



# MANAGING STRESS & PRESSURE

## THE COACH AS A PERFORMER

No factor is more critical to coach well-being than managing one's stress and pressure. Coach well-being matters as only those who help themselves can truly help others. Unfortunately, too few coaches prioritize themselves on a daily basis. Instead, they neglect their own needs and place personal well-being at the bottom of their list of priorities, and rather work tirelessly to develop their student-athletes and programs. Coaches can often deplete their batteries without pausing regularly to recharge them.

## DO YOU NEED TO KNOCKOUT BURNOUT?

Complete the following inventory.<sup>1</sup> Circle the answer that best represents how you feel right now about coaching. The higher your score, the greater your risk for burnout.

Question	Not at all how I feel	Somewhat how I feel	Exactly how I feel
I don't look forward to coaching as much as I used to.	1	2	3
I feel physically and emotionally worn out from coaching.	1	2	3
I don't feel that I can cope very well with the demands of coaching.	1	2	3
Athletes and others I work with don't show the same commitment level as I do.	1	2	3
I don't feel supporting in my coaching.	1	2	3
There is a lack of communication and trust where I coach.	1	2	3
I don't feel secure in my current coaching position.	1	2	3
I question if the amount of energy I spend on coaching is worth it.	1	2	3

# A.C.T. to Manage Stress & Pressure

A.C.T.	Strategies	Plans to A.C.T. to manage stress and pressure:
<p><b><u>A</u>cknowledge Stress</b></p> <p>Regularly engage in one or more of the following activities to complete the stress cycle and support more positive coping behaviors.</p>	<p><b>Ways to complete the stress cycle:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Physical activity</li> <li>· Deep breathing</li> <li>· Positive social interaction</li> <li>· Laughter</li> <li>· Crying</li> <li>· Affection</li> <li>· Creative expression</li> <li>· Get out of town (water, mountains, etc.)</li> <li>· Social support/mentorship</li> <li>· Intellectual stimulation</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>C</u>ommunicate</b></p> <p>Work to develop strong interpersonal, instructional, and group facilitation skills.</p>	<p><b>Interpersonal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Clear is kind</li> <li>· Ask for help/support</li> </ul> <p><b>Instructional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What to do (technical aspect)</li> <li>· How to do it (teaching-learning, modeling)</li> <li>· When to do it (timing)</li> </ul> <p><b>Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Re-focus on mastery</li> <li>· Debrief using lens of wins and “lessons”</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>T</u>ime Management</b></p> <p>Create priority lists, delegate work to others, and provide quality training to trusted assistants and colleagues to help you manage stress and pressure.</p>	<p><b>Utilize this framework to reflect on tasks and demands:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Important, urgent – do right away</li> <li>· Important, not urgent – do it later</li> <li>· Not important, urgent – let someone else do it</li> <li>· Not important, not urgent – remove the activity from your list</li> </ul>	

## References

1 Coach Wellness Checkup. Reprinted with permission, from W. Gilbert, 2017, *Coaching better every season: A year-round system for athlete development and program success* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 342.

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