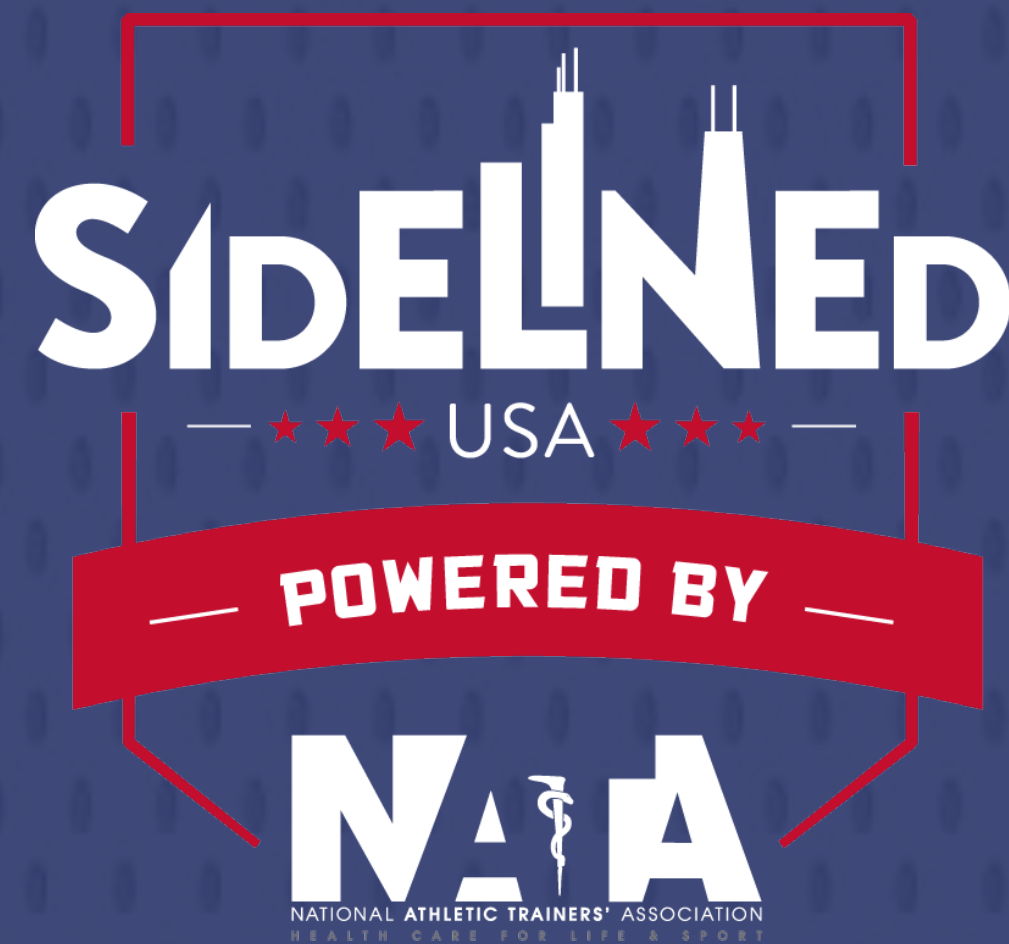


IMPROVED PATIENT CARE FOR PERMANENTLY-SIDELINED ATHLETES: **THE ATHLETIC TRAINER'S ROLE**

presented by



DISCLOSURES

JORDAN ANDERSON, MS, ATC

Vice-Chairman of the board of directors for Sidelined USA, a 501c3 nonprofit organization serving and advocating for permanently-sidelined athletes. I have no financial interest or gain related to Sidelined USA and its directives.

Learning Objectives

Objective 1: Identify common psychological struggles of permanently-sidelined athletes coping with the transition out of competition.

Objective 2: Explain the Stages of Grief & Transition as they relate to the permanently-sidelined athlete.

Objective 3: Summarize Brown & Hogg's Model of Healthy Adjustment Following Career-Ending Athletic Injury.

Objective 4: Differentiate how they can support the permanently-sidelined athlete in the six key areas of: grief and loss, identity crisis, mental health concerns, maintaining motivation, support network, and resources.



PERMANENTLY-SIDELINED ATHLETES

a definition

An athlete who can no longer participate in their sport due to career-ending injury, health condition, or concussion-risk



INJURIES/CONDITIONS THAT CAN *permanently sideline* ATHLETES



SERIOUS INJURIES

Repeat ACL tears
Knee injuries
Labrum tears
Repeat dislocations
Neck fractures
Chronic muscle tears
Hip injuries
Repeat ankle injuries
UCL ruptures
Spinal contusions
Back injuries
Nerve damage
Multiple pneumothoraces
Ligament damage
Repeat joint injuries



HEALTH CONDITIONS

Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (HCM)
Left-Ventricle Non-Compaction (LVNC)
Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Dysplasia (ARVD)
Congenital Heart Defect
Pericarditis
Valvular Heart Disease
Systematic Hypertension
Mitral Valve Prolapse
Long QT Syndrome
Cardiac Arrhythmia
Seizure disorders
Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome
Marfan Syndrome
Thoracic Outlet Syndrome
Cervical Stenosis
Chiari Malformation
Arteriovenous Malformation
Cervical anomalies
Lung/breathing conditions
Blood clotting disorders
Mental health disorders



TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Repeat concussion
Family decision to discontinue
Doctor recommendation to discontinue
Not cleared to play
Post Concussion Syndrome (PCS)
Subdural Hematoma
Epidural Hematoma
Intracranial Hematoma

RESEARCH REVEALS

Permanently-sidelined athletes experience a range of emotional responses including:

- ▶ GRIEF
- ▶ IDENTITY LOSS
- ▶ LONELINESS / ISOLATION
- ▶ ANXIETY AND FEAR
- ▶ LOSS OF CONFIDENCE
- ▶ LOSS OF MOTIVATION
- ▶ DEPRESSION
- ▶ ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE
- ▶ DISORDERED EATING
- ▶ SUICIDAL THOUGHTS



Sources: Alfermann et al., 2004; Lally 2007; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990, and Kleiber & Brock, 1992.

Covid-19 Effect

Since March 2020, millions of athletes have been sidelined. Away from their: teammates, friends, coaches, support, etc.

This has to be given special consideration. Many articles have discussed the effects of social isolation, many of these effects overlap which those experiencing permanent disqualification from sport.

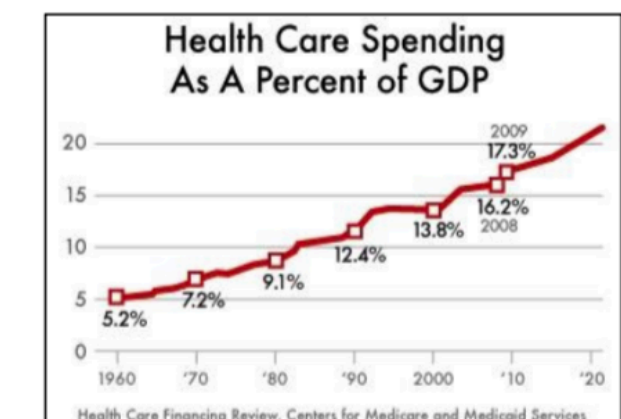
While this is not a permanent reality, the effects are similar and can be equally devastating and long lasting.

