

✦ TRUESPORT TALKS

Mental Wellness and the Student-Athlete





The Invisible Opponent: Contending for Student-Athlete Wellbeing

Lightning Round

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Invisible Opponents?

How do these invisible opponents negatively impact student athlete wellbeing?



Culture and Student Athlete Wellbeing

- To fully understand student athlete wellbeing, you must understand the cultural context in which it occurs

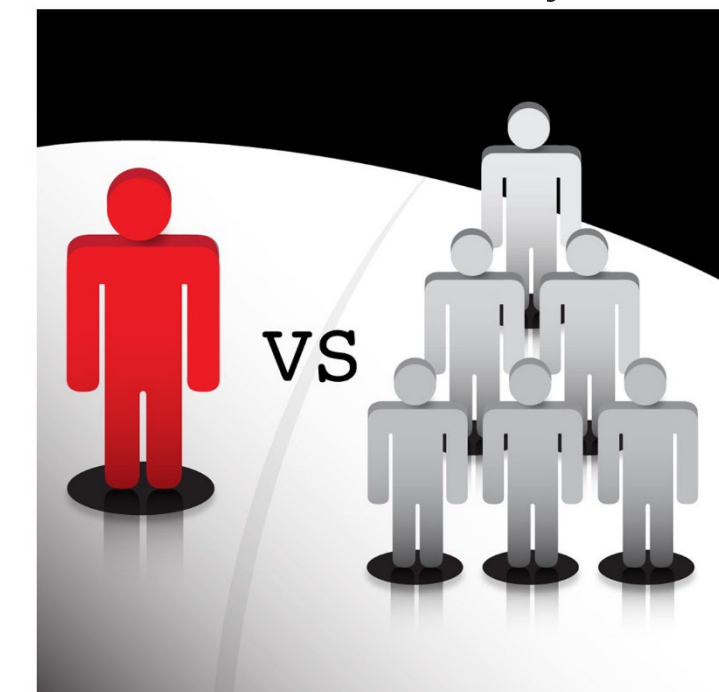




Sports Culture in the US



- **Achievement motivation** is defined as a person's efforts to master a task, achieve excellence, overcome obstacles, perform better than others, taking pride in exercising talent (Murray, 1938).
- **Individualistic vs. collectivistic culture ("ME" vs. "WE")**
 - Individualistic cultures are higher in achievement motivation
 - The United states ranks higher than any country in individualism
- United States is **high** in achievement motivation and places great value on the success of the individual
- The disconnect?
 - Sports culture and individual values often conflict





The Cognitive Triad and the Student Athlete

Student Athletes develop core beliefs in three areas

Myself

"I am

"

