

Just be There! Athlete Motivation and Parental Support:
A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to gather and understand the lived experiences of athletes of a young adult age, who lacked parental support during their athletic careers. Furthermore, the purpose included understanding the meaning these lived experiences had for the research participants and their sport motivation. The study used Moustakas' phenomenological analysis to find meaningful realities of sub-elite and elite level athletes. A total of six athletes between the ages of 20-28 participated in semi-structured interviews. Two female athletes and four male athletes shared their experiences relevant to their sport and motivation levels. Sports included football (soccer), track and field, cheerleading, and triathlons. Themes that emerged from the data analysis included, presence, self and bodily concerns, mindset and time, each theme had a series of sub-themes. The study also used Eccles' expectancy value theory to explain athlete motivation levels and their participation in sport. Results indicated that several factors within Eccles' expectancy value theory lead to an athlete's sport commitment and level of enjoyment. Athletes experiences revealed that many athletes found they needed more parental presence throughout their sport participation even as adults.

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Chapter 1: Review of literature

Defining Motivation

We often hear the term “motivation” and relate it to every aspect of our lives, from learning in school, to working full time jobs, to exercising and training. Motivation has been a subject of interest for many psychologists and sport enthusiasts (Roberts, Treasure & Conroy, 2007). In association to motivation, we pose the questions of why humans decide to think and behave the way they do, and where the idea of those actions stem from? As a society we are constantly searching for the reasoning behind each one of our actions. Motivation has been defined as a hypothetical construct that describes both internal and external forces that produce the initiation, persistence and direction of behaviour (Vallerand & Thrill, 1993). Internal forces refer to intrinsic motivation, which can be described as a behaviour a person resorts to because it is naturally satisfying and the reward in itself is their personal enjoyment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). External forces pertain to extrinsic motivation, which is defined as a behaviour a person engages in to achieve external rewards such as money, or to avoid punishment (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Intrinsic motivation has been recognized by organizational scholars as a primary driving force for performance at work (Brief & Aldag, 1977; Hackman & Oldham, 1976, 1980; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Staw, Calder, Hess, & Sandelands, 1980). Research has also shown that when motivation is intrinsic, individuals find their work more interesting thus their attention becomes more focused and intense (Shin & Grant, 2019). Similarly, when athletes find greater enjoyment in a specific training task and within the sport, the more motivated they are to remain in it. Jones, (1955), states motivation deals with why behaviour gets started, how it is energized, sustained, directed, and stopped, and further questions what kind of subjective reactions are present while this is happening.

Human actions reflect the coordination of functions and processes towards specific ends (Ryan, 2012). These ends are often set goals humans wish to achieve. Starting from Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, we are taught to understand that humans act to obtain physiological needs such as water and food, safety needs such as shelter, psychological needs including a sense of belongingness, love and esteem needs and self-fulfillment needs such as self-actualization. The hierarchy of needs may be used as a basis of motivation and goal setting. The structure of motivation is composed of all the motives that stimulate human behaviour. The word *Motive* is defined as the cause, the reason of an action, and an impulse that drives action which is mobile, has momentum, a goal, and an objective (Cucui & Cucui, 2014). For each action there is always a motive present that is thought of prior to the force of action. Furthermore, it is important to note that an individual's action does not lie in the presence of a certain motive but includes the hierarchization of all motives. This relates back to the hierarchization included in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. The *Oxford Handbook of Motivation* (2012) indicates that humans are clearly motivated, goal-directed creatures. At times a person's motivation can be explicit and conscious, while other times it can be directed by nonconscious, implicit aims and attitudes (Ryan, 2012). Motivation has been summarised by Deci and Ryan (1985), as the reasoning behind one's behaviour or absence of behaviour, however, to contrast that theory, Mahehr (1984) indicated that the study of motivation "begins and ends with behaviour" (p.132). Many sport-related studies have discussed athlete motivation alongside the self-determination theory originating with Deci and Ryan (Amrose & Anderson, 2007; Readdy, Raabe & Harding, 2014; Calvo, Cervelló, Jiménez, Iglesias & Murcia, 2010), this study will be incorporating Eccles Expectancy Value Theory (2004).

Athlete Development

Prior to discussing Eccles expectancy value theory, The Long-Term Athlete development model (LTAD; 2016) will be examined and how it can be used to build motivation. The LTAD model has been a highly used model for national governing bodies and practitioners across the world (Mushariwa, 2018). Constructs of the model include timelines of ages and which developmental stage of sports athletes would fall into; the current model used includes seven stages. The stages include Active start, Fundamentals, Learning to train, Training to train, Train to compete, Train to Win and Active for Life. The LTAD model is highly focused on the chronological age alongside sport development, hence the emphasis is on developing the awareness of physical activity and growing specific sports skills for youth in order to progress their sport involvement and success for the future. The LTAD model is an important model in understanding motivation as it helps set a base of athletic awareness, and later stages can incorporate aspects of sport psychology, whereby athletes recognize the importance of mental skills. As competition pressure increases, mental fitness training is introduced and includes building positive attitudes, positive focus and effort (Sport for Life – Long-Term Athlete Development Resource Paper 2.1, 2016) Sport for life Canada (2016) discusses the mental, cognitive and emotional development as one of their 10 key factors that influences LTAD. Proper athlete development can influence how athletes become motivated throughout their sporting activities. The way athletes are coached and mentored throughout development stages allows them to grow both physically and mentally (Sport for Life – Long-Term Athlete Development Resource Paper 2.1, 2016). As athletes progress into adolescents they start to put greater emphasis on sport specific training as the pressure for sport achievements becomes greater, and adolescents become aware of extrinsic and intrinsic motives (Baillie & Danish,

1992). Based on the sport, athletes usually start psychological skills training from the “training to train” stage. For example, looking at the athletics LTAD model, specific sport psychology is strongly implemented during the “training to compete” and “training to win” stage. These stages state that athletes go through mental preparation to cope with the stress of high-level competitions and further their emotional development (AthleticsOntario, 2013). Being able to train their mental skills such as imagery, attentional focus, motivation, arousal control, mental toughness, and coping skills among others are all indispensable factors that contribute to athlete success and prolonged sport involvement.

Elite and Sub-Elite Athletes

As discussed within the LTAD model, motivation levels may range depending on the level of competition, hence it is important to understand how elite and sub-elite athletes are defined, these definitions will also help in comprehending the populations various studies incorporate. An elite athlete is an individual who has or is currently competing at the national and international level in sports, they often represent the country at a high level and may be titled as a professional athlete (Scharfen & Memmert, 2019).

Sub-elite athletes are athletes who have been or currently are competitive individuals but have not been named to a national team and stay competitive at the regional level (Teques, Calmeiro, Rosado, Silva & Serpa, 2019). Another distinguishing factor between elite and sub-elite athletes is that elite athletes’ self-determined behaviours are built from a combination of enjoyment of sport tasks which are characterized by an orientation toward mastery levels along with persistence and strong desire to achieve personal goals (Mallett & Hanrahan, 2004). Mallett et al, (2004) further states that the sense of goal accomplishment is associated with self-determined forms of motivation. Elite athletes are seen as having an advantage in psychological

skills, such as, having higher levels of confidence, focus and mental efficacy, this contributes to setting more personalized and realistic motivating goals (Pashabadi, Shahbazi, Hoseini, Mokaberian, Kashanai, & Heidari, 2011). Elite athletes are said to have greater performance motivation than sub-elite athletes as they focus on doing better than their competitors (Šmela, Pačesová, Kraček, & Hájovský, 2017). Other factors that distinguish elite and sub-elite athletes include body composition and performance characteristics; maximal power output, anaerobic threshold and Vo2Max (Lorens, Reiman, Lehecka & Naylor, 2013). Athletes at both levels strive to achieve peak performance and are said to excel when having supportive figures by their side. The way an athlete perceives dimensions of parental involvement such as financial, moral or emotional support has impacted the achievement of elite status in sports (Wolfenden & Holt, 2005). From athletes who reported more directive behaviour (giving sport-specific advice and telling them how to improve) from their parents, it was found that those athletes progressed into higher career stages than their counterparts (Wuerth et al., 2004). Parents are needed to provide financial assistance and emotional support to help their children become high-level athletes. Wolfenden and Holt (2004) reveal that both coaches and parents fulfill different roles in developing sub-elite and elite-athletes, and as children develop each role changes over time. For example, coaches may play a larger role in athlete development at older ages whereas parents may play a larger role in athletic development at younger ages and levels. Ericson, Krampe and Tesch-Romer (1993) suggest that elite-athletes are more likely to engage in deliberate practice than deliberate play and in order to achieve elite-status individuals must sustain deliberate practice for a period of ten years. Deliberate practice is defined as practice activities which are performed with the intention of progressing a certain skill and incorporate the goal of improving

performance (Krampe et al., 1993). It is important to note that continuous practice for all types of athletes is beneficial for performance on any level.

Eccles Expectancy Value Achievement Motivation Theory

Expectation of success can be defined as one's belief towards mastering a skill or completing a task, for example mastering a bicycle kick in soccer (Eccles et al., 1983).

Subjective task value refers to the importance one places on being successful within a specified domain. In 1983, Eccles, Wigfield and colleagues proposed an expectancy–value model of achievement performance and choice and examined it primarily within the mathematics and education domains. Expectancy in this model refers to one's belief of their ability and their probability of success, while task value is centered on how the activity meets an individual's needs. Expectancy plus task value lead to achievement behaviours (Cox & Whaley, 2004).