Mental Health Support

Suspending seasons and canceling competitions can cause significant grief, stress, anxiety, frustration, and sadness for an athlete. The psychological impact of COVID-19 on a competitive athlete is potentiated by the removal of his or her social support network and normal training routine, which for some is a critical component of managing depression or anxiety. Sports medicine providers should anticipate the need for additional mental health support for athletes, which could include ensuring regular check-ins with athletes, facilitating telehealth consultation with a sports psychologist, and encouraging maintenance of social interactions with family, friends, and teammates by phone or video chat.

Sources: Coronavirus Disease 2019: Considerations for the Competitive Athlete. Toresdahl and Asif, Guest editorial, sports health. May/June 2020

The negative psychosocial effects may result in additional health care utilization and spending in future years.



Source: The impact of school closures and sport cancellations on the health of Wisconsin adolescent athletes. McGuine et al.; Journal of Athletic Training, December. 2020

CONCLUSIONS

The mental health, physical activity, and HRQoL of US adolescents during the COVID-19-related school closures and sport cancellations varied depending on sex, grade level, type of sport participation, and level of poverty. Specifically, female athletes, athletes in grade 12, team sport participants, and athletes from areas with more % < 18 poverty described lower levels of physical activity, greater symptoms of anxiety and depression, and lower HRQoL in May 2020. Public health officials need to consider these differences when evaluating steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 across the United States. In

NCAA MENTAL WELL-BEING STUDY

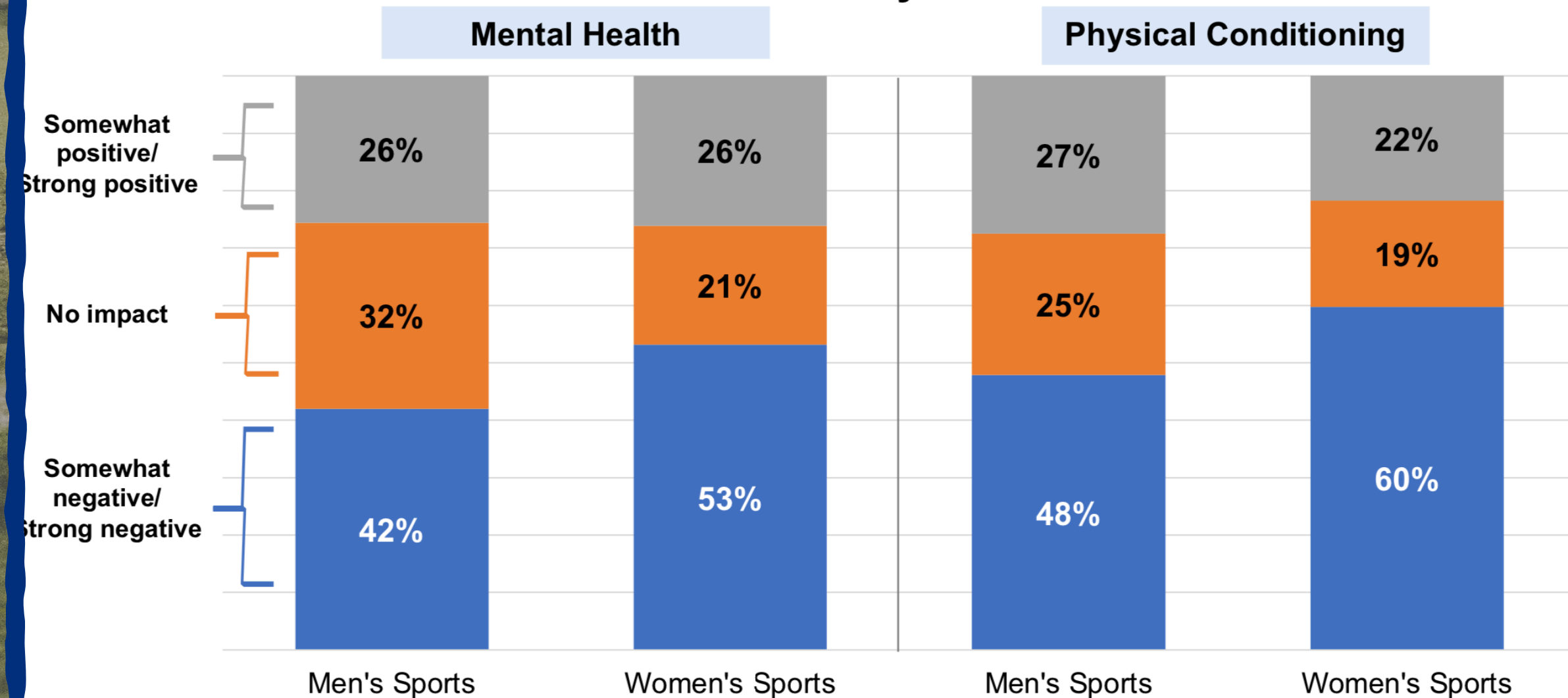
24,974 STUDENT-ATHLETES SURVEYED

FEELING REPORTED	MEN'S SPORT ATHLETES	WOMEN'S SPORT ATHLETES
OVERWHELMED	78%	93%
EXHAUSTED	66%	85%
ANXIETY	44%	72%
DEPRESSED	24%	38%

SIDELINED
USA

FALL
2020
STUDY

Impact of Time Away from College Sports in the Spring and Summer on Mental and Physical Health