Others

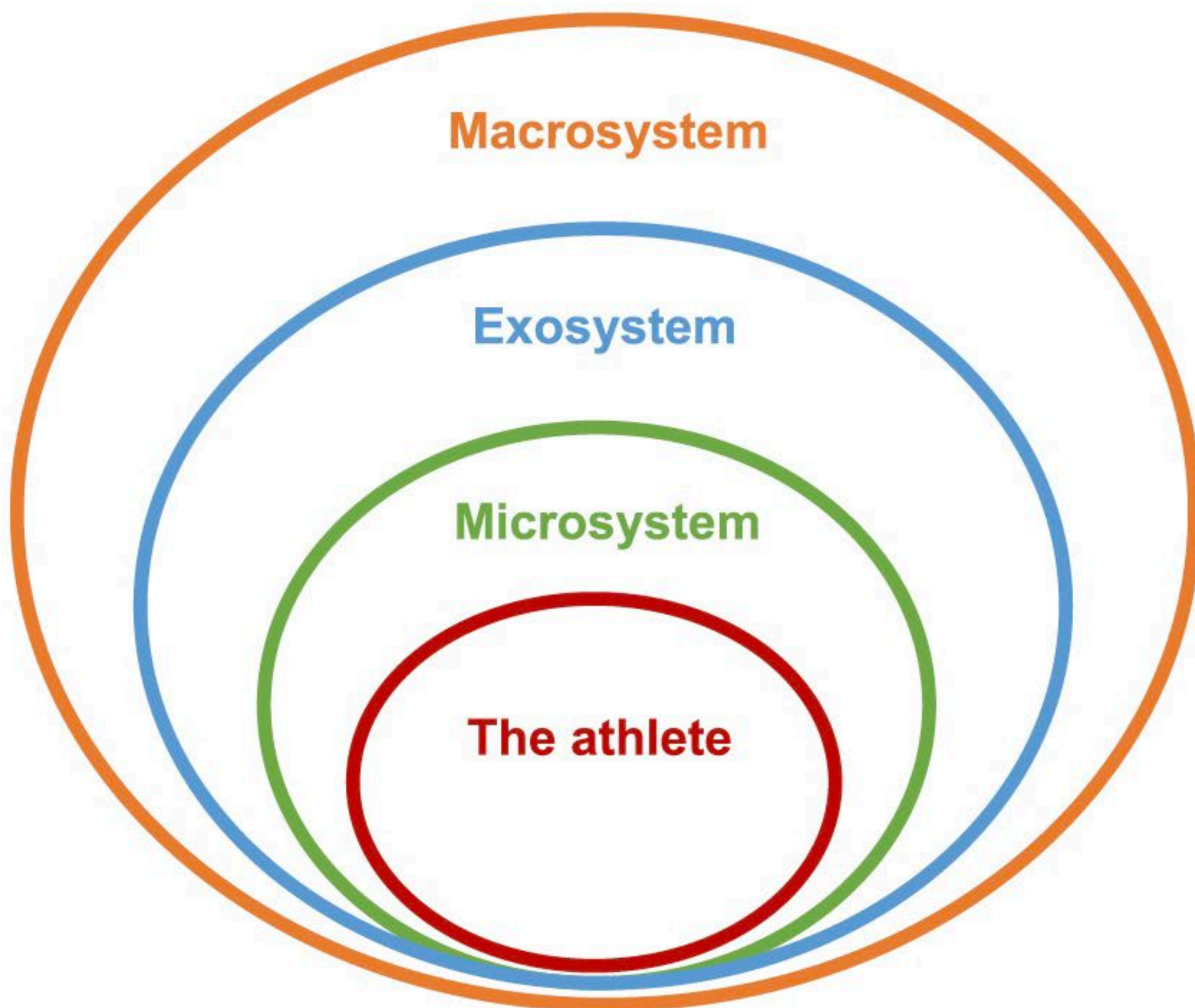
"Others are

"

The Future

"The Future is

"