Various studies using the frameworks of expectancy-value theory have shown that task value often predicts task choice (Durik, Vida, & Eccles 2006, Eccles 2005; Gorges, Schwinger & Kandler, 2013; Harackiewicz et al, 2008; Meece, Wigfield & Eccles, 1990). The expectancy value theory describes and explains variations of achievement related choices and behaviours across multiple domains (Weiss, Amrose & Kipp, 2012). Eccles et al. (1983) believed that unidimensional achievement motivation theories such as Weiner's (1985) model, self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989), perceived competence (Harter, 1978), self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985), goal orientations (Nicholls, 1984) did not sufficiently explain why differences existed in youths' levels of motivation across domains, given similar ability levels (Cox & Whaley, 2004). They predicted that there must have been other factors underlying the pervasive gender differences that existed in motivation across all age groups. According to Eccles, achievement motivation is predicted both directly and indirectly, it is predicted directly by an individual's expectation of

success and their task values. Within the expectancy value theory, four specific task values were focused on. These task values identify as; attainment value, interest value, utility value and cost. Weiss et al. 2012, stated that attainment value refers to personal importance of doing well in a specified achievement domain which confirms one's self-identity and opportunities of developing competence. Interest value relates to how much one enjoys doing the activity, while utility value relates to one's perception of how useful the activity may be in both short term and long-term situations. Lastly, cost incorporates the loss of time, effort and other resources (Weiss et al., 2012). In most cases, cost is associated with a negative relation towards achievement behaviours and may have been less incorporated but is considered an important factor and may be described as a de-motivating factor.

Achievement motivation can be predicted indirectly by socializers' beliefs and behaviours; gendered stereotypes; children's schema, goals and interests; and past achievement experiences alongside other influences (Weiss et al., 2012). Eccles et al, (1983) study revealed differences in physical activity motivation among females and males that were also linked to expectations of success and subjective task values. The study specifically revealed that young females held a lower expectancy of success and task value than young males. Given the time of the study, this may be very different in present time. Eccles and Harold (1991) revealed that both task value, interest, utility, attainment and self-concept of abilities were strong predictors of the amount of free time adolescents spent on math, language, arts and sports. One potential explanation for group differences in self- and task beliefs that was mentioned deals with self-schema. Self-schema has been defined as generalizations about the self that one gains from past experiences which serve to determine how an individual can process all of the self-related information in their environment (Markus, 1977).

Although Eccles and colleagues' expectancy value theory was originally used within the education domain, the expectancy value theory has been seen to be useful in examining parental influences on youths' physical activity and beliefs and behaviours (Fredericks & Eccles 2004). The following pages will be centered towards the expectancy value theory within a sports perspective alongside the effects of parental influences.

Expectancy value constructs can be linked to parental beliefs about specific values of achievement domains, especially at a young age. Through past experiences parents are seen to be very influential in generating value in sports for their children. Three mechanisms of parental influences that have been discussed by Fredricks and Eccles (2004) are a) providers of experience (tangible support), b) interpreters of experience (conveying beliefs about a child's competence or goal orientation) and c) role models (expressing attitudes and demonstrations of behaviours that endorse a certain value). How one identified their athletic identity can impact how much they value sports and their expected success within that domain. Athletic identity can be determined through commitment to the activity, time invested in the activity and the ability level of said individual (Kendzierski, Furr, & Schiavoni, 1998). A modified version of the expectancy value model can be seen as the expectancy value model for sport participation referred to in appendix A, Figure one. The model provides a greater understanding of how differing factors influence each other and lead up to achievement related behaviours.

Review of parental influences

Eccles, Freedman-Doan, Frome, Jacobs and Yoon 2000; Fredericks and Eccles, (2004) expectancy value model has been considered to be one of the main theoretical models within sports and parent socialization (Bioché, Guillet, Bois & Sarrazin, 2011). The model can be viewed in Appendix A, Figure 2. The model is based on the grounds that the choices and

behaviours of the latter are primarily guided by their expectations of success and the subjective value they place into the activity. Thus, the two most proximal variables that determine a young individual's choices are 1) his or her expectations of success in the task or activity and 2) the value that they place on it (Bioché et al, 2011). The expectancy value model hypothesizes that children's success and value are partly influenced by their parents' beliefs and behaviours (Bioché et al., 2011). The model of parental influences in sport as presented by Fredricks and Eccles (2004) suggests that the behaviours adopted by parents depends on various sources: their general beliefs; their child-specific beliefs related to athletics, and certain child characteristics, including gender and developmental stage. Parental perceptions of their children's abilities were consistently found to be positively related to a child's perceptions of ability both directly and indirectly through reflected assessments (Bois, Sarrazin, Brustad, Chanal, & Trouilloud, 2005). Boiché et al (2011) conducted a study of antecedents, accuracy and consequences of parent's behaviours that revealed that both mothers and fathers often perceived their sons as more competent, place greater value on sport for them and provide more encouragement and equipment for them than their daughters. As the study revealed gender differences, and the subject appears to be documented well throughout literature, Horn and Horn (2007), indicate that there has been a lack of knowledge relative to parental behaviours and influences at different ages.

Bhalla and Weiss (2010) conducted a study on the cross-cultural perspectives of parental influences on female adolescents' achievement beliefs and behaviours in sport and school domains and used Eccles expectancy value theory as a framework for explaining the variations in achievement beliefs and behaviours within multiple domains. They emphasized that parents play an important role in shaping children's success expectations, task values and achievement

behaviours. In association to Eccles et al's research, Fredericks and Eccles (2005) study found that children's ability, beliefs and participation in sport were heavily related to their parents' beliefs about the child's abilities. Bhalla and Weiss, continued to emphasize that parents model attitudes and behaviours which influence children's self-perceptions of ability towards achievement because sport is seen to be voluntary and parents' attitudes about behaviour related to physical activity are important for children to stay involved in sports. In reference to gender differences, gendered stereotypes which parents may follow shape the way they perceive and influence their children's perceptions, Jacobs and Eccles (1992) found that mothers' gendered stereotype beliefs were associated with perceptions of their child's ability. Mothers rated children's ability higher when the stereotype favoured the child, for example boys are stereotyped as being better in mathematics and sports while girls are framed to be better at English (Bhalla & Weiss, 2010). The examination of cultural research within this theoretical framework enhanced the understanding of relationships between participants perceptions of parental and cultural influence and their self-perceptions and behaviours within achievement areas. This study's results further supported Eccles' (1983, 1998) expectancy value theory while displaying the cultural similarities and differences for mechanisms of parental influence on their daughters' beliefs within educational and sport domains.

Eccles and colleagues' development of the family socialization model within the sport context was developed to explain the impact of influences on children's motivational tendencies. The main factor within the expectancy value model was that children's decisions to participate in sport activities were made within the context of available choices, therefore understanding how parents influence choices is important in understanding motivational tendencies (Fredericks & Eccles, 2004). Studies done by Eccles, (1993), Eccles, Wigfield & Schiefele, (1998) and

Fredricks & Eccles (2004), found that expectations for success are influenced by children's self-concepts of how they view their own abilities. Children who perceived to have high sport ability were said to be more inclined to participate in sports, while children who had less favourable self-perceptions would be less likely to participate. Overall, parents were seen to influence children's expectations and motivation through their beliefs and behaviours. Parents patterns of encouragement affect children's affective responses for example, motivation and enjoyment. Hence, Parental encouragement had been related to both male and female children's liking of physical activity (Brustard, 1993,1996). Although parental encouragement has played an important factor into increasing motivation, high levels of parental pressure can also create negative results and de-motivate some children from play (Gould, Eklund, Ptlichkoff, Peterson & Bump, 1991). On the contrary low levels of parental pressure have been associated with positive effects and an increased level of enjoyment (Babkes & Weiss, 1999). As seen in the expectancy value model factors, parental expectations, values and beliefs are associated with Children's own abilities, skillfulness and having the necessary physical capabilities to be successful in sport. Over the years, girls have reported that their parents placed lower value on sport participation than on boys' sport participation. In a study by Fredricks and Eccles, 2002, the impact of parents' beliefs on the development of children's ability to succeed in sport was emphasized. Eccles' 2005 study further supported the model with findings showing that boys have higher perceived competence and more positive values associated to sport than girls did. Hence the study relates back to how parents perceive their children's athletic abilities based off their gender. They further reflect how many parents will continue to place an emphasis on sports for their sons as opposed to their daughters. Many of the studies mentioned thus far have been associated with exploring the impact of athlete perceptions of the parent-created motivational

climates, examining both mothers and fathers alongside the athlete's physical self-concept while reviewing the impact of gender differences and their chronological age. Many of the ages discussed have been within the young adolescent stages, hence there has been little done on the young adults' athletic development based off parental influences. Late adolescents have also been examined but have shown that there has been a more negative effect at that age especially for females. Eccles and Harold, 1991, reported that parents were more likely to encourage their sons' involvement both positively and negatively in sport more so than they were for their daughters, also showing that fathers continue to be the strongest parental influences in sport development (Greendorfer et al., 1996). Findings in a study by Jowett and Rhind on the impact of parent created motivational climates and adolescent athletes' self-concepts concluded that adolescent athletes continue to perceive their parents as an important socialization factor in their sport involvement. Through examining the differences of mother and father motivational climates, it has been recorded that both parents encourage their son's involvement, particularly fathers but continue to place a lower expectancy and value of sport for their daughters (Jowett & Rhind, 2007).