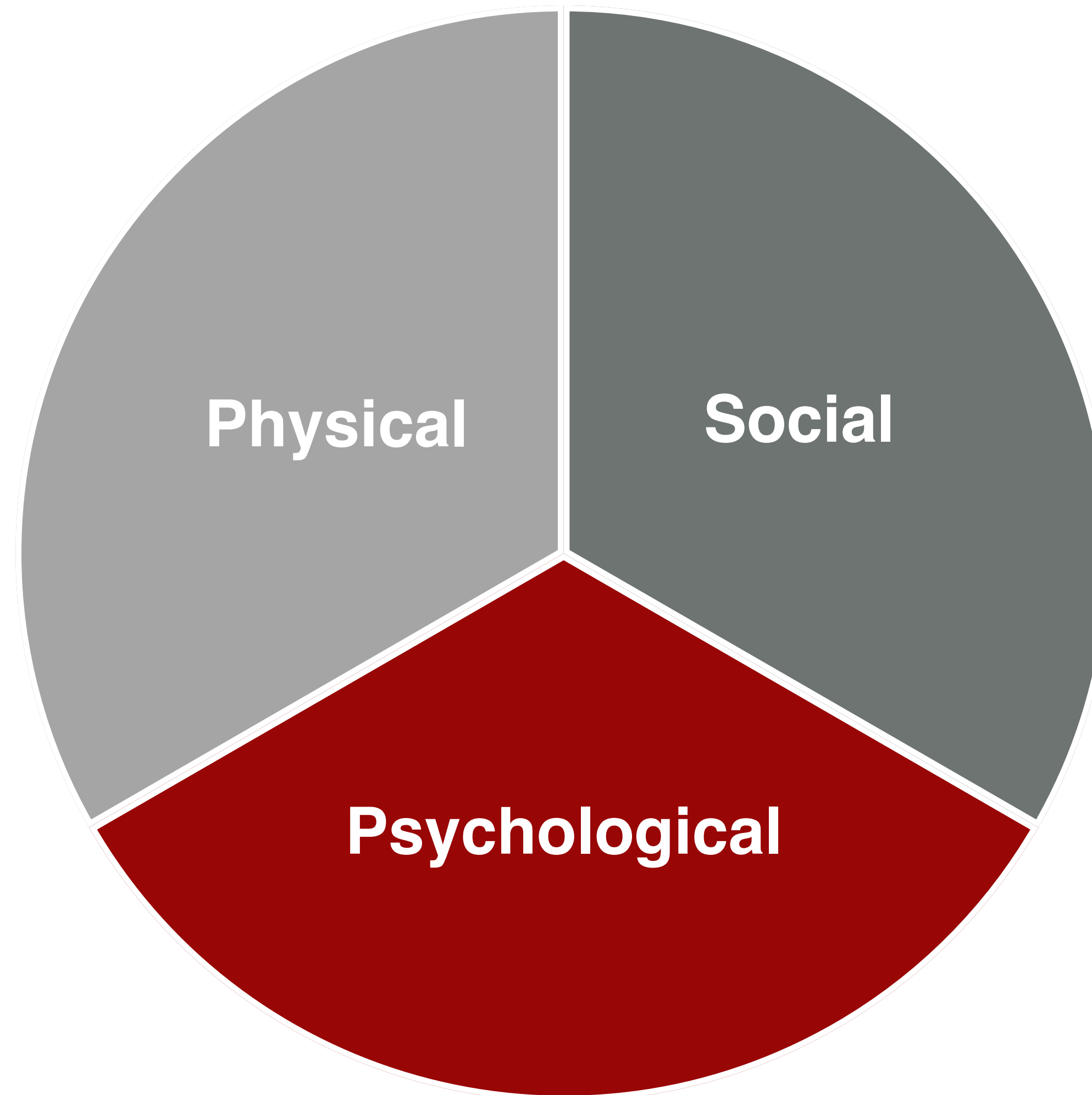
Note: The sum of percentages in each bar may not equal 100% due to rounding.
Source: NCAA Student-Athlete Well-Being Study (Fall 2020).

NCAA Research

SIDELINED
★★★★★ USA ★★★★★

3 DOMAINS OF EXPERIENCE

that characterize the injured athlete's journey



GRIEF & TRANSITION IN SIDELINED ATHLETES

SHOCK

Initial paralysis at hearing the bad news

DENIAL

Trying to avoid the inevitable

ANGER

Frustrated outpouring of bottled-up emotion

BARGAINING

Attempt to challenge/reverse the termination

DEPRESSION

The reality of the inevitable sinks in

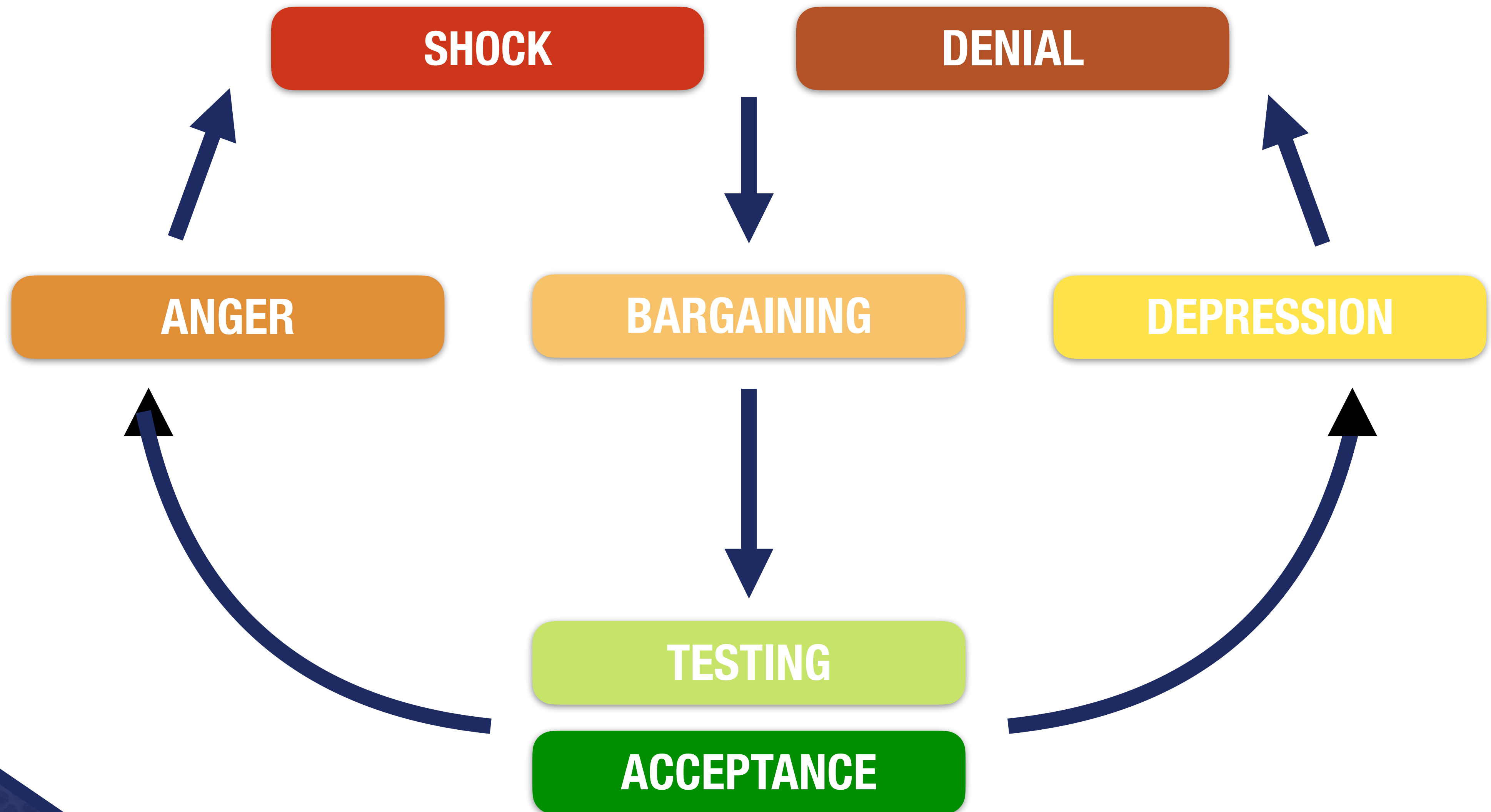
TESTING

Seeking a new passion or challenge

ACCEPTANCE

Finding a meaningful way forward

LOOPING EFFECT: GRIEF & TRANSITION IN SIDELINED ATHLETES



* This model is a blending of the Kubler-Ross Model of Grief and Lewis and Parker's Seven Stages of Transitional Change.

