

## HOW ATHLETES CAN MANAGE DEPRESSION

By Stanley Popovich

Sometimes, athletes deal with depression. Here is a short list of techniques that an athlete can use to help manage their depression.

One of the ways to manage your depression is to challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. For example, you are afraid that if you do not get that job promotion then you will be stuck at your job forever. This depresses you, however your thinking in this situation is unrealistic. The fact of the matter is that there are all kinds of jobs available and just because you don't get this job promotion doesn't mean that you will never get one. In addition, people change jobs all the time, and you always have that option of going elsewhere if you are unhappy at your present location.

Some people get depressed and have a difficult time getting out of bed in the mornings. When this happens, a person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do to get their mind off of the problem. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read the newspaper or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things. Doing something will get your mind off of the problem and give you confidence to do other things.

Sometimes, we can get depressed over a task that we will have to perform in the near future. When this happens, visualize yourself doing the task in your mind. For instance, you and your team have to play in the championship volleyball game in front of a large group of people in the next few days. Before the big day comes, imagine yourself playing the game in your mind. Imagine that you are playing in front of a large audience. By playing the game in your mind, you will be better prepared to perform for real when the time comes. Self-Visualization is a great way to reduce the fear and stress of a coming situation.

Another technique that is very helpful is to have a small notebook of positive statements that makes you feel good. Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down in a small notebook that you can carry around with you in your pocket. Whenever you feel depressed, open up your small notebook and read those statements.

Take advantage of the help that is available around you. If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your fears and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future. Managing your fears and anxieties takes practice. The more you practice, the better you will become.

The techniques that I have just covered are some basic ways to manage your depression, however your best bet is to get some help from a professional.