Collegiate Athlete Motivation

From differentiating elite and sub-elite athletes, many of those athletes peak within collegiate sports and grow towards becoming professional athletes, hence the topic of collegiate athlete motivation is an important topic to examine. As children develop some parents may place a high emphasis on sports with the end goal of a sport-scholarship, in which case the scholarship is the main motive for sport participation. In other situations, where parents may play a lesser role in athlete development, students may choose to join sports teams and clubs for personalized factors. Curry and Weiss, 1989, state that competitive motivation is associated with being an

athlete or sport participant, they further explain that both competition and fitness motivation is positively correlated with the involvement of self in the sport role. For many years, athletic scholarships have been highly valued within the American sport system, studies have shown that the more emphasis an athlete places on athletic scholarships the less intrinsically motivated they are (Medic, Mack, Wilson & Starkes, 2007). Medic et al (2007), have also discussed the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic motivational levels between females and males, they found that females held higher intrinsic motives than males within collegiate sports. Vallerand (2012), states “unfortunately, scholarship recipients may come to feel that they play more to justify the scholarship they have received than for the pleasure of the game”(p.69), further explaining that student-athletes may have lower levels of intrinsic motivation. Moller and Sheldon’s 2019 study on intrinsic motivation of NCAA former athletes revealed that many players who had scholarships felt more inclined to play sports for extrinsic motives. Furthermore, the study also revealed that even years after playing at the college level, these athletes negatively associated present-day participation in their sport. In another study, data revealed that 60% of participants indicated that relatives and parents play an important role in their sport activities (Omeear-Fauzee et al., 2009). They indicated that their parents were their main motivators to compete at the university level and provided ample amounts of support and energy for them to be successful in sports. Other motivational factors included coaches, motivational words, friends, rewards, fame, environment, and audiences. A study by Rees and Hardy (2000), involving ten high-level athletes revealed four dimensions of social support, those being: emotional (comfort and security), esteem (confidence), informational (advice) and tangible (resources). Participants of this study discussed how coaches, parents, and guardians play a role in each of the four dimensions. The study was able to display that athletic success

stems from parental support even at the collegiate, elite-athlete level. Further studies such as Holt and Dunn (2004) revealed that highly skilled soccer players benefited from social support and increased their competencies related to soccer success. Likewise, in a study surrounding world-class rugby players, the level of encouragement a family and extended family offers is very important towards increasing athletic performance (Scanlan, Russell, Beals, & Scanlan, 2003). Morgan and Giacobbi (2006) conducted a study on talent development and social support among highly successful collegiate Division 1 athletes, their study further complimented the fact that successful athletes are bred through a combination of favourable factors such as genetics, practice, and situational factors including family, coaches and teammate support alongside mental characteristics. Hence, there are multiple factors that could influence a student-athlete's or world-class athlete's motivation level throughout their collegiate careers. The way these factors affect them during college can also lead to the way they act within sports in the future.

Literature gap

Through the discussion of multiple studies related to athletes, motivation and parental influences it has become evident that the gap within current literature involves the lack of studies done on how sub-elite and or elite athletes become involved in elite sports without having strong parental support systems. The discussion of Eccles' expectancy value model revealed that many parents and coaches influence an athletes' drive and self-expectancy of success through how they believe their parents value the sport and their participation in sports. Many studies that incorporate Eccles's expectancy value model for sports participation are centered on two age groups: youth and adolescents (Eccles et al, 1983; Eccles et al, 1993; Freedman-Doan et al, 2000; Fredericks & Eccles, 2002; Fredericks & Eccles, 2005). Hence, knowing that youth are highly dependent on parental and coaching support to excel within their domain, how can

athletes who lack such support become successful in their sport? Examining the motivational levels and where athlete motivation stems from for the young-adult athletes who are at the elite and sub-elite level will aid in understanding motivational tendencies of those part of the minority of athletes who excel in their sports. Comprehending the motivational tendencies and examining the lived experiences of such individuals can help in developing and adjusting training regimes with added support systems.

Chapter Two: Rationale, Purpose, Research Questions and Limitations

Rationale

The concept of motivation is a highly discussed topic relevant to all aspects of life, and it is a term we commonly hear within sports. Successful athletes can be described as “driven” and “hard-working” and behind those characteristics are driving forces that have influenced them to train at an elite level. Motivation, as discussed within chapter one, can be both intrinsic and extrinsic, and can be described as internal or external forces that drive one’s behaviour (Vallerand & Thrill, 1993). Every athlete, no matter what competitive level they are at has both internal and external motivators that drives them to train and to compete. Internal motives can be associated to our natural tendencies that seek to explore and find new challenges from which we can learn (Mallet & Hanrahan, 2004). Additionally, an internal stimuli can be anything which gives an individual personal satisfaction. Several intrinsic motives can be linked to achievement behaviour and motivation. External forces can be linked to anything that drives an individual to behave because of a risk or a reward, otherwise known as an incentive. Some factors that could motivate athletes include social inclusion, health and fitness, money, sponsorships, fame, parents, coaches and colleagues. Since motivation can be associated with numerous aspects, the factor that this research will focus on is parents and how they play a role in developing and or maintaining athlete motivation. In a national study of student-athletes regarding their experiences in college, it was indicated that 96% of athletes felt their immediate family provided them with social and emotional support (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2007).

Parental support is a topic that is often discussed in youth and adolescents’ sport development. Ryan and Deci (2000) iterate the importance of motivational influences when they argue that “It is of preeminent concern to those in roles such as manager, teacher, religious

leader, coach, health care provider, and parent that involve mobilizing others to act” (p. 69). Hence, parents play a continuous role in motivating their children throughout life. Many studies have shown that there exists a correlation between parental support and a child’s perceived athletic beliefs and success (Bhalla & Weiss, 2010; Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Boiche et al, 2011; Clarke et al, 2011; Knight et al, 2016). One study showed that parental influences, cultural beliefs and upbringing modify athlete motivation through perceived values and family support (Bhalla & Weiss, 2010). Collins and Barber’s (2005) study of elite female field hockey players, revealed that athletes incorporate parental beliefs and expectations into their own, and parents are seen to be highly influential in motivating their daughters within sports. The studies that have been discussed are often centered on youth and adolescents. Likewise, when looking at previous research, I have noticed that even when examining the transition periods of student-athletes alongside common stressors, most studies continue to focus on the upbringing of youth athletes and support systems prior to the collegiate state. The current research study will be focusing on semi-elite and elite athletes who are considered to be young-adults and have competed a minimum of one year in university or at the provincial or national level.

Most studies that have been done with athletes and motivation have used self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), the hierarchical model of motivation (Vallerand, 1997) or achievement goal-theory (Mallet & Hanrahan, 2004). This study will incorporate the expectancy value theory, as it shows how success expectancies and task values can predict achievement behaviours. (Eccles, 1993; Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998; Fredricks & Eccles, 2004) The parent socialization model was developed to understand family socialization in the sport context and to explain the impact of contextual influences on children’s motivational tendencies. The expectancy–value model includes a number of variables that directly or

indirectly influence success expectancies and task value (Eccles et al., 1983). Variables include perceived task difficulty, goals, self-schema, perceptions of significant others' beliefs and behaviors, interpretations of past achievement outcomes, the cultural milieu and historical events (Cox & Whaley, 2004). Parents and parental figures have the ability to influence how an athlete perceives their abilities in sport, those who perceive they have a high sport ability are typically more inclined to participate in the sport than those who have less favourable views (Jowett & Rhind, 2007). If parents influence the way an athlete thinks and acts, they can influence their decision to stop participating in specific sports. For example, if an athlete is told that they may not be as successful as they were in a previous season, they may be demotivated to participate because they do not see there being a positive external reward. However, if an athlete understands that but is still encouraged to participate for internal factors they may remain in the sport. Through incorporating the expectancy value model, the study will be more structured and centered on how parents fit into the model and how this contributes to overall athlete achievement and motivation.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to gather and understand the lived experiences of athletes who lacked parental support during their athletic careers within the last five years. Furthermore, the purpose includes understanding the meaning these lived experiences may have had for the research participants. The study will be using a phenomenological approach in order to grasp the essence of what it means to be an athlete who lacks parental support. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena, and how the world in which people live is experienced. Phenomenology consists of interpreting lived experiences (Husserl, 1970).

Exploring athlete motivation is important because, each individual has their own types of motives that can lead to different experiential outcomes (Martens & Webber, 2002). Constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are linked to intensity of participation and persistence of effort (Martens & Webber, 2002). Some of these motivation construct lead up to achievement behaviours that reflect on an athlete's sport commitment, time in sport and involvement on sport teams (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005). Understanding how parents shape an athlete's motivation even at an older age, (where many individuals drop-out of sport), can aid in furthering sport-development and involvement at an elite level. Through a phenomenological analysis of parental influences and athlete motivation, I aim to identify experiences of athletes who lack parental support and their experiences of motivation in sport and how this affects their overall performance and well-being.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The proposed study will attempt to bridge the gap found within the literature pertaining to sub-elite and elite athlete motivation based off parental influences. In attempts to do so, the following question will be considered.

- 1) How do elite/university athletes who lacked parental support stay motivated within their sport?

By hearing the lived experiences of athletes, concepts of motivation will be examined.

Furthermore, the study will seek to understand how athletes may substitute typical support systems (parents) for others and the effect those have in sport.

Limitations and Delimitations

Every researcher has their own set of assumptions which help spark interest for their study. These assumptions may create certain limitations or delimitations. Limitations are defined as possible influences that cannot be controlled or may be the results of delimitations enforced by the researcher (Thomas & Nelson, 1996). Limitations can be seen as possible weaknesses, for example conducting a study within a limited time interval can alter the way the study is composed (Simon, 2011). Due to time constraints and the chosen methodology of a qualitative phenomenological research study, the results cannot be generally applied to larger populations but only suggested (Simon, 2011). Wiersma (2000) states that qualitative research happens in a natural setting, which is why it is difficult to replicate studies. Every study and set of results linked to lived experiences is unique, hence studies which use a phenomenological framework can be limited in creating validity and reliability and focus more on creating trustworthiness.

Delimitations are defined as characteristics that arise from limitations in the scope of the study, help define the boundaries of the study and can be controlled through the researcher (Simon, 2011). Delimitations result from the choices made by the researcher, this includes choices of study objectives, research questions, theoretical perspectives, paradigms of the study, the methodology, theoretical frameworks and the choice of participants (Simon & Goes, 2013). Delimitations of this study include the choice of doing a qualitative phenomenological study. This impacts the structure of research questions and interview questions, whereby the questions are structured to unravel the lived experiences of participants. Another set of delimitations includes the selection of participants. The study limits those who participate as it only chooses to select those who fit within the desired criteria. This criterion includes selecting those who are between the age of 19-28 years old and are defined as sub-elite or elite athletes who are or have

been in the train to compete stage. Furthermore, participants must believe that they lacked supportive parental influences during their participation in sports.