5 FACTORS IN ADAPTATION TO CAREER TRANSITION

Taylor & Ogilvie's Conceptual Model of Career Transition, 1994

1 Developmental Contributions

2 Self-identity

3 Perceptions of control

4 Social-identity

5 Tertiary factors

3 COMPONENTS INFLUENCING THE COMPLEXITY OF TRANSITION

Schlossberg, 2004

EXTENT OF TRANSITIONAL CHANGE:

Relationships
Routines
Roles
Assumptions

TIME NEEDED TO DEAL W/ TRANSITION

Months
Years

ATHLETE'S COPING SYSTEM

Situation
Self
Supports
Strategies

MODEL OF HEALTHY ADJUSTMENT

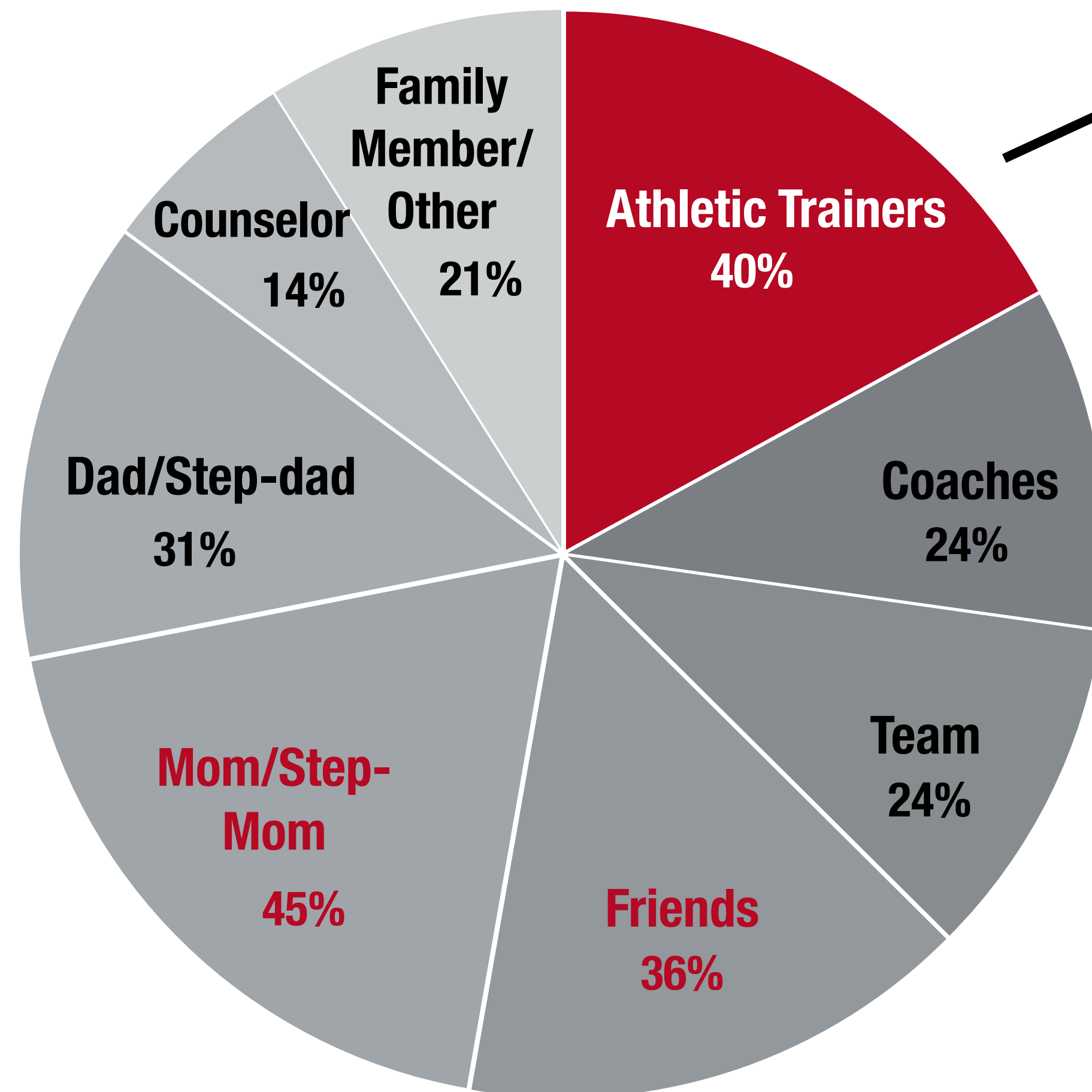
following career ending injury



SIDELINED ATHLETE SURVEY:

ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SUPPORT FOR SIDELINED ATHLETES

Sidelined Athletes' Perceived Support



% Moderately Or Extremely HELPFUL

40%

Reported their athletic trainer as
“moderately” or “extremely”