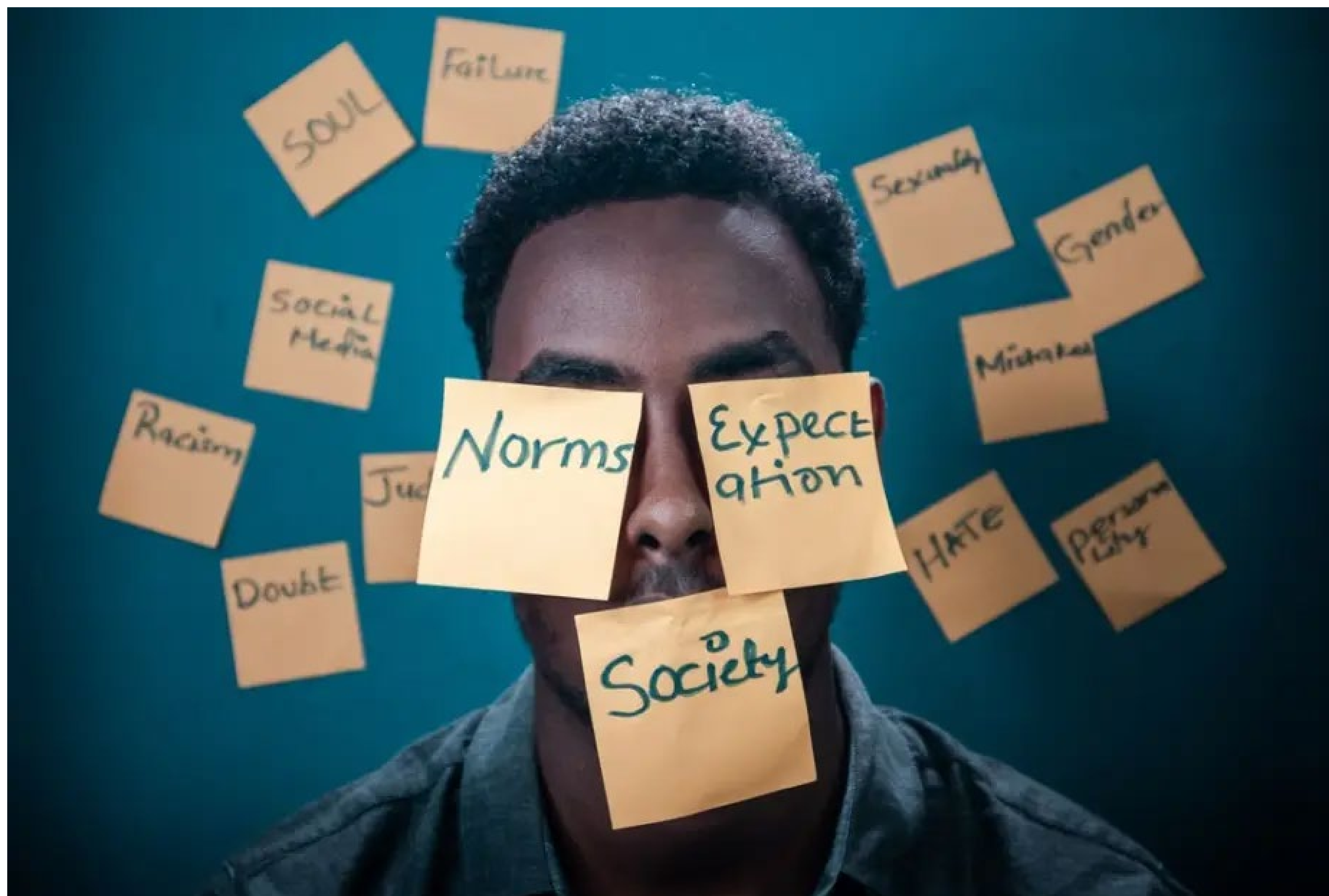


Macrosystem
(Inter)National sporting environment, public and social media

Exosystem
Individual sport

Microsystem
Coaches, parents/relatives, friends, high performance and sports medicine staff

The athlete
Coping skills, attitudes





Athletes and the Invisible Opponents

- Multiple studies indicate that elite athletes experience comparable rates of emotional disorders to the general population (Gouttebauge et al., 2019; Rice et al., 2019)
- Risk factors vary across stages of life for an athlete
 - Young athletes: Support from parents and coaches
 - Older athletes: Support from coaches, environmental and training demands







Making the Invisible Visible

- In order to effectively contend for student athlete mental wellness we need to highlight some of these risk factors
 1. Identity and the student athlete
 2. Preparing student athletes for the present and the future
 3. Overcoming adversity as it relates to injury
 4. Managing expectations and pressure

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Who am I? Identity Issues Faced in Sport

Melissa Streno, PsyD, CMPC

November 16, 2022



How is body image in sport connected to one's identity?

- Sport specialization is a risk factor for a negative body image
- Sport schedules and routines are enveloped in sport
- Support systems are composed of people connected to the sports routine



contribute to a negative and damaging perception of
body image



How is body image in sport connected to one's identity?

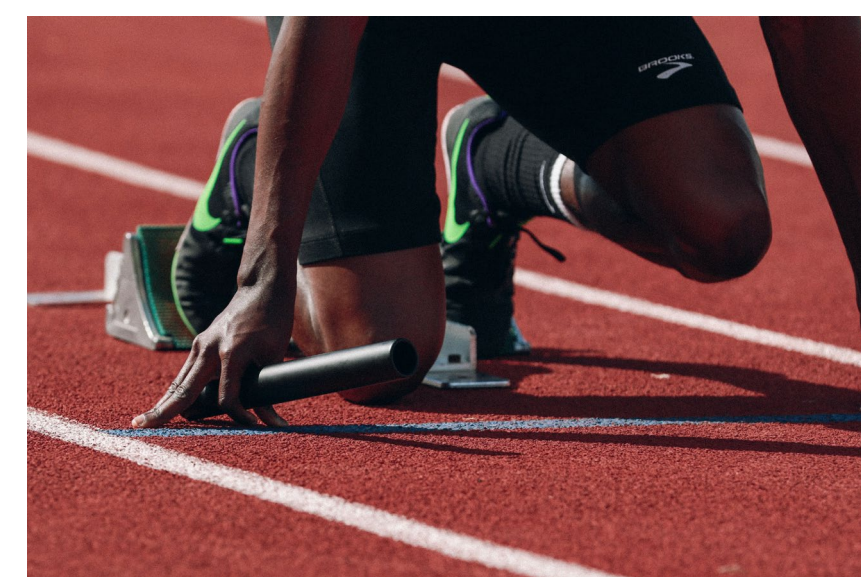
- Where do specific numbers play a role in an athlete's identity?
- Turton and colleagues' research (2017): "high athletic identity" contributes to eating-disorder behaviors
- Ron Thompson describes identity and a sense of attachment as "advantages" in sport because they can be "protective"





Take a minute to pause and reflect on the statements below:

- I feel _____ if I am unable to exercise.
- When I am done exercising, I feel _____.
- I am allowed to _____ after my workout is complete.
- I exercise because _____.