Due to time constraints and resources, the study will incorporate a variety of athletes from a variety of sports, both team sports and individual sports. Additionally, this study has chosen to allow participants to define their own parental influence. This includes those who may lack parental support due to, death, divorce (single parents), or disengagement from sports.

Chapter Three: Research Design, Methodology and Methods

Research design and Theoretical Perspective

According to Crotty (1998) a theoretical perspective provides context for the process by using its logic and criteria based off one's philosophical stance. It is important to take a theoretical stance when doing research as it helps guide and organize the research study. Acknowledging a theoretical perspective can also be referred to what one considers as part of their "world-view" and aids in situating the researcher in their study (Jones, Torress & Arminio, 2014). Hays and McLeod (2010), discuss how a world view is centered on beliefs of human nature, social relationships, time, and the environment alongside responsibility and control. This study holds an interpretivist epistemology. Interpretivism, which is also referred to as hermeneutics, rejects universal laws while accepting that interpretation is integral to human interaction and knowing (Schwandt, 2007). Interpretivists are "committed to the philosophy of social construction" but believe that the social world is produced through meaningful interpretations" (Pascale, 2011, p.22). Holding an interpretivist view the researcher understands that the world is complex and ever-changing. Through interpretation researchers unmask what is hidden behind the objective phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). Regarding the meaning of hermeneutics, being an interpretivist also seeks to uncover aspects that have been hidden, in order to present deeper understandings of the phenomenon (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, through the use of an interpretivist lens, the participants' interview responses will be examined to find a deeper meaning of elite-athlete motivational factors. The interviews will also be interpreted to find a deeper understanding of parental influences at an older adult age.

Methodology

Jones et al., (2014) state that qualitative research is informed by one's epistemology, ontology and theory that guides a study design with implementation, data collection and analysis, and interpretation. The chosen methodology for this qualitative study is phenomenology.

Phenomenology is the study of phenomena; how the world in which people live is experienced through conscious acts (Husserl, 1970). Through using a phenomenological standpoint, the aim of this research is to understand the lived experiences and the essence of an elite-athletes motivation, support systems and how those may lead to performance success.

Phenomenology has been fostered through the philosophical underpinnings of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Edmund-Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Jones et al, 2014). According to Moustakas (1994, p.58) "phenomenology is committed to descriptions of experiences, not explanations or analyses". When conducting semi-structured and open-ended interviews, textural descriptions will be created to describe athletes 'perceptions of motivation and success.

Living a life centered on athletics and well being, as a researcher, I hold my own perceptions and experiences and thoughts relating to those lived experiences. Through conducting a research study, I will be answering many of my own questions through discussion of sport-related lived experiences. Data will be collected through an informal, interactive process and will use open-ended questions and comments. Moustakas informs us that although questions may be developed in advance which are aimed at evoking the participants lived experience, they may not be used when the participants share their full story of their experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Participant selection and recruitment

Most qualitative researchers select participants purposefully, whereby “the logic and power of purposeful sampling... leads to selecting information-rich cases for study (Glesne, 2016, p.50). Information-rich cases are defined by Patton (2002), as cases that researchers can learn about important factors that contribute to the research purpose. Based on the research study, both a homogenous sampling and a snowball, chain and network sampling strategy will be used while selecting participants. Clark (1999), defines homogenous sampling as a sampling strategy that selects all similar cases in order to describe a sub-group in depth, in this case the subgroup would be elite-young adult athletes and or sub elite-athletes who lack a parental support system. Snowball sampling refers to obtaining knowledge of potential participants from people who know people and meet the research interests (Glesne, 2016). Finding elite-athletes who lack parental support may be difficult to recruit, this is why using sources of networks and aspects of snowball sampling will be used.

To recruit participants there will be a blast e-mail sent out to those who are student-athletes, coaches and those working within the athletics department of Brock University, with an attached recruitment poster indicating the topic of the study, participants criteria and researcher contact information. The recruitment poster can be viewed in Appendix B. The criteria for the study will include being between the ages of 19-28, having played a sport at the elite or semi-professional level, and having a perception of little athletic support from parental figures. The age group has been chosen based off several Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) models, which indicate that the “train to compete” and “train to win” stage is when athletes are around the age of 18 and start to become serious about their sport as they enter the highest level of competition possible (Sport for Life, 2016). Reaching out to universities will aid in finding elite,

young-adult athletes as many “train to compete” while completing a degree. Posters will also be posted on public poster boards surrounding the universities and athletic training complexes to foster further recruitment. Social media posts regarding the study will also be composed if little participants show interest from the e-mails. Once, contact has been made with selected participants who meet the criteria and time of the study, interviews will take place.

Methods

Crotty (1998), defines methods as techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data. Each methodology helps guide a researcher to use methods that correlate to the study while incorporating their epistemological stance. Qualitative researchers play an important role in producing the data they record through social interactions and questions they ask, hence making research studies co-constructed by the researcher and the participants (Glesne, 2016). Using phenomenology as my methodology will aid in the development of the co-creation of this research study for the purpose of advancing athlete motivation and well-being. Prior to interviewing, epoche will be the first step taken. Moustakas defines epoche as a process whereby prejudgements, biases and “facts” are set aside. epoche can be describes as a process that helps one prepare for new knowledge, it is “a way of looking and being, an unfettered stance” (Moustakas, 1994 p.85). Both Willis (2007) and Patton (2002) argue that life history narratives, observational field notes, creative non-fiction, in-depth interviews, both semi-structured and unstructured, and visual materials are valid methods which can be used to collect data to understand the lived experiences of a participant. Thus, this study will be using in-depth semi-structured and open-ended interviews to gather data. The research study will include semi-structured interviews as these types of interviews allow participant involvement to structure and process the interview (Hays & Singh, 2012, p.239). Furthermore, these types of interviews will

allow consistent flow of conversations while allowing the conversation to take its own route. According to Moustakas (1994) the researcher is responsible for creating an environment where the participant will feel comfortable and will respond honestly and thoroughly. The interview will begin with a conversation followed by a few moments of meditation to gather one's thoughts and awareness. Once rapport is established between myself and the participant, I aspire for the interview to flow in the form of a conversation, whereby the interviewee is not pressured or guided into saying alternative thoughts and emotions. Hence, limiting the use of leading and intruding questions. A leading question signifies that the researcher has established an articular view or sense of the participants instead of establishing it through the participant (Jones et al., 2014). The interview questions have been designed based off *Six Categories of Questions* designed by Patton, (1990). This guide has been used due to its appropriate structure for a phenomenological study, which includes questions relative to experience/behaviour, opinion and value, feeling, knowledge, sensory, and background questions. This will aid in the development of fostering hidden aspects of elite-athlete motivational phenomenon. Through the use of questionnaires and interviews new dimensions of social reality including inconsistencies of participants will help reveal the complexity of the situation. The interview guide can be viewed in appendix C.

Data Collection

The study considered the concepts of gaining access, which Glesne (2011) discusses as a process that involves acquisition of consent to go where you want, observe what you want and talk to who you want. Through generating communication via e-mail and telephone and in person conversations, rapports will be established with participants and key informants. Key informants are people who have a great knowledge of the inquiry setting and have insight on the

desired participant, they help the observer understand what is happening and why (Patton, 2002, p.321). Within this research study key informants could be athletic trainers, coaches and teammates. Interviews will be audio-recorded, and jot notes will also be written while conversing with participants. Audio-recording interviews will aid in recalling knowledge and experiences of the participant. A personal diary will also be kept to express feelings, concerns, and pose questions regarding the shared lived experiences. By keeping a journaled diary on the subject, self-reflexivity, positionality, and assumptions will be composed.

Ethics

Prior to the selection and recruitment process, and participant participation, research ethics will be obtained by following Brock University's ethical guidelines- Research Ethics Board (REB). An application will be submitted to the REB to ensure ethical requirements are fulfilled prior to the commencement of the study. Additionally, the study will attempt to ensure that no psychological or physical harm will be done to the participants. To avoid harm, utmost care must be taken into account (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Considering this, participants will be given consent forms, which will ensure confidentiality in the study. Participants will be able to withdraw from the study at any given time. Ethical approval will be necessary to structure the safety of participants, furthermore, confidentiality will also be kept. Patton (2002) states "confidentiality means you know but won't tell. Anonymity means you don't know, as in a survey returned anonymously" (p.408), due to the nature of methods that will be used, the study will be using pseudonyms, meaning names will be changed and or eliminated during transcription and analysis. Once being a student-athlete, I may come across individuals I am familiar with, which may create greater rapport but will also need more confidentiality. As Jones

et al (2014) point out, principles of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be operationalized in this research study through the statement of informed consent. Each participant will be e-mailed an informed consent form, which will need to be signed prior to any interaction or interview with said participant.

Sample Size

Patton (2002) discusses that sample sizes are dependent on the methodology and the purpose of the study. Hence, one needs to consider what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with the available time and resources. For a phenomenological study, Cresswell (1998), recommends interviewing up to ten participants, where as Boyd (2001) states two to ten participants are enough to reach saturation. Considering the time frame of a master's thesis, this study will include six participants to gather a greater scope of athlete experiences. Interviews will be from 30-60 minutes, with an optional follow up interview or phone conversation. Individual interviews will be held in open and specialized offices, within the universities, although, if certain participants feel uncomfortable at the university another private location can be suggested by the participant.