HELPFUL

Athletic trainers were reported as the

#2 most helpful

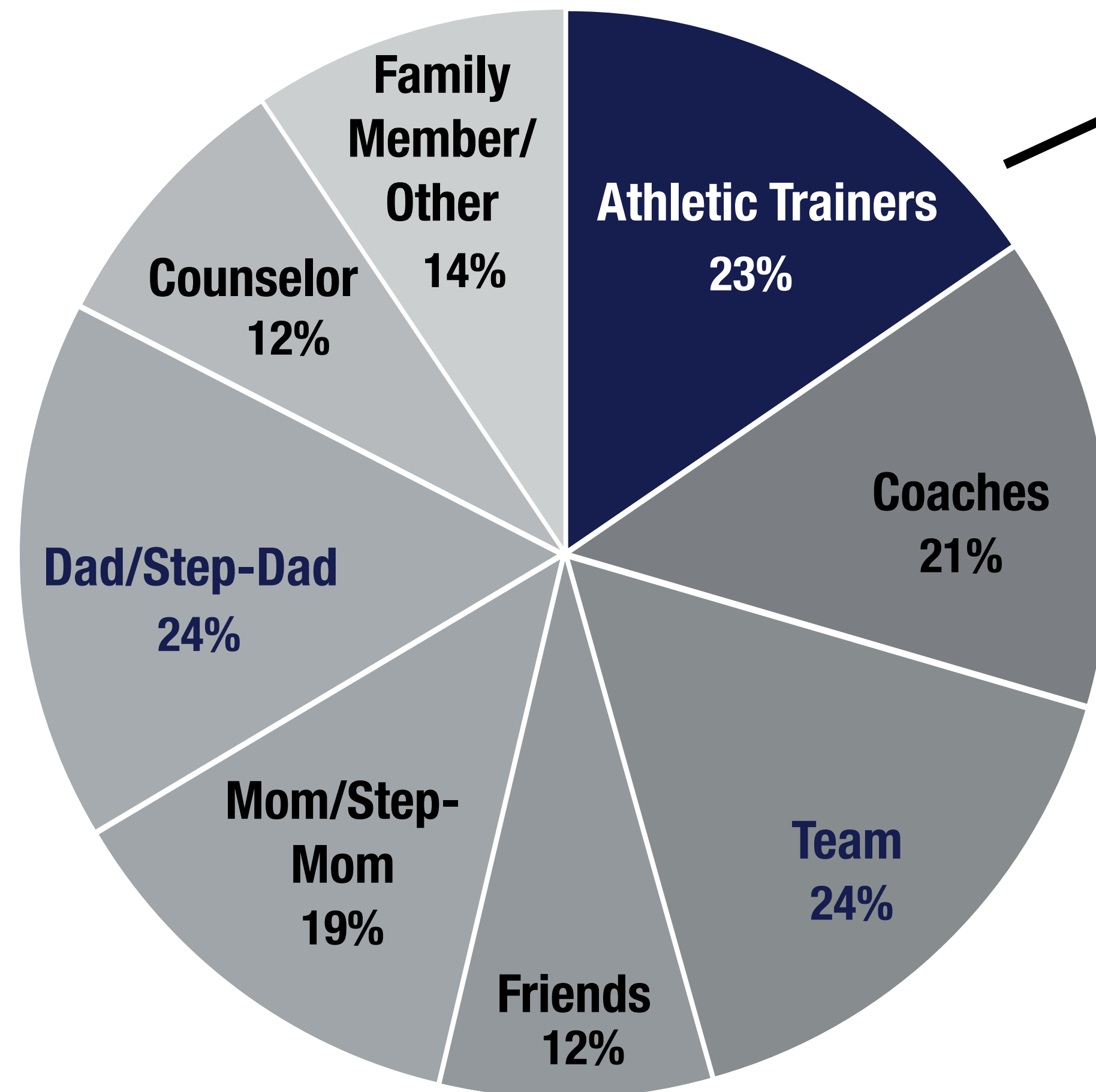
member of the athlete’s support network.

81% of the athletes we surveyed reported
association with an athletic trainer.

SIDELINED ATHLETE SURVEY:

ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SUPPORT FOR SIDELINED ATHLETES

Sidelined Athletes' Perceived Support



23%

Reported their athletic trainer as
“moderately” or “extremely”

UNHELPFUL

66%

Reported their athletic trainer could have
been more supportive/helpful or checked
up more

% Moderately Or Extremely UNHELPFUL

THE ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ROLE IN

supporting permanently-sidelined athletes

GRIEF AND LOSS

IDENTITY LOSS

MENTAL HEALTH

REBUILDING MOTIVATION

SUPPORT NETWORK

SUPPORT RESOURCES

GRIEF AND LOSS

helping the athlete work through the grief process



- ▶ Open up a line of communication
- ▶ Give them license to feel
- ▶ Educate the athlete about process of grief/transition
- ▶ Encourage them to take it day by day
- ▶ Stay positive and be encouraging
- ▶ Check back in from time to time

IDENTITY LOSS

and identity crisis

“Initially, athletes can feel a deep sense of loss or void in their lives. They lose not only the actual physical activity, but the gratification they get from competing and the social aspects of the sport. They may also lose that feeling of invulnerability and absolute trust in their bodies.”

DR. GERALD KAFOREY

Vanderbilt Sport Medicine Center

“Many student-athletes have not developed their identity outside of that as an athlete. Thus, if this role is threatened by injury or illness, they may experience significant ‘loss.’”

DR. MARGOT PUTUKIAN, MD, FACSM

Director of Athletic Medicine and Head Team Physician, Princeton University

“If all of the sudden you can’t be an athlete, it sends you into a bit of an existential crisis in terms of, ‘Who am I, and what am I doing here?’”

DR. DEBORAH SAINT-PHARD

Director Colorado University Womens Sports Medicine

IDENTITY LOSS

and redefining personal identity



- ▶ Affirm the grieving athlete in who they are
- ▶ What made them a great competitor?
- ▶ Assist in transfer
- ▶ Help them look ahead rather than looking back
- ▶ Check back in with the athlete regularly over the next couple of years

