops, whereas for us it’s like ‘OK, plan B, plan C.’”
'Failure week' at top girls' school to build resilience

By Judith Burns
Education reporter, BBC News

A top girls' school is planning a "failure week" to teach pupils to embrace risk, build resilience and learn from their mistakes.

The emphasis will be on the value of having a go, rather than playing it safe and perhaps achieving less.

Pupils at Wimbledon High School will be asked how they feel when they fail.

The headmistress, Heather Hanbury, said she wanted to show "it is completely acceptable and completely normal not to succeed at times in life."

Ms Hanbury's pupils achieve some of the highest exam scores - but from Monday they will be invited to focus on failure.

There will be workshops, assemblies, and activities for the girls, with parents and tutors joining in with tales of their own failures.

There will be YouTube clips of famous and successful people who have failed along the way and moved on.

The emphasis will be discussions on the merits of failure and on the lessons to be learned from it.
Creating a failure-friendly Environment

FAIL FORWARD

We are changing the culture, feeling and understanding in the UK of failure by sharing stories, bringing people together and provoking conversation on failure as an important part of growth & learning.

JOIN US

http://www.failforward.co
Facilitative Environment: Practical Implications

- Such initiatives should be considered in relation to an individual’s/team’s psychosocial development
- Ensure activities are suitably debriefed to fully realize their benefits
- Provide opportunity, encouragement, and support for experimentation and behaviour change over time
Implementing Resilience Training in Practice

- Holding open and frank discussions about resilience
- A comprehensive resilience training program needs to cover all three areas
- All areas of the program should be addressed collectively rather than in isolation of one another
- Importance of having a recognized place in a team
- Commitment from all layers of the organization
“Like our physical fitness, I believe that psychological resilience development can become not just something we in the Army “do”, but rather a critical component of our culture that will be integrated throughout our community to develop better soldiers”. (p. 2)


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Thank you for joining us

Thank you to everyone for joining us today and thanks also to Mustafa and Paul for what I’m sure you will agree was a fascinating and informative presentation.

Please take a few moments when your webinar window closes to complete a short survey on today’s webinar – we appreciate your feedback as it helps us continually improve our webinars.

We will email everyone a link to the recording of today’s presentation, so you can view it yourself or pass it along to friends or colleagues.

Thank you again for your participation today and I look forward to speaking to you again at the next BASES webinar.