Data Analysis

Schwandt (2001) points out "If data could speak for themselves, analysis would not be necessary", hence, following data collection, data analysis will begin. First, audio recordings will be transcribed verbatim. Transcribing verbatim will display realistic language and will stimulate greater understanding of emotions and thoughts as seen through what Jones et al, (2014, p.164) state; analysis techniques allow the researcher to notice and identify descriptive, common or unusual ideas, phrases, or words and then attach a broader meaning of the phenomena. These

transcriptions will be sent to participants for review and once cleared, further data analysis will commence. According to Moustakas (1994), data collection and analysis for a phenomenological study begins with the epoche and Phenomenological Reduction. Epoche is defined by Moustakas (1994) as a process where “the everyday understanding, judgements, and knowing are set aside and the phenomena are revisiting visually, naively, in a wide-open sense, from vantage point of a pure or transcendental ego (p.33). Bracketing, also known as phenomenological reduction, will follow this process. Bracketing involves placing the focus of the research in brackets and setting aside all other components so that the research process is purely focused on the topic and question (Moustakas, 1994 p. 97). Horizontalization will follow, whereby each phenomenon has equal value as its essence and nature are being discovered (Moustakas, 1994). Once horizontalized statements are written, meanings will be listed and will be clustered into themes. Once themes and key phrases are established, textural descriptions of the experiences will be constructed. These experiences will be discussed and further summarized to find the essence of the lived experiences.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a term that refers to the concept of validity. Aspects of trustworthiness within qualitative research are of high importance as when researchers can demonstrate trustworthiness within their studies and projects, what they are really doing is “encouraging confidence in their findings” (Jones, 2014, p. 36). While Creswell (1998) indicates that many phenomenologists consider verification as being related to the researcher’s interpretation of the data and what is collected and analyzed, to display trustworthiness within this qualitative phenomenological study, the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability will be used (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility refers to if the findings within

the data set are believable, and can be achieved through transcripts, member-checking, re-reading interviews and providing a descriptive analysis during each step of the analysis. Hence, this study will be using verbatim transcription and will follow up with participants to ensure the recorded interview is true to their words. Transcribing verbatim will add sport specific language and will show the essence within the sport experience. Transferability means the findings of the study create meaning for others (Morrow, 2005). Although transferability is assessed by those who read the study, as a researcher one should use more descriptive and transparent language regarding the participants of the study along with rich contextual description as this could create more meaning and reveal relatable experiences. Dependability is seen to be an evaluation of integrated processes of data inquiry and data collection (Morrow, 2005). Dependability as part of trustworthiness as it prevents findings from being based off researcher biases and is supported through comparison of similar data. Triangulation including the researcher's perceptions, the participants perceptions and the literature review will contribute to the dependability of the study. Lastly, confirmability is defined as requiring the researcher to tie findings with data and analysis (Jones et al., 2014). Presenting participant language and verbatim quote can demonstrate confirmability. Through utilizing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability trustworthiness will be established.

Chapter Four: Analysis

A total of seven interviews were conducted, two female athletes and five male athletes. Of those seven, six interviews were found to match the study criteria and were transcribed verbatim. Each interview revealed common themes of Presence, Mindset, Body and health and Time. This chapter will address the analysis of the study based off Moustakas' framework of phenomenology. Once interviews were transcribed verbatim and sent back to participants for approval, bracketing saliences and horizontalization was done, ensuring each statement had equal value. Due to the length of a phenomenological analysis, steps two and three of the analysis will be described and will be located in appendix D.

Step 1: Epoche

The initial step of the phenomenological process was to set aside personal preconceptions about the topic. These were written down in a separate notebook prior to starting any analysis. Some of the preconceptions included male athletes are more supported than female athletes, most people do not like to discuss family, greater financial support often leads to becoming greater athletes, immigrant parents are more hands off in sports. There were additional preconceptions that were noted from a strong personal connections to sports.

Step 2: Horizontalization

The first step of Moustakas' phenomenological reduction taken was Horizontalization. Each statement taken from the participant's interview was shown as having equal value. The length of the statement created "meaning units". To ensure these statements had meanings, each interview was read multiple times. Only after being re-read each interview was divided into statements. These statements were completed when a participant had completed a message or a thought.

Once the statements were divided, saliences were looked for. Those that stood out the most were noted. These statements capture an essential example of the lived experiences being studied.

Once these textural saliences were selected, they were grouped into clusters that fit a thematic status, otherwise known as a “theme”. These clusters were made and were pieced together into an individual composite textural summary.

Step 3: Imaginative Variation

Returning to themes, other possible meanings of the saliences were examined and imaginatively questioned. These saliences were looked at through a variety of perspectives that could shown different sides of each lived experience. These statements were once again examined using a beyond “common sense” approach, setting aside the major experiences and looking for other meanings that could relate to concept of body, space, relation and time. The individual composite summaries were then revisited and revised to incorporate imaginative variations. Composing these statements helped compose the essential structure of each experience.

Step 4: Individual Composite Descriptions

The fourth step of the analysis included integrating the structural qualities and saliences into individual composite descriptions of the athletes’ experiences.

Athlete #1

A male athlete aged 20 years old, described his background on sports he played in the past, some of those include, soccer, tennis, rock-climbing and track and field. His focus the last few years has been track and field. He differentiates his love for team sports and individual sports, understanding he is a better individual athlete than a team player, he starts to take more responsibility for himself and his training. The Athlete describes both his indoor season and

outdoor track season, but primarily focuses on his indoor season while he is in university, competing at the provincial level. He indicates due to constant training and a lack of proper facilities it is tough to recover and be healthy for a full outdoor season during the summer. Still being at a young age, the athlete states he would like to be more competitive at the collegiate level, however he knows he may not be able to fully succeed because of recurring injuries and because a life of sport is short. The athlete describes how he feels that although sport is meant to be fun, there is a line between having fun and being serious, the more competitive you are in sports, the more serious you act.

The athlete defines motivation as a goal he sets for himself to achieve everyday, furthermore he associates motivation as part of having something to prove. He shares more about how his motivation to train and compete in track and field has influenced his motivation for his everyday life, this includes his motivation to do better academically and be a better person towards his family and friends. He states “it’s the need to prove to other people, yes I am here for a reason, I am not just here to have fun. I’m here to prove something. And mostly I just want to prove myself, that yes, I can do it, I can still run fast, and prove to my parents that I am a good athlete, I guess”.

Following his definition of motivation, the athlete discusses his relationship with his family members. He expressed how his parents were more focused on him with school and were not heavily involved with sports, due to this he feels they did not want him to be involved in sports. He further describes that it was difficult growing up at home as it was a single-mother household. When things got difficult at home this athlete used sports as an escape from home reality. Reflecting upon high school days, the athlete says he spent a lot of time commuting on his own to get to practices and this was one thing that his mother disliked. She felt he should

have spent more time studying and being home with his family than he did playing sports. He confessed that his mother hated seeing him get hurt from sports, which may be a reason why she wanted him to stop running and training. The interviewer relates back to this scenario through personal experiences, stating that sometimes mothers get upset when their child gets hurt in sports because they are concerned. Looking at the present, the athlete states his mother was not happy with him focusing on another year of track because he was injured from the start and she would often see him in pain, he felt she often pressured him into quitting sports for good.

The athlete stated “not being at a competition or a single competition for the last five or six years, so kind of showed that they are not happy with it and they don’t see me succeeding so they don’t want to support the idea of me running track”. This heavily reflects upon the time frame of his sport involvement along with the absence he feels from his parents. He believes that them not being at any competitions or races the last six years shows their lack of care for him and sports. He expresses his feelings by stating that when he has a good or bad race he cannot go to his parents for advice or support because he knows they do not want to hear about it. He also feels that since his parents are absent it demotivates him in his performances. The athlete imagines that if his parents showed up to his competitions, he would be over-joyed and happy, he would also feel pressure to do his best- but a good type of pressure. Athlete expressed he would like to be supported by his parents, by them physically being there at competitions “ the one real change is that I’d want them to be with me at a competition, and just like be there to support me”.

He believed that if his parents were more involved he would have greater motivation in the sport of track and field, however if they were too involved he would begin to resent the sport because he would be doing it for them and not for himself. He indicates that since track is an individual

sport, having parents who may be too involved may cloud one's own ability to self-reflect on their own competitions and performances. As he continues to self-reflect the athlete believes he needs better communication with his parents, feels he needs to express his thoughts on his athletic development and injuries in order to be better and possibly change the way his parents react to his sport involvement.

Over time, the athlete thinks that his parents, primarily his mother, as he does not talk to his father, has given up on encouraging him to quit track, but continues to take very little interest in his sport and track involvement. He feels money provides a sense of support and although they do not support his track participation, they have given him money for new spikes because they know it would make him happy. He further states his relationship with his sibling is simultaneously close and distant because his sister does not care for sports but at the end of the day they support each other. When asked to rank his parental support out of 10, the athlete describes his parents as being supportive on a level of 5/10, there but not there when he needs them to be. When he compares his teammates parents, he realizes others get a lot more support as their parents travel to see them compete while constantly communicating with them on how their practices, trainings and competitions are going. The athlete states "I have learned how to compensate for my parents not being there", therefore adapting to the environments and relations he has.

As the conversation continues, the athlete feels his parents do not play a role in his motivation, but he does remember his mother saying to never give up on something he does because he cannot do it, this is somewhat motivating for him. The athlete would feel more motivated if his parents came to see him compete or train as it would increase his motivation and drive to do better. He reiterates the point of if parents were present, it would spark "a special

kind of motivation”. He believes even if his parents talked to his coaches occasionally, it could contribute to his improvement. Although he states his parents do not increase his sport motivation, the athlete uses a quote often said by his mother in his warmup routines. He envisions her saying to him “do something the best way you can, or don’t do it at all”, he uses this as part of his pre-race imagery and this allows him to compensate for his mother not being physically present. Other days he often incorporates spiritual or religious phrases his parents would use as motivation in his daily routines.

While discussing support systems, the athlete states that his teammates have been very supportive and have given him the ability to use self-affirmation and visualization, which has helped him perform better and stay motivated during the season. Furthermore, discusses how his teammates have helped him improve his overall mood by working together and providing emotional support and support by training together outside of practices. He describes one of his coaches as having a huge impact on his motivation levels and states “I feel like that recognition that I’ve been putting in myself and working and becoming a good hurdler that’s motivated me as well and being recognized by coaches on the good things that I do that also motivates me”.