Body image IN and OUT of sport

- Athletes possess both an athletic and social body image (*Follo, 2007; Krane et al., 2001; Loland, 1999; Russell, 2004 in de Bruin et al., 2011*)
- To feel “OK,” athletes are trying to fit a mold of an ideal within their sport, while also fielding outside pressures of how to look from society





Perfectionism is pervasive in the sport world

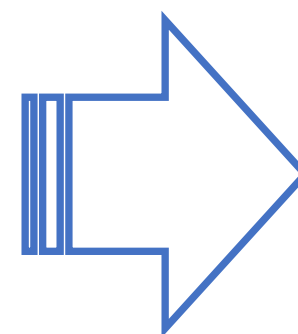
- If one is truly never satisfied or always looking to be better, enough, etc., can they truly connect to their authentic self and the values that drive them?
- An unhealthy relationship between diet and exercise transforms into a statement of character and identity
- Comparison tendencies: the pressure to do well and the attention surrounding body image, especially in comparison to others, combines for a detrimental merging





The impact of transitioning out of sport on one's identity

- High performing to suffering!? (*Stephan and Bilard, 2003*)
- “Loss of being socially significant” (*McPherson, 1980*)
- Who am I outside of sport?
- The impact of a physically changing body after sport on one's identity and body image perception can be significant
- Conversation about needed post-career support is not always the priority





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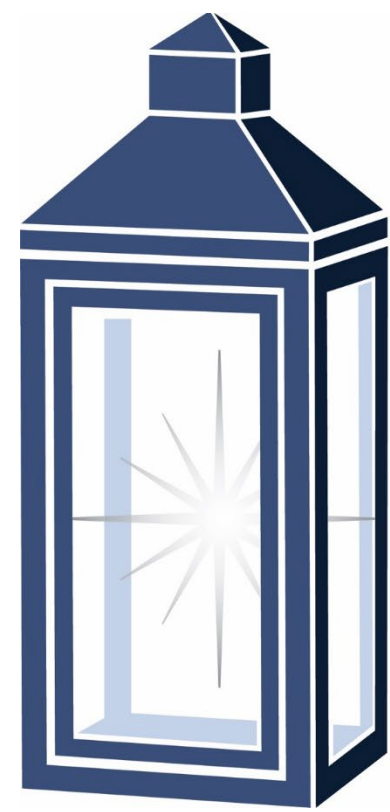
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All images obtained from unsplash.com



Thank you and stay in touch!



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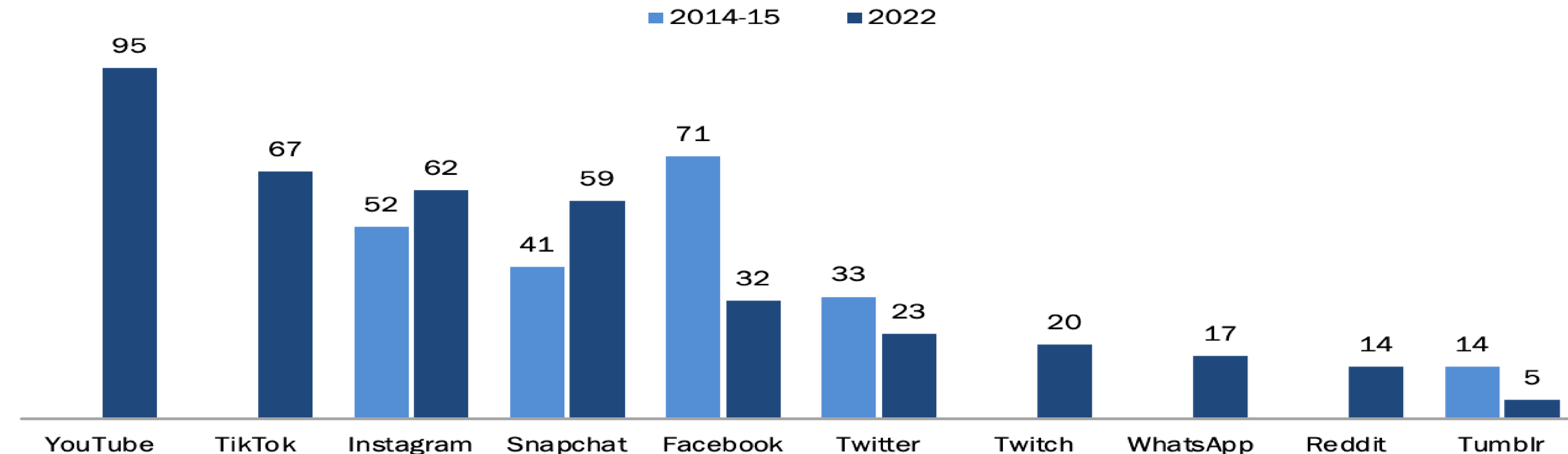
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Majority of teens use YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat; share of teens who use Facebook dropped sharply from 2014-15 to now