IDENTITY LOSS

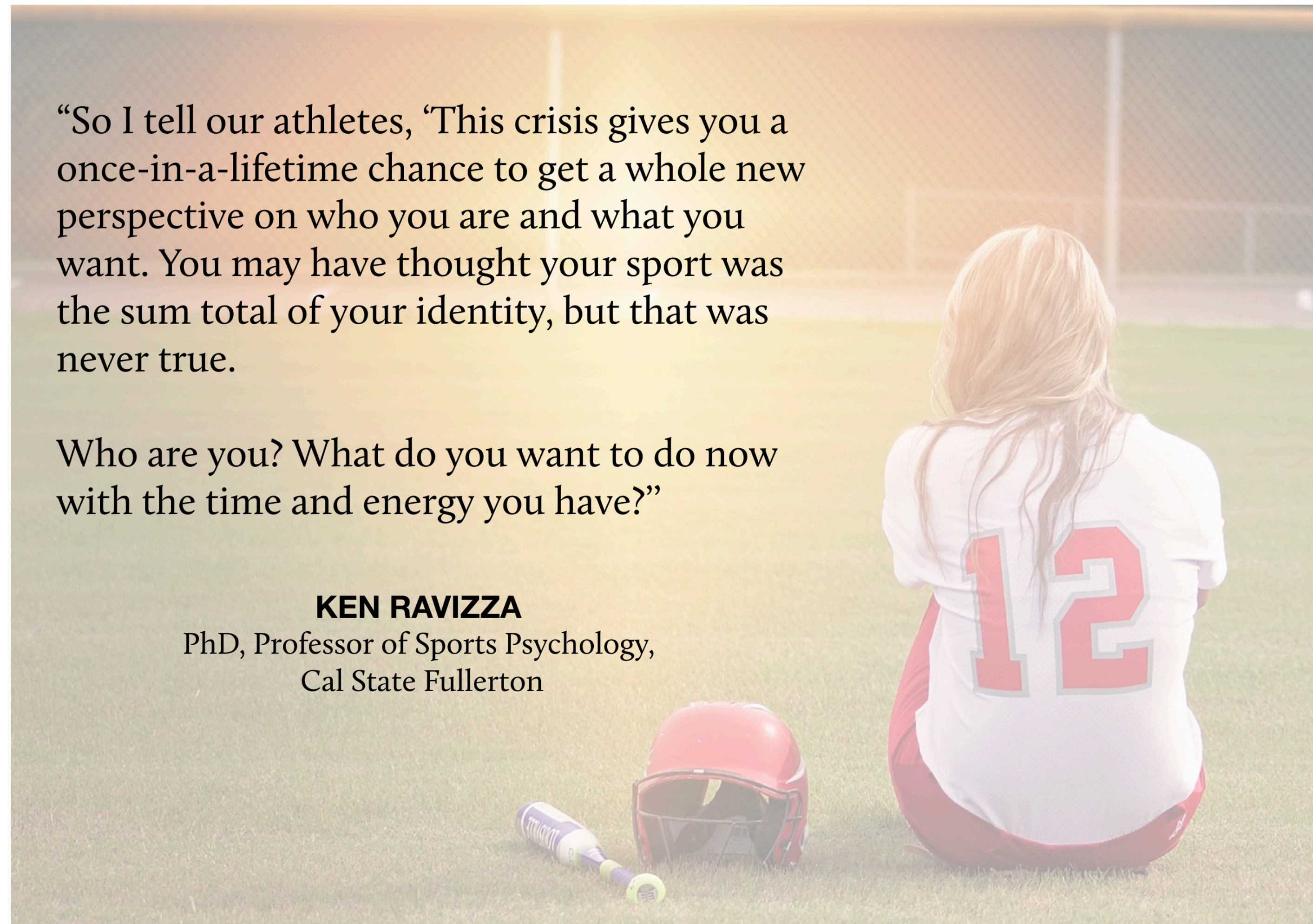
building a healthy identity

“So I tell our athletes, ‘This crisis gives you a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get a whole new perspective on who you are and what you want. You may have thought your sport was the sum total of your identity, but that was never true.

Who are you? What do you want to do now with the time and energy you have?’”

KEN RAVIZZA

PhD, Professor of Sports Psychology,
Cal State Fullerton



MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

screening for more serious emotional responses



- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Eating disorders
- ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ Suicidal ideation

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

screening for more serious emotional responses



Problematic psychological responses:

1- those that do not resolve

2- worsen over time or

*3- where the severity of symptoms
seems excessive*

Margot Putukian, Princeton University, NCAA Mind Body Sport

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

screening for depression

Warning Signs of Depression

National Institute of Mental Health

- Anger, irritability or aggressiveness
- Noticeable changes in mood, energy level, or appetite
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating, feeling restless, or on edge
- Increased worry or feeling stressed
- A need for alcohol or drugs
- Sadness or hopelessness
- Suicidal thoughts
- Feeling flat or having trouble feeling positive emotions
- Engaging in high-risk activities
- Ongoing headaches, digestive issues, or pain
- Obsessive thinking or compulsive behavior
- Thoughts or behaviors that interfere with work, family, or social life
- Unusual thinking or behaviors that concern other people

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

signs of emotional distress

Symptoms the Athlete May Be Feeling and Experiencing:	Signs the Athlete's Support Network May Observe:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▸ Sadness▸ Feeling of a hopeless outlook▸ No sense of purpose▸ Loss of interest in activities▸ Apathy▸ Fatigue▸ General discontent▸ Anxiety▸ Irritability▸ Despair▸ New preoccupation with death▸ Recklessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▸ Unwavering sadness▸ Lack of interest in activities once loved▸ Fatigue▸ Poor self-care▸ Changes in sleep patterns▸ Changes in eating patterns▸ Personality change▸ Short temper/mood swings▸ Appear agitated▸ Social isolation/disengagement▸ Increasing drug or alcohol use▸ Engaging in risky behavior▸ Giving away possessions

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

opening up a conversation



- ▶ “How are you doing with everything?”
- ▶ Scale of 1-10, what’s your stress level?
- ▶ How is your energy level?
- ▶ How is your appetite?
- ▶ How are you sleeping?
- ▶ “Do you think you want help with how you’re feeling?”

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

screening for more serious emotional responses

Assessments:

- ▶ **PHQ-9** - Patient Healthcare Questionnaire-9
- ▶ **BDI** - Beck Depression Inventory-Fast Screen
- ▶ **CES-D** - Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