Athlete #2

The 21-year-old male athlete who competes in track and field at the provincial level describes his sport experiences, in the past he had primarily played basketball. The athlete differentiates the two sports as basketball was very team focused whereas track and field is a very individual sport. He discussed how even when you have your own position in basketball you focus on that but still play as a team, and in track and field, as you get into jumping events, you primarily stay with that group of athletes and do not associate yourself with those who specify under distance runs, sprints, and throws. He describes his differentiating thoughts “ugh

especially in track, even though its an individual sport, there's still a team dynamic, there's that connectivity, there's that togetherness when it comes to being with your team mates and your fellow athletes, and you still have that feeling that your like it's a team sport but in a sense its individual". He indicates that he chose track because he wanted to feel involved in sports again and felt that his jumping ability from basketball could carry over to long-jumping. The athlete described his need for involvement and found belonging to a team fulfilled his inclusion. The athlete reveals that his friend encouraged him to try out for track and field in university, and he felt that once he did, he enjoyed it.

The athlete got into basketball by thoroughly enjoying it for the simplicity of just playing sports with his friends. His parents did register him for different basketball camps when they had summer or winter breaks at school. For the most part, the athlete got into basketball for the social inclusion benefit of it. He specifies that he liked being on sports teams because it gave him a sense of routine. He enjoyed having something to do after school or after classes instead of just watching television. It made him become more productive and increased his time management skills. As the discussion progresses the concept of time becomes more prevalent. He gives a background of the sport of track and field, indicating that he focuses on the indoor season which you train year-round for but compete from November through February. Practices are about four times a week with additional weight training sessions a minimum of three days a week. The athlete continues the logistics of the sport, saying that although as a university they focus on the indoor season, they often practice outside until it snows and there is a lot of pre-season work they are told to put in.

The athlete describes his family as a "typical nuclear", stereotypical family, consisting of his father, mother and brother. He states "we're the type of family, like we eat dinner together

once a week, we ask about each others day, ugh that's about it, we try to be involved in one another lives as much as we can". The athlete continues to say that while he was growing up his parents worked a lot, his father would work nights and his mother would work during the day, both working around six days a week. He would only see his family all together on Sundays. He would often tell his parents when he had practices and games or competitions, but he would understand that his parents would not always be able to make it because they worked a vast majority of hours of the day. He understood they worked to make a living, and understood they could not always be present during his games and competitions, indicating ""kind of hard to see if from their perspective, their trying to do everything that they can to just make a living, pay bills, that sort of thing, I guess it's a little selfish of me to ask so much of them to be there,".

The athlete discusses how his parents would watch sports and discuss sporting events such as the Olympics and the NBA as a means to bring the family closer together. He makes note that his parents ran track as teenagers back in Sri Lanka their native country. He then discusses how they have always encouraged him to be in sports and applaud his present involvement with sports.

The athlete describes his communication in present time, when he tell his parents about his meet schedule, his mom usually states that she will be working and unable to attend and his father acknowledges it but does not go beyond that. He feels that his mother connects with him better as she is a huge Raptors fan and takes pride in Andre De Grasse is from the same region she was born. As the athlete discusses his involvement with the sport of track his parents compare his events to their interests and tie into a nostalgic factor of the sport. The athlete discusses how he tries to explain the logistics of long-jump during a competition and how although his parents start to grasp the concept, they are not sure how that information affects them, "they're like what are we supposed to do with this piece of information, this is more vital to you than it is to us".

He describes how his parents were involved in his sports by providing the necessities, shoes and shorts, and driving him to some practices and camps. Once he was older and participating in track and field, he provided his own spikes and equipment. He then described his mother as being more supportive when it comes to discussing his day to day routines and describes her as more intuitive. The athlete states that when he was younger his parents had to be present and supportive because children cannot always be on their own. He said they tried to be present as much as they could. Once he was older, there was a factor of independence and parents felt they were no longer needed. He goes on to say that although his teammates offer him support and cheering while competing, he feels that having parents be present would be nice. He indicates how on some days his coaches replace his parents “fill that void yeah, they’re just there strictly to help you when it comes to succeeding in whatever event that your participating”. He continues to state that in his childhood he would characterize his parental support as being more evident, he felt their presence when they would give him feedback on his performances in basketball. Comparing his parental involvement to his teammates parents’ the athlete believes that as other parents travel over four or five hours to see their children compete, it provides them with more support, while his parents are located in the GTA, “It’s a rare occurrence, even if there are in the area, so... as I said earlier, my parents are rarely there, even if they can swing me a message before I even start my event, or leave for my event, that in itself, it goes a long way.”

The athlete defines motivation as “it’s something that just gives you a kick in the pants to just keep going, keep ugh enduring, keep ugh yourself on track, just keep doing what you want to do whatever that may be. Motivation comes in lot of different ways, depends on how you perceive it”. As the discussion of motivation emerges, the athlete specifies that “my motivation is within recognition”, he believes this motivates him to train harder and provides a positive

experience within sports. The athlete's goal is to excel at the sub-elite level and cannot envision himself reaching the Olympic level due to his late specialization in the sport. The athlete states his parents do contribute to his motivation because he knows they once were athletes and he is "an extension" of what they are. He has it in his blood to be an athlete. He specifies that "physical presence is just as important as the mental presence", seeing his parents cheer him on is what he believes would increase his overall motivation. The athlete states "an individual sport like track. You're already in an individual mindset, when you start so when you're running or jumping, it's just you out there". He continues to say, "it gives you a lot to think about, but the fact that they're not there for that, it's something that is like a lingering factor... lingering like in the back of my head I guess, like this is okay, this is good, I'm pumped I'm ready to go, I'm looking around like okay, I got my teammates here, they're supporting me too, and then you kind of just think about it and like who would I really value to see here?". He continues, "I want them to kind of just make the effort themselves rather than just telling me would you like it if we came". If he could change one thing about his parents, it would be that his parent would be more present at his sporting events. He believes that seeing them there would prove that they care and support him, he would want them to be physically present, he believes this would increase his abilities in sport and motivation. If his parent were more physically present, he predicts "maybe I might be a lot better at my event, for all I know because they're constantly critiquing and thinking about and trying to just really be involved and see success in that sense. Cause like what they see, they don't see my effort at practice, they only see the perspective from what I tell them at the meet, but if they're able to see what happens at the meet and they see me at home". Physical present would offer a different perspective on how they interact with each other. He indicates that his parents have never attended his meets, they did attend a few basketball games

when he was in grade 10 but that was it. He also believes that if his parent were overly-involved then he may not have been doing sports for as long as he would be because it would feel like a chore.

The athlete states his greatest support system includes his parents, or at least one of them and indicates his coaches and teammates play a huge role as well. He describes how his motivation for basketball had been higher when he was younger because he was still learning and developing skills in the sport, his motivation was also influenced by his mother's interest in the NBA. He states that in track it is different because he finds it is just running straight or in a circle, although others may find it exhilarating, he does not believe it fully applies to him. The athlete ranks himself as a 6 out of 10 for his level of motivation, he reiterates the point that he believes motivation and recognition goes hand in hand and when someone excels at an event and are seen to be the best, they receive more recognition which provides them with a greater driving force to enhance their skills. Because of teammates excel he believes they are more motivated. The athlete believes that sometimes lacking recognition could be a motivating factor to train harder, however he also believes that training hard only motivates you if the work you put in gives you the results you desire. He stated that he would love to feel a 9/10 on being motivated. While sharing a story about when he felt most motivated, the athlete said that the first year he got involved in track he ran mid-distance and one of his coaches told him how proud he was with his improvement in the season. He felt motivated because he started to feel like he found his niche event. The athlete states that he rarely receives recognition from his parents on his improvements because it is difficult to hit personal bests (pbs) every meet. When he does hit pbs his mother is happy for him. He states his father is the strong silent type so he did not speak to him much. In the past, the athlete believes the way people have perceive him and his abilities has affected his

motivation. He indicates that your coaches telling you one thing versus your parents sharing the same thought make a huge difference. Coaches deal with more physical approach while parents can trigger that emotional support the athlete needs. He states, "I mean hearing it from one person compared to someone you actually value, that's something. Even though it's the same message it has different connotations." The athlete believes that in order to improve his motivation he needs to focus on improving his weaknesses and working to improve his overall form of jumping. He believes he often looks at his strengths to outweigh his weaknesses.

The athlete believes that aging from high school to university has increased his motivation because he is more capable of his abilities and more understanding of what he needs to do to achieve his results. This discussion incorporates the ideas of mindset and time, along side motivation and ability. Going into his last year of track and university, the athlete feels he will be more motivated because he found an event that interests him. In terms of his post-university life, the athlete believes he will continue to stay physically active but does not believe he will participate or train to be competitive in track and field ever again. He participates in track now because he believes it opens doors to meet new people, try new things, and experience new things. The athlete foresees himself as staying physically active and still utilizing his jumping skills in pick-up basketball. He believes that setting a goal for being healthy and fit would increase his motivation in life "like it gives me motivation to keep up my physical standing, as well as its something that I can push myself towards, achieving a common goal, a goal I've set for myself". He would like to utilize the skills and knowledge he has learned from sports within the last few years to remain physically active, so it does not seem like sports was a waste of his time. As the conversation comes to a close, the athlete states that since he will be entering his last year of competitive sports, he believes his parents might make an appearance to be present.

However, if his parents are not there, he knows he will still have the support of his coaches and teammates. He would simply value his parents present more.

