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## The role of the resilience in coping with stress in sports

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### Abstract

It is known that some sportsmen manage stress better than others, coping with loss and pressure during competitions and afterwards. After losing a game or a competition, some sportsmen manage to bounce back, rapidly, to a previous state of normal functioning; others delay too much in getting over their loss. We focused on the analyses of the post-competition period of time and the development of the sportsmen in their training and state of mind. For those who cope poorly with loss and defeat in competitions, we consider counseling having a main role in their training as the resilience is consider a process not an individual trait.

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### 1. Introduction

The word resilience has its origin in science and refers to the material resistance. In psychology, resilience is associated with other words like coherence, adapting to stressful situations, self-reliance, etc. People tend to respond in a different way to the same stressful event, even the members of the same family. Studying the works of Siebert (2009), we could identify four types of responses:

- Some individuals are overwhelmed by the effort they are supposed to make in their attempt of facing the challenges. In stressful situations these individuals cannot develop, adapt, learn, create or try their best solutions because they are emotionally drained.
- Other individuals become aggressive. In their effort of getting the right response to a stressful situation, they feel in danger of losing, they are frightened and their response is extreme, loaded of emotions.

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- Loss and failure can lead to other responses. The individuals consider the event as unfair, unjust so these people see themselves as victims of an unfortunate context of life.
- Other individuals are resilient and their responses to stressful events are constantly adapted, and overcome fast and efficient loss and failure, rejection or abandonment. Being resilient won't ensure success in all the situations but will preserve vital energy for everyday challenges and obstacles, as well as a constant self-development attitude towards difficult events, stressful events or unsuccessful ones.

Resilient people face all the events that face a non-resilient person, their way to respond to these events is different. For sportsmen the situations are rather similar. All sportsmen face the same challenges. Being resilient in the sport career does not ensure success and winning game and competitions. Failure is an important part of the resilient sportsman career but even failing the resilient sportsman will continue to be focused, reaching for his goals and his mistakes will not disorganized the activity.

Ripley (2008) emphasis few ideas regarding the resilience. She consider that resilient people believe that they can influence the course of events, they look for a positive meaning of their life events and they believe that they can learn both from positive and negative events. This believes protect them from the impact of traumatic experience and make them feel that they are in control. Once we understand how to respond to challenges in life with resilience, downturns are not so overwhelming, defeating, or destructive. Resilient people respond to life's challenges with courage and emotional stamina, even when they are afraid. Downturns become challenges to face head-on and overcome. Even though we have no control over many events in our life—accidents, natural disasters, crime, illness, the economy, etc. — we can control how we *respond* to these events, and we can choose to do so with resilience. Resilience is a process that is sustained by five essential characteristics (Wagnild, 2010):

- Meaningful life (purpose)
- Perseverance
- Self-reliance
- Equanimity
- Coming home to yourself (existential aloneness)
- Meaningful Life (Purpose)

“Life without purpose is futile and aimless. Purpose provides the driving force in life” (Wagnild, 2010). The meaning of life or actions can be considered as the foundation of everyday life, as well as the whole development process in life span: personal development, professional development or a sports career. This is the main characteristic of the process of resilience, on which relies the rest of the characteristics: perseverance, equanimity, self-reliance, existential aloneness.

- Perseverance

Perseverance is the characteristic that allows the human being to keep on going despite the failure, mistakes, rejection, abandon, accidents, illness, divorce, traumatic events, etc. Repeated disappointment and failure are important downturns. But resilient individuals overcome all these roadblocks and reach to their goals in the life span development as well as in their professional projects. Sportsmen, teen or adults, overcome health problems, accidents, or failure in their activities; they reach for their goals no matter what and continue fighting against the odds. Resilience is considered to be a process, that is why we consider perseverance as the main motive of the development of the reliance at sportsmen alongside with the role model.

- Equanimity

Equanimity refers to balance and harmony. Some people face regrets and disappointments after mistakes, failure and loss while resilient people avoid extreme responses, look for solutions or start all over again. Because of that resilient people are described as optimistic. Resilient sportsmen look for different possibilities, solutions,

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