% of U.S. teens who say they ever use each of the following apps or sites



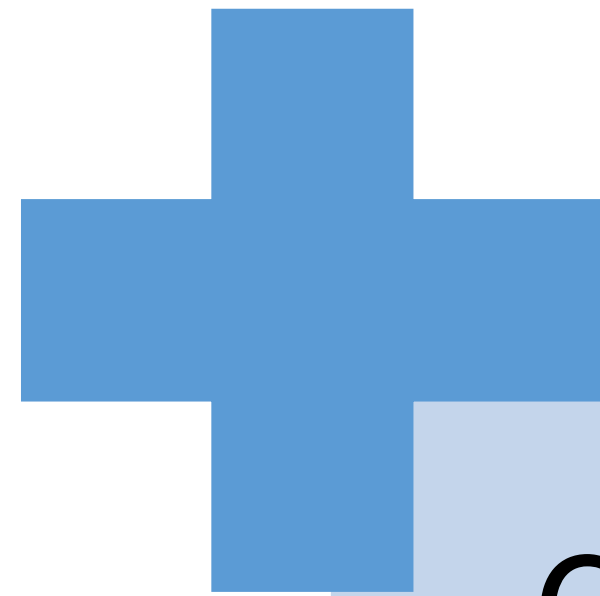
Note: Teens refer to those ages 13 to 17. Those who did not give an answer or gave other responses are not shown. The 2014-15 survey did not ask about YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitch and Reddit. TikTok debuted globally in 2018.

Source: Survey conducted April 14-May 4, 2022.

“Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022”



Pros and Cons of Student Athlete



- Connection to friends/family
- Recruitment/NIL
- Motivation/Stress Relief



- Control
- Coping
- Comparison



"The dilemma is that nobody has to say something, but that is precisely why somebody has to say something."

Ohio State University football star Harry Miller (@h_miller76) joins us to discuss his decision to step away from football to focus on mental health.