Athlete #3

This 24 year old female athlete has always been involved in sports. Her main sport has been cheerleading, but she also got into the sport of track and field in University. She describes her cheerleading experience of 8 years, until the age of 20, where she began to focus on track and field. She competed at some of the highest levels available in her region, including provincial and national teams. The athlete gives a time frame for her sport involvement, stating she had been involved in cheerleading for about 8 years and ran track for about 6 years. She indicated she had about 10 competitions per year which would last an entire weekend. The athlete describes her initial experiences with cheerleading, she chose the sport of cheerleading due to her love of gymnastics, she loved tumbling and flipping “I loved learning new skills, working with teams, being able to be the flyer the one up in the air, I loved performing, being able to compete and put on a wonderful performance, and you know that if you have a good performance that you and your team put on, it’s honestly the best feeling in the world”. Sadly, she felt that her parents did not support her being in gymnastics due to her injuries and the fear of gymnastics affecting her natural growth. She continues to describe her transition of sports, she got involved with track and field because she loved sprinting which also related back to sprinting in tumbling. She compares how her sports interrelate as both cheerleading and track, specifically sprinting and hurdling require speed, agility and flexibility. She shares how she got into the sport, stating she initially started off with gymnastics and her academy had started advertising a new upcoming cheerleading team. At the time, cheerleading was not as common and was in the developing

stages of becoming a recognized sport in Canada. Due to the athlete's body size, weight and skill, she had become a flyer. The athlete shares her description of her love for the sport, she loved being a flyer and the athleticism associated with being in the air, along with how cheerleading combines both performance and competition.

She expressed how all competitions rely on the hard work you put in for several months "especially in cheerleading or dance that sort of thing, you work so hard like months and months for your routines and they're 2 minutes long and that's all you have to prove how hard you've worked". She goes on to discuss the logistical training times, indicating she spent about 12 hours of practice per week for cheerleading. The athlete continues the discussion of the logistics of the sport and discusses how you would train for the sport year-round, but placed an emphasis during September through April, with competitions beginning in November ending in April. The athlete describes her fear of being put in as a replacement during a routine because an older flyer had fallen and was unable to compete. She states she did fall a few times in a competition, but it was not in a disastrous way. She expresses how she had excelled quickly in cheerleading and tumbling but suffered an injury and could no longer compete at the highest level due to a tumbling mental block. She stated, "I had pretty much the highest level tumbling that I could, which was a round off handspring full, a standing tuck, pretty much everything that could guarantee you a spot on a highest level team and I fell and I did hurt myself and I scared myself and through that time I developed a tumble block and honestly had to return how to tumble and never got back up to the level I was once at." She expressed her frustrations which also linked to her coaches and parents' frustrations on her involvement in the sport.

As the interviewer and athlete started to discuss the athlete's family background, the athlete specified she had grown up in a four-person house with her mother, father and older

sister. She specified that her and her sister who were two years apart were complete opposites in everything they did, including sports. Her sister was taller than her, more muscular, and focused on traditional sports like soccer and hockey, while the athlete had a smaller build and focused on gymnastics, cheerleading and track and field. In discussing the athlete's view on sports, the athlete described her dad as a well-rounded athlete, a semi-pro hockey player who also played football. Her mother was not given a chance to participate in sports as much as she would have liked but did play some basketball when she was younger. As parents, they both actively engaged with their children and encouraged their children to get involved in sports. The athlete shares her story of what her mother thought of gymnastics once she was able to compete at a higher level. The mother disagreed with the coaches who stated that at the age of 10, the athlete needed to train multiple times a week, compete a lot more and have a strict diet. The athlete's parents had decided to end the athlete's gymnastics development as they understood possible side effects of the sport (nutrition, injuries, time commitment). She describes "they were maybe hesitant because I had to go to all these extra lessons and practices and I had to keep pushing myself, and travelling to. to be on the competitive team, I think it was just a lot for them". Due to the geographical location of the athlete's family, there was limited level of tumbling and cheerleading offered at which she could excel at, they agreed to sign her up for a team which was a bit far to drive to. The athlete felt that her parents did not fully understand the sport of cheerleading because they were used to her sister's traditional sports.

The athlete believes that her mother supported her more so than her father because her father prioritized her sister's hockey, "umm but definitely not as supportive as they were for my sister, because they knew the sport, they understood it, and obviously my dad was the coach and they have a lot of responsibility for those sports.". As the athlete grew older, she felt her parents

supported her more, giving an example of when she cheered at university football games, her parents came to watch and found it cool to see her on the sidelines. When experiencing a tumble block, they did not know how to deal with it or help her. When asking about how her parents reacted to her frustrated emotions surrounding her tumbling block, she described her experience, as a time where she felt unsupported and continued to state “ I couldn’t tumble, they were honestly at the point of not wanting me to continue and they weren’t going to pay for it. So, I didn’t have much motivation that way... they basically told me I should just quit”. She described this experience as an emotional car ride home with tears in her eyes because she was very upset with herself. When asked if they would react in the same way for her sister, she believed that that would never be the case because her sister never seemed to get frustrated in sports and presented less emotions in it.

The athlete expressed her parents demonstrated support for her sports by driving her to practices, and later once her sister went off to university her parents had more time to watch her compete. On a side note, the athlete mentioned that her sister had played rep teams all her life and had NCAA and OUA hockey coaches recruiting her but chose to give up hockey after high school. When discussing her sister’s decision to quit, the athlete shared that her parents were shocked about her decision due to the time they invested into her hockey development. However, her sister felt she had no time to be a teenager and was unable to do things like see friends and work which is why she chose to focus on her own interest in university, as opposed to playing competitive hockey. She did say she continues to play beer league hockey as an adult. The athlete revealed that her mom was the primary parent of support, and became the “cheer mom” who would help plan fundraisers for the team once the athlete showed that she wasn’t happy about the lack of support she was receiving. She expressed that she would often get frustrated

with her father because she was unable to talk to him about the sport “I would talk about things sometimes and he just wouldn’t get it.”.

Over the years they became more understanding of the sport and the tricks and positions. While discussing her parents’ involvement, the athlete described that her mother’s physical presence was 99% at her competition because as a child, you would not be able to be dropped off at events like these, especially when you had to travel to Florida for nationals, a high level competition that athlete would travel to every year. When discussing her parents attendance in track and field, the athlete described her parents’ attendance as “rare”, she felt they did not attend because they knew track was her secondary sport, she was also older and travelled with the team and was seen to be a mediocre competitor at the provincial level. She also discussed how when she entered track and field in university, she was aware that she was not going to be super good because it takes years of practice to excel in this sport and she did not have enough time to improve. The athlete shares her thoughts of her dad’s involvement in running because his mother was an Olympic qualifier, but the athlete knew she would not get to this level. She was happy to celebrate her own personal bests, however once she peaked, she got injured and stated it was tough to make a comeback.

Comparing her involvement with a hypothetical situation of her sister, the athlete feels that they provided financial support but were not emotionally invested into her sports. Had her sister gone back to hockey she feels her parents would be more involved because they knew the sport. While comparing her parents’ involvement with her teammates’ parent’s involvement the athlete believes it was similar because cheerleading was an up and coming sport many parents did not fully understand the extent of athleticism in it. She compares the sport of cheerleading to the sport of hockey as, hockey parents would be very involved in tournaments and cheering but

they would not be in cheerleading. When she would compete in track in high school, her mom would drive her to practices or pick her up but stated she needed to choose one sport and felt she would not excel in track. Once the athlete reached university and started to get back into track, her parents did not support it financially, they did pay for her schooling, but she paid for her living, food and sport expenses. She felt that her sister's hockey fees and travelling for her sister's tournaments had always been more expensive than her cheerleading and her parents invested more time and money into her sister's sports.

The athlete believes her parents did play a role in her sport motivation, when she was young her dad would help her run at the park, however when she suffered a tumbling block her parents demotivated her by telling her she should quit the sport. They also did not help her practice flips or tricks or support her when she was trying to practice on her trampoline. As the athlete got older, she believed her parents influenced her motivation in other domains besides from sport in order to prepare her for the world. While continuing the discussion of the athlete's parents present perspective on her sports, she described her living situation, since she has lived alone for several years they do not take much interest in what she does, they are aware she goes to the gym and tries to live a healthy lifestyle. She described her communication with her parents regarding track "I mean we would talk about it, but it wasn't like they were invested in it, like they didn't want to know my times, or the workouts I was doing or ways to improve." She further discusses an experience she had while competing at her last track meet in university, "Something really special that shocked me was that, my last race in university, it was like 3 hours away and my dad actually came to it and saw me race, he showed up which I didn't expect." The athlete stated that when her dad showed up to see her race it made her very nervous because she already knew she was not going to do well. She was motivated to try her best

because she knew he made a long trip to go see her. She then stated that her parents could have been more supportive and involved if they had learned the names of techniques or stunts, and if they offered more support when she was going through a difficult phase of her sport (her tumbling block).

The athlete feels that her parents did not support her as much in the sport of cheerleading because they did not see it as a sport that would benefit in the long run, no paid scholarships, no jobs, no real life world connections. The athlete agrees that while you are young, your main support system is your parents because someone has to be able to drive you to practices and pay for your sports. However, as she grows older, she realizes that her main support systems included her coaches. She reflects on current relationships and states that her parents would never tell her to quit something she loved, but they did “So it’s funny because you know they told me to quit something that I absolutely loved, when I was younger”. Whereas when she had jobs she disliked and felt miserable, her parents encouraged her to stick with it because she was an adult and had to take responsibility. She found that as a young-adult she has very little to no financial aid from her parents.

The athlete believes that cheerleading did do a lot of things for her, contrary to her parents’ belief. She believes cheerleading kept her very sheltered throughout high school, she did not party, smoke, drink because she was focused on excelling in sports. Even coming into university, she wanted to do cheerleading more competitively as opposed to the social aspect of being a university athlete who parties with their team. She also described her parents as strict growing up “I did have strict parents where I wasn’t allowed to go out and party and stuff or be around people they didn’t accept. So, it was a big shock for me, being on a team with older girls, and with people who party, it was a normal thing, but sports wasn’t a big thing for them”. She reveals

that she would have liked to change the way her parents showed support through learning more about the sport and being more emotionally and physically supportive when she was faced with injuries. She stated “maybe if my parents would talk to the coaches, I know they didn’t talk about the teams and choose them or give much input but maybe if they talked to the coaches for me then it would have maybe could have made an impact. Again, maybe they weren’t comfortable with doing that because they didn’t know the sport”. Having a love for the sport of cheerleading and them telling her to quit made her second guess her passion. The athlete states “So if I had kids who did sports that I knew I would be more motivating, even if they didn’t then I would still try to be more motivating towards them than what my parents were for me.” if she were a parent, she would provide more support to her kids. She reiterates the point that since her sports were more “new” than the traditional hockey sport, her parents were not as involved, however she compares it to her boyfriends parents who also coached hockey and indicates that hockey parents are very supportive, again reflecting back on her sisters involvement.