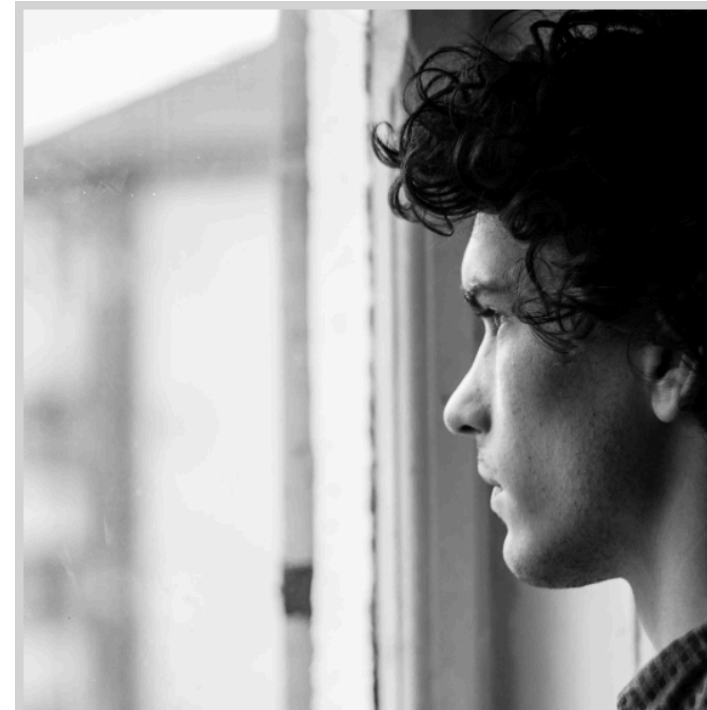
additional resources



www.SidelinedUSA.org

TOOLS *menu*

select RESOURCES
& INTERVIEWS



Becoming Sidelined: When
Depression Turns to Despair



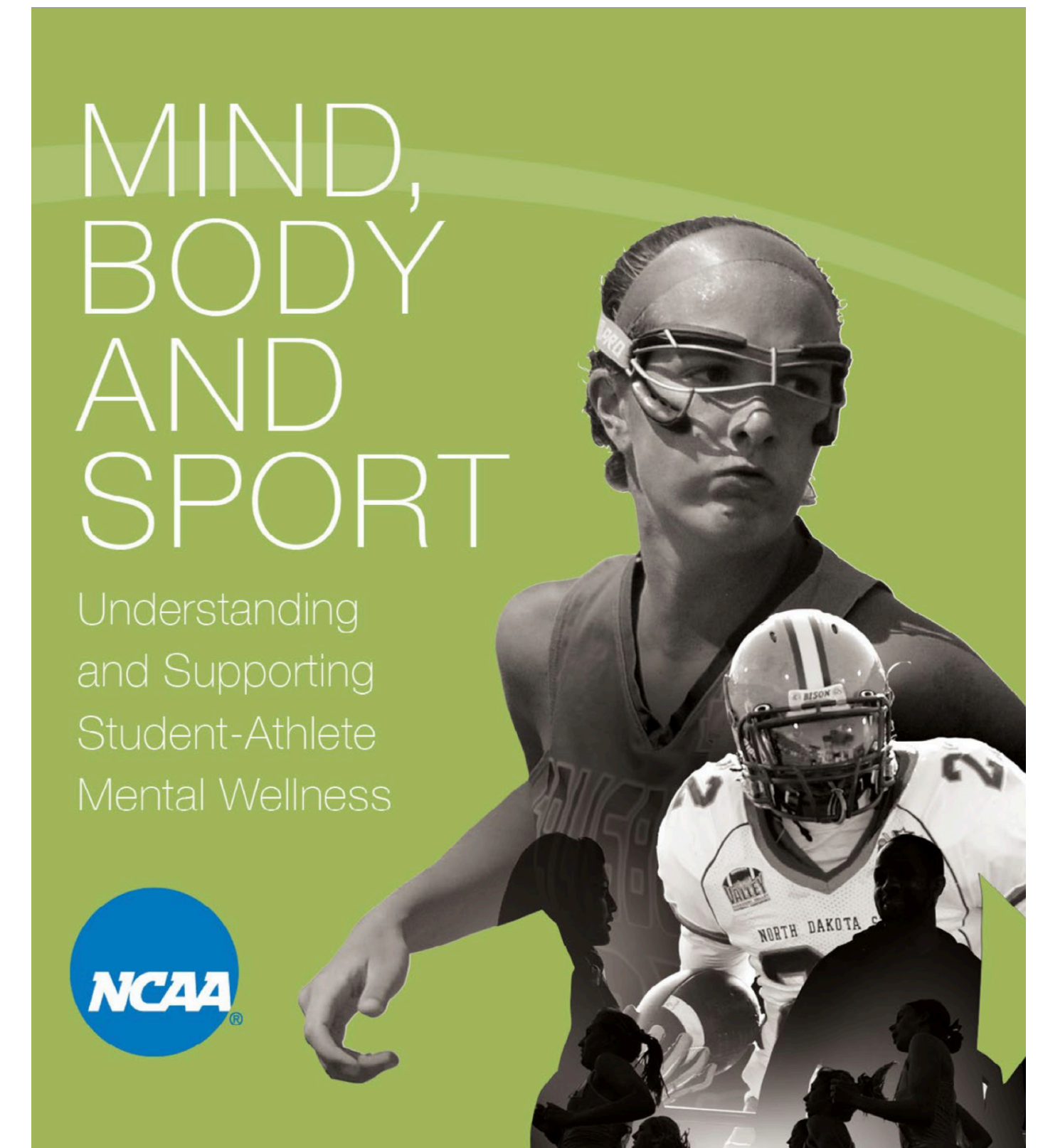
Becoming Sidelined: Signs and
Symptoms of Depression



Suicide Prevention and
Awareness for Supporters of
Sidelined Athletes



7 Keys to Supporting a Sidelined
Athlete Battling Depression



[https://www.naspa.org/images/
uploads/events/
Mind_Body_and_Sport.pdf](https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/events/Mind_Body_and_Sport.pdf)

REBUILDING MOTIVATION

encouraging new goals, challenges, and passions



- ▶ Significance of physical activity
- ▶ Adjusted personal goals
- ▶ Realistic expectations of measurement
- ▶ Rebuilding motivation through identifying a new passion or challenge
- ▶ Retaining the competitive edge

REBUILDING MOTIVATION

Reframing the obstacle

The obstacle becomes the path-

"Our actions may be impeded, but there can be no impeding our intentions or dispositions.

Because we can **accommodate** and **adapt**.

The impediment to action advances action.

What stands in the way becomes the way."



*Meditations by
Roman philosopher and
emperor
Marcus Aurelius*

SUPPORT NETWORK

a team approach



- ▶ Commit to being an active part of the athlete's support network
- ▶ Keep tabs with the athlete's coach
- ▶ Meet as a team
- ▶ Direct the athlete to further resources

UTILIZING AVAILABLE SUPPORT RESOURCES



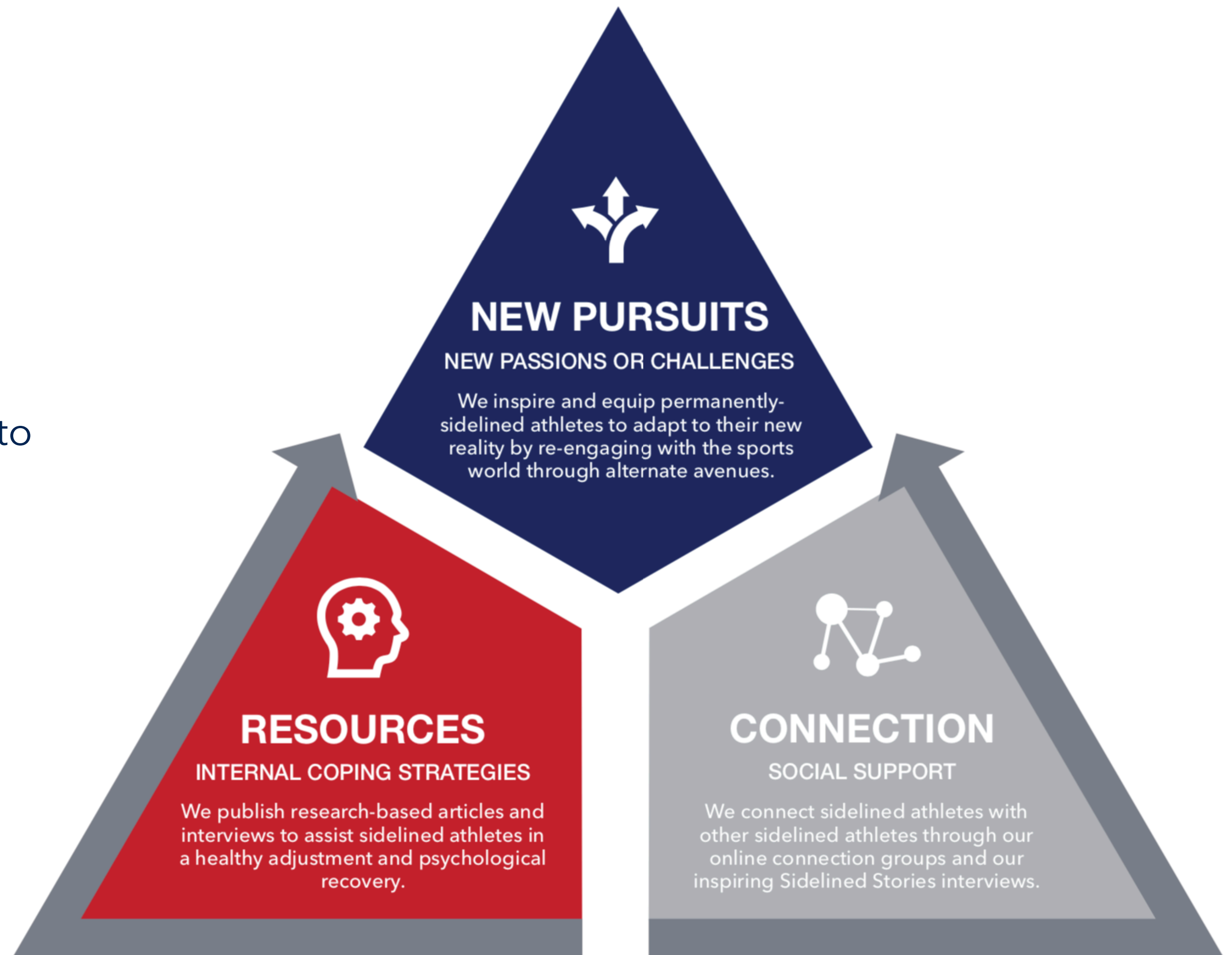
- ▶ Psychologist: Teach coping strategies such as Reframing, Mental Toughness, Relaxation Techniques, Imagery, Gratefulness, "Plan B"
- ▶ Another athlete w/ shared experience
- ▶ Sideline USA-NATA
 - Online resources
 - Connection: social support
 - New pursuits

