

Special Issues in Evaluating and Treating Elite Professional Athletes for Psychiatric and Substance Use Disorders

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Sports Psychiatry vs. Sports Psychology

▶ **Sports Psychology**

- ▶ Older and more established
- ▶ Tends to focus more on performance enhancement techniques
- ▶ May also prioritize providing therapy for mental health disorders

Sports Psychiatry

- ▶ is a burgeoning subspecialty
- ▶ Addresses the etiology, evaluation and treatment of psychiatric symptoms and syndromes



Unique Stressors Facing Elite Professional Athletes





Success is Better Than Failure - Or Is It?

- ▶ Instant "head of the (extended) family"
- ▶ Family and Friends change
- ▶ Target on your back
 - ▶ Women
 - ▶ Con Artists and Thieves

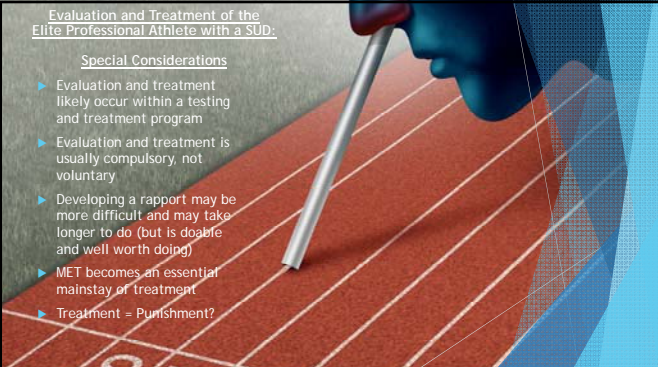
The Clinician's Priority: Establish TRUST

- ▶ Fiercely protect privacy and confidentiality
- ▶ You want nothing from him
- ▶ Show understanding and appreciation, not "fan" admiration
- ▶ Help him accomplish what HE wants and needs



Tips for History Taking with Elite Professional Athletes


- ▶ Athletes may minimize sx
- ▶ More humiliation, guilt and shame
- ▶ Ask in detail about binge drinking



Evaluation and Treatment of the Elite Professional Athlete with a SUD:

Special Considerations

- ▶ Evaluation and treatment likely occur within a testing and treatment program
- ▶ Evaluation and treatment is usually compulsory, not voluntary
- ▶ Developing a rapport may be more difficult and may take longer to do (but is doable and well worth doing)
- ▶ MET becomes an essential mainstay of treatment
- ▶ Treatment = Punishment?



Evaluating and Treating The Athlete with a General Psychiatric Disorder:

Special Considerations

- ▶ Athletes seek treatment less
- ▶ Sometimes, treatment for general psychiatric illness occurs during compulsory treatment for SUDs
- ▶ Status as athletes increases stigma and shame → greater barrier to engaging in treatment

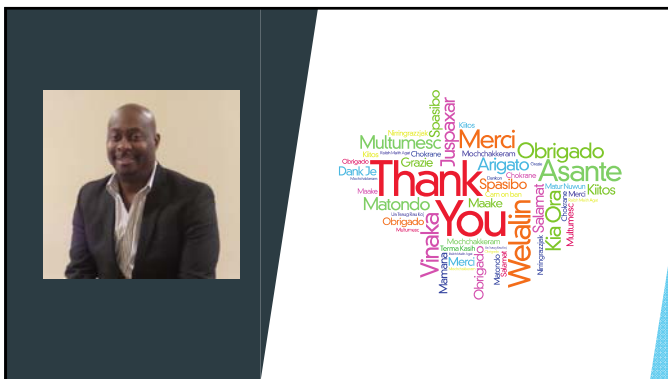
Treatment for Elite Professional Athletes:

Special Considerations

- ▶ Commonly used modalities:
- ▶ MET
- ▶ CBT
- ▶ Mindfulness Meditation
- ▶ Life Coaching
- ▶ Pharmacotherapies







Word cloud containing: Thank You, Merci, Obrigado, Asante, Grazie, Spasibo, Multumesci, Danke, Malondo, Weitaun, Kia Ora, Salamet, and many other expressions of gratitude.