8:32 AM · Mar 21, 2022

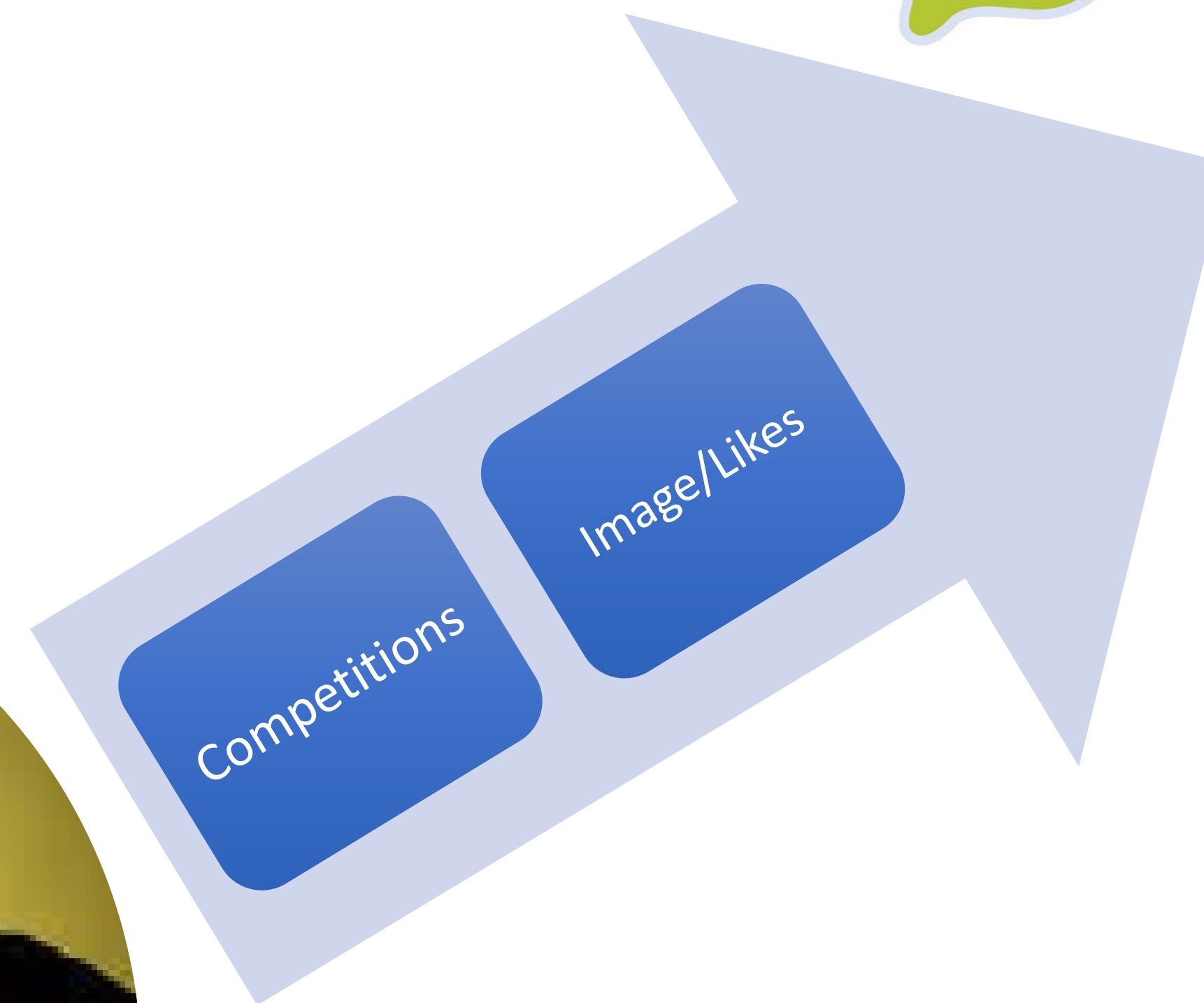
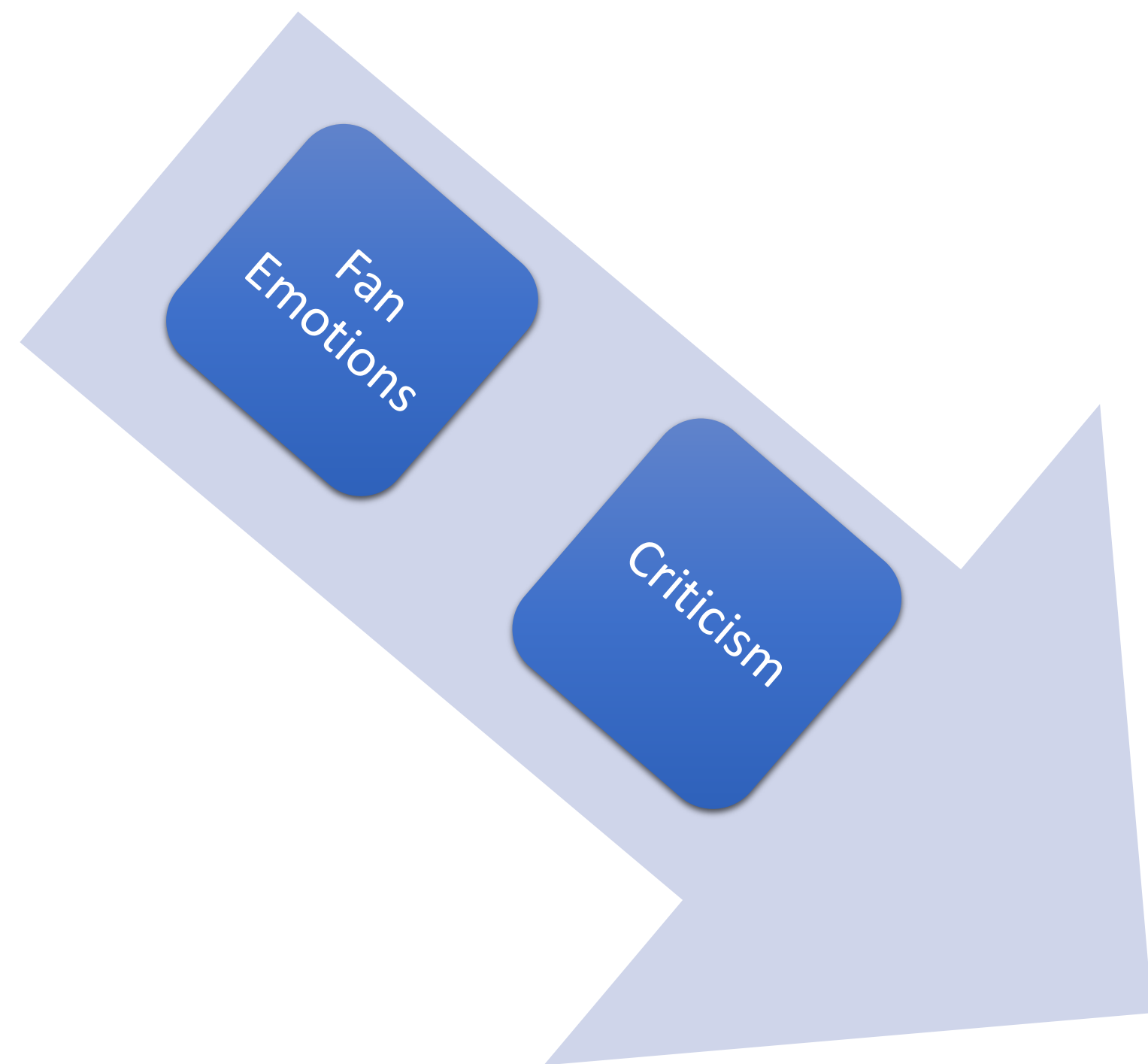
9.7K Reply Share