SIDELINED USA PROGRAM MODEL

a meaningful way forward

MISSION

To reunite permanently-sidelined student-athletes with their passions and inspire them to find a meaningful way forward.



RESOURCES

to support a healthy psychological adjustment

SidelinedUSA.org

TOOLS *menu*

select **RESOURCES**



**BECOMING
SIDELINED**



**HEALTHY
ADJUSTMENT**



**MEANINGFUL
SUPPORT**



**BEYOND
THE GAME**

COVID-19 WELLNESS INITIATIVE

to support athletes temporarily removed from sport

SidelinedUSA.org

FREE *mental health*
Wellness RESOURCES



CONNECTION

social support - connecting with others with shared experience

1. “Sidelined Stories” podcast

SidelinedUSA.org

TOOLS *menu*

select **SIDELINED STORIES**

2. *Personal introductions*

One-on-one



JEREMY, DI FOOTBALL PLAYER
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
SIDELINED, CERVICAL STENOSIS

I was able to **connect with other athletes** with similar stories. Being able to connect with someone else who has struggled really helps make this **transition smoother**. I see my future, now, working as a football coach to help guide, influence and have a positive impact on young men’s lives – just like mine has been impacted by the coaches I’ve had over the years.

Sidelined USA gave me **a safe space** at a time where I felt abandoned and thought no one was aware of what happened, what I was dealing with, and the pain it caused me physically and mentally after I was medically disqualified. Sidelined gave me **a support system** and **people who care** and will even randomly **check in on me** even though I haven’t even met them in person.



TENE, DI BASKETBALL PLAYER
TULANE UNIVERSITY
SIDELINED, KNEE INJURIES

NEW PURSUITS

supporting new passions or challenges

SidelinedUSA.org

TOOLS *menu*

select **NEW PURSUITS**



SIDELINED ATHLETE IRB RESEARCH SURVEY

THE ATHLETE EXPERIENCE WITH MEDICALLY FORCED EXIT FROM SPORT

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT
2. DEPRESSION
3. SUICIDAL IDEATION
4. DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE
5. CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING MEDICAL EXIT
6. SUPPORT OFFERED BY ATHLETIC PROGRAMS
7. SATISFACTION LEVELS OF SUPPORT OFFERED

Under the supervision of:



Justin Stanek
Athletic Training Program Director



ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY
Illinois' first public university

CURRENT STATUS as of 10/15/2020:

Actively seeking additional participants, 59 completed surveys to date

Goal is 100+ participants, providing a sample set 5-10x larger than available studies*

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS:

Specifically related to their medically-forced exit from sport:

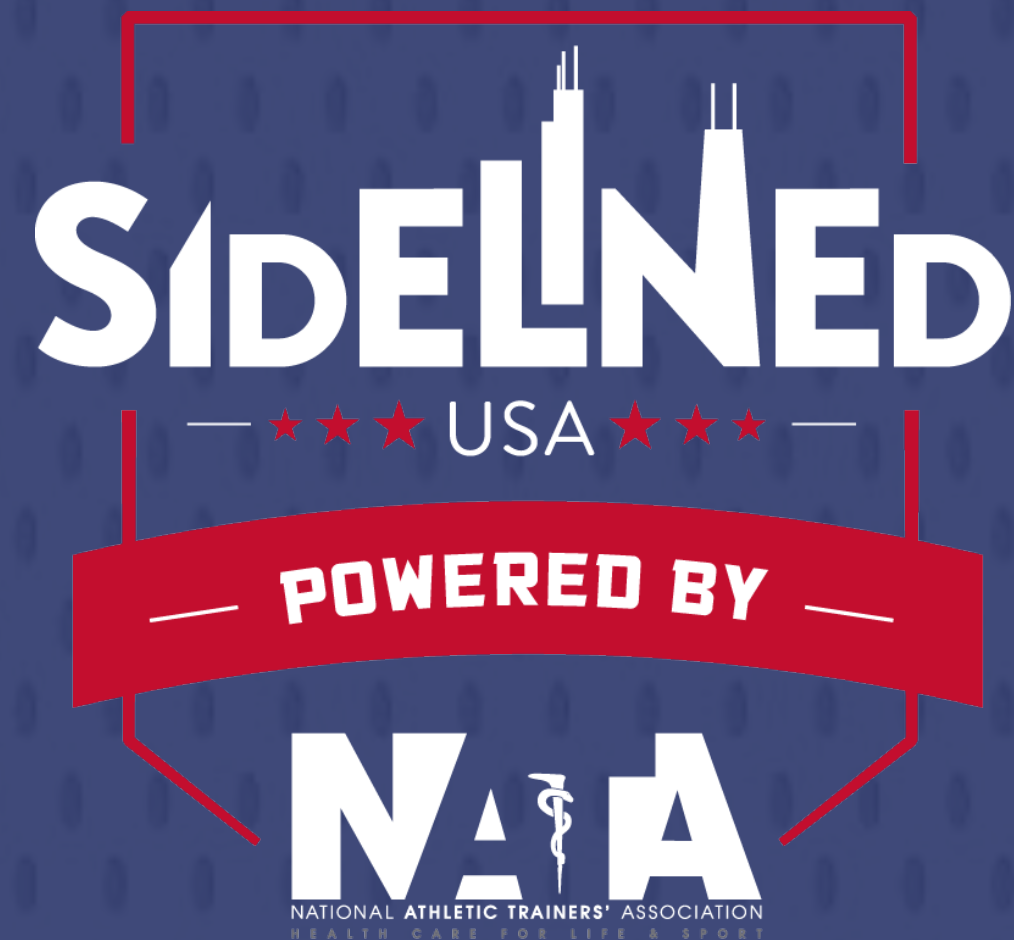
- 90% of participants reported experiencing **IDENTITY LOSS**
- 81% experienced **DEPRESSION**
- 34% experienced **SUICIDAL THOUGHTS**
- 7% created a **SUICIDE PLAN**
- 17% abused or used **DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL** to cope

* Available research on psychological impact of medical exit from sport is typically 7-18 subjects.

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A MEANINGFUL WAY FORWARD



www.SIDELINEDUSA.org

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