Read 292 replies

Ohio State's E.J. Liddell receives threats after Buckeyes' early exit from NCAA Tournament

"Honestly, what did I do to deserve this? I'm human," Liddell tweeted alongside screenshots of the messages.





Control In

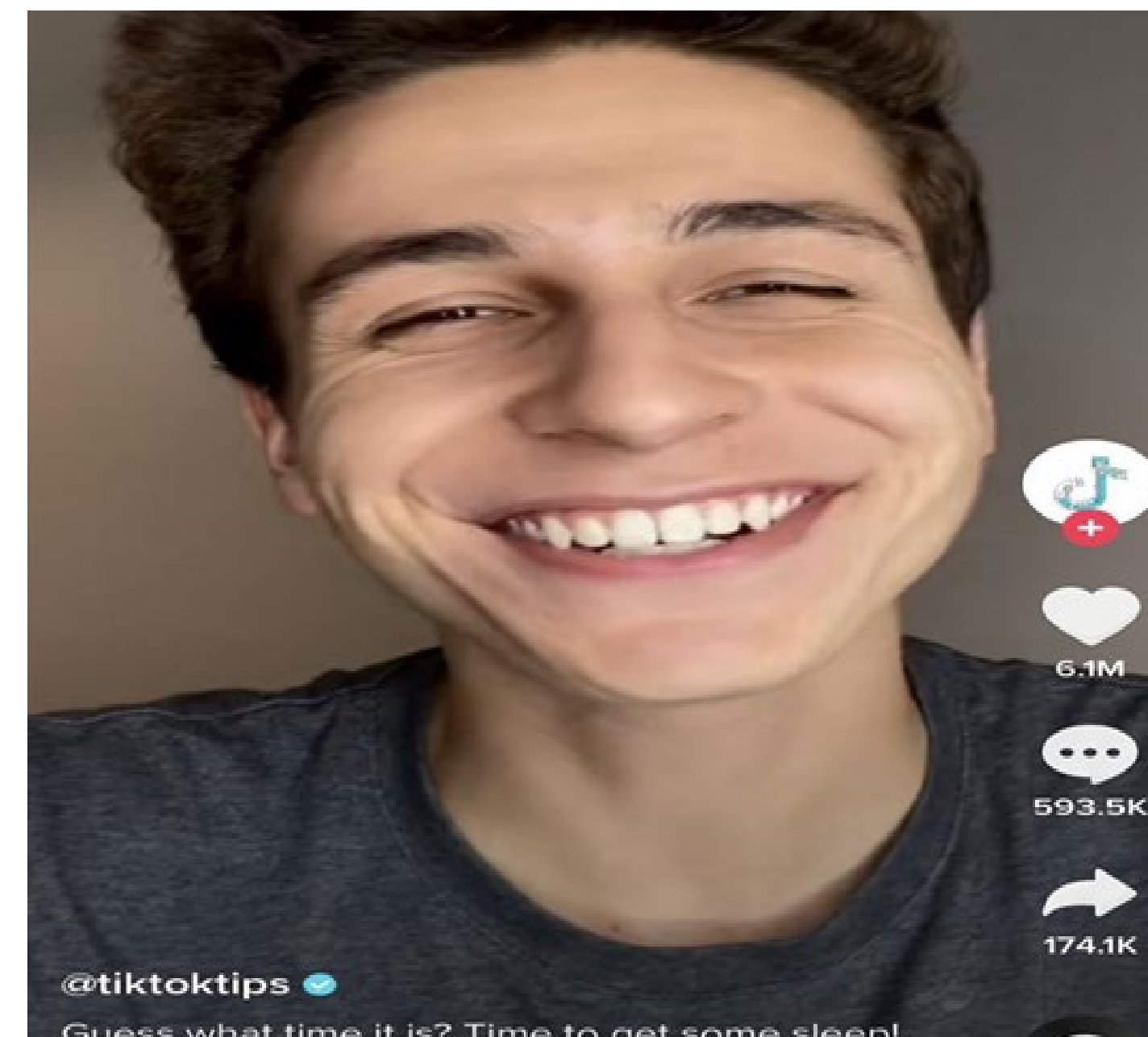
Control Out



Coping



Sleep



Emotion Regulation



Self-Esteem



Misrepresentation

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Ready, Set...Return?

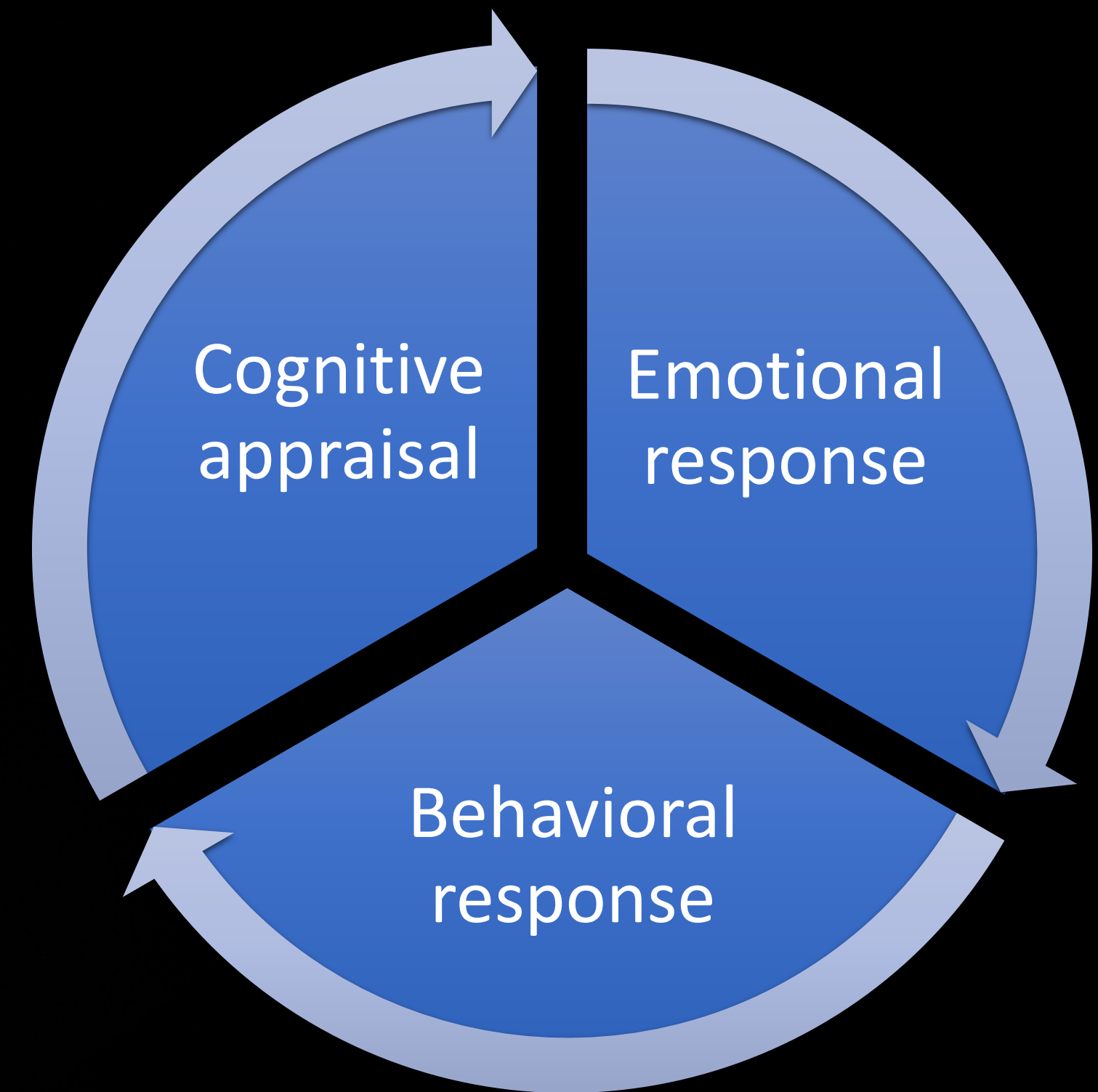
Erin Haugen, PhD, LP, CMPC

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Founder & CEO, Haugen Performance Consulting, PLLC



There are 2
types of
athletes...





**Initial stage:
Intense
emotions**



**Rehab:
Wide range of
experiences**





**RTS:
Fear of injury
& poor
performance**



Return...



...or retire?



Pressure & identity





Who am I?

**What if I
regret my
decision?**



**Who will I
let down?**

**What if I'm
not as
good?**



45%

Why?




Poor
psychological
readiness





↓ fear
↑ confidence
↑ self-efficacy
↑ motivation



**We need to
invest in
psychological
readiness**



Thank you!