The athlete defines motivation as “finding the strength within yourself to be able to succeed at whatever you want to do. If you don’t have motivation to do something, you’re not going to do it” She believes that if you lack motivation, you will not commit to doing certain things. In a self-reflection, the athlete believes that overall she is a highly motivated person, she speaks about her drive to excel in her career and how she has always been active and plans to stay in shape as she ages even after her career in sports. The athlete describes her level of motivation a being a 10/10 because she was always encouraging others to keep training. She feels that her motivation struggle when she was older and could not tumble anymore because she did not have others cheering for her, and she felt she was letting the team down. She stated “that it’s really hard, you know its tough to be a motivating factor when you’re just screaming on the

inside”. She continues to describe her motivation in track as being a highly motivating teammates, she felt that since she was not part of the relay team she did not have other relying on her which allowed her to focus on herself and just be a respectable and coachable athlete. The athlete shares her experiences of when she felt most motivated. She stated that she felt most motivated to win and to train in order to prove to her coaches she could advance to higher levels in cheerleading, she further felt motivated in her last year to win a national title, but sadly came in second.

She expressed that her motivation in university was different because she felt her cheer team had a different dynamic than the one, she was used to. She stated “When I was in university, I didn’t really enjoy the team, I was motivated to do well and prove to myself but that was about it. I didn’t feel a connect with my team. Track and field I just wanted to motivate everyone to enhance friendship and the team vibe, but I knew I wasn’t going to be special, I knew I wasn’t going to do well but I wanted to be that motivating person for the team, for everyone.” The athlete shared how she found that as a student athlete she faced difficulties balancing, school, work, sport and relationships but found she excelled at everything due to her motivation and time management skills. Times the athlete felt interrupted her motivation was when she quit cheerleading after first year of university, she found herself in a slump because she transferred schools, was staying at home, had a long-distance relationship and was not involved in sports. she also mentioned that her tumbling block played a huge role in the way cheerleading played out for her. She stated that her main goals in sports were “to be the best athlete I could, make the coaches happy. Be a coachable athlete”. The athlete described how she tried to overcome her difficulties of tumbling blocks and increase her motivation levels through discussing her issues with sport psychologists. The athlete discusses how her final year of track

she sprained her ankle and sadly was out for 4-8 weeks, never being able to fully train with confidence again due to fear of re-injury and not being able to recovery in such a short indoor-track season. She said “That’s always been my main goal, to try to do my best and take improvements and work on things so I was motivated to get back into it, I do love the sport of track but it was tough because I wasn’t getting the results I wanted. While being injured in her last year of track, she found motivation to run her final races when she was told she should not by doctors, because she knew it would be her last chance to compete in sports at a highly competitive level “I think just knowing that I was going to be my last chance to do competitive sports. After university there was nothing, there still is nothing for me to do to be in a competitive sport”.

When asked about how the athlete foresees aging affecting her motivation to stay physically active, she shared her current situation “For me, personally, working full time and another job, and running my household, it’s exhausting. You know I get to the gym once a week these days and it’s just my body. I just have a lot of aches and pains and being diagnosed with hypo-thyroidism that’s affected my energy... I feel like I’m a 100 years old”. She finds she is motivated to stay fit but finds it hard to be motivated for other things because she feels she has nothing to work towards. The athlete specifies that she felt she was as motivated as she could have been, however she feels that if her parents talked to her coaches it could have had a better impact on her sport involvement and she could have excelled past her tumbling block. She also states that if her parents had been excessively involved, they may have not left it up to her to decide when to quit sports, or they would have been less understanding when she felt stuck in her mental block, additionally she states it may have been better for her career or it may have been worse.

Looking at the athlete's present involvement, the athlete does occasional drop in aerial classes, and wanted to sign up for a new adult cheer tea which focused on stunting, dancing and jumps (omitting tumbling-where her fear lies) her parents were not fond of the idea and believed she should spend money on something better. Similarly, in the past her parents felt "cheerleading isn't going to get you anywhere, it's not going to get you a scholarship, it's not going to help you in life. It's not gonna make you get paid to play sports. whereas my sister could have gone to school for free.". The athlete plans to continue to be a very motivating person and help motivate seniors in healthy active living as part of her job. The athlete describes that her next motive in life is to focus on working hard, excelling in her job and possibly getting into a dance class if she finds the time and money. She plans to stay physically active through life but understands life comes with many curveballs.

Athlete #4

The athlete's current age is 28, he describes how he used to play a competitive level of soccer, and would define his level of sport as amateur status because he was not being paid, but was being groomed to play in the top-leagues across the world beginning at the age of 16. He stated "So, it wasn't professional in the definition being compensated, but it was professional in aspirations of being the best in the world.". The athlete played academy football (soccer) in England for Liverpool football club. The athlete goes back to share his experience of playing travel football prior to getting scouted for an elite-football club in England. The athlete discusses his training preparation and the recommendations he received from trainers in order to develop and groom his body for more advanced football. Stating practices were about three hours, two of those hours being conditioning and strength training while one hour was reserved for

scrimmages. This athlete would often run competitively with other sprinters as well. He goes on to discuss how many games he played throughout the season, stating that at an international level it was much more but once he was out of the academy he played around 30 matches a year per club and 25-30 of indoor futsal during off-season. He expresses his main career was between the ages of 16 and 20. He reveals that due to a series of head injuries, a neurologist told him that playing at competitive levels was no longer possible due to the risk of being reinjured. The athlete continues to describe his background of his football journey, indicating that within the first year of the academy he suffered an ankle injury. Since he was an import player he was sent back to Canada and continued playing for a semi-professional league. By the time he was 18, he was invited to tryout at the TFC academy, sadly once again he suffered an ankle injury and had to take time off. After realizing that he could not compete at the highest level for a while, he was sought out by NCAA recruiters.

The athlete expresses how football was the main sport he invested his time into, but did not feel that emotionally it was the sport for him. He believed it was a sport he was forced into due to financial restraints, although he did fall in love with it after a few years. He describes his motives for playing football included his role model, David Beckham, his father who once played in the NHL, his accessibility to the sport followed by the discipline the sport brought. The athlete felt the sport of football was also in his blood as he came from European decent and had cousins who played for the Manchester united academy. The athlete describes the sport environment, “that it’s one of the only places that I find completely peaceful.” Which referred to the football field. He feels that football is an entirely beautiful game that is composed of stamina, agility, power and explosiveness. He understands that many people can see this sport as soft, but states from playing firsthand it is one of the hardest sports to excel at as it involves

footwork, and a toll on the body. He compares it to when he played rugby and states he has never been more injured than when he played academy football. He described the footwork as he stated, “Most people don’t realize, and girls, forgive me, they could be dancers in the Russian ballet, if they weren’t professional athletes.” Following this he goes off on a memory from when he got to a stadium where David Beckham played, being 18 at the time, he describes this as a humbling experience and provided them with a lot of nostalgia incorporating the smell of the wet grass, and thinking about past titles and trophies. Looking across his career highs, he has always dreamt of playing for Dortmund, later only playing for the MLS (as a realistic goal) he played a couple games as a call up. He expresses his next focus and realistic dream was to obtain an NCAA scholarship and get an education, when it came down to it he decided it was best to stay in Canada for his own political and personal reasons.

Looking at his family relationship, the athlete described it as a blended family, he had three sisters and a brother, although some of them came from other marriages they always associated each other as siblings and were close. The athlete speaks highly of his father even after being faced with alcoholism, he is proud to say his father became 25 years sober this year. The athlete shines light on growing up with his father recovering out of rehab for his alcoholism, and essentially stating they were not financially stable, his parents wore old bummy clothes, he expressed “ “they never did anything for themselves because they gave us everything they had.”. Both the interviewer and athlete describe their parents as hard working and it may have come from having a European culture, a sense of stubbornness to never ask others for help. He felt he learned a lot from him and admired him for all his hard work in and outside of sports. He speaks highly of his brother as well and continues to say the most difficult relationships he had within the past has been with his mother and his sister. The athlete describes that his mother’s intentions

to get him into sport were for recreational and social reasons, but was more serious about his brother getting into sports for success. He further describes his father as having a “hockey dad” mentality which came with giving aggressive advice on how to play, this encouraged him to play dirty until he realized he did not want to be known as a rude player but rather be known for his skills. He stated, “he would kind of plant the seeds of aggression into your head, like play with a chip, do some things that were a little dirty, kind of encouraging whatever it took to get an edge”.

He shares his perspective on how his parents showed their perspectives on sports. Expressing, they would not come to games too often because his dad worked a lot and his mother did not drive. When they did come to a game, his father would voice his opinion during the car ride home while his mother would tell his father to back off when the athlete was not in a mood to talk. The athlete felt that his father would overstep his boundaries and disrespected his son when speaking too much about his sport, given that his father did not play football. He further describes his interpretation of how his parents thought about sport participation, he stated his mom assumed if her child was in sports he would stay out of trouble and his father believed that he could learn to perform under pressure, learn through pain, build resiliency to overcome adversities, he would learn how to overcome what life may bring. The athlete shares how he perceived his parents while playing away from home, he believed they supported him and his dreams but once his dreams crashed due to injuries, he describes them as being depressed for him, knowing that he was hurt from his unfortunate turn of events, “They definitely felt that it broke me and they were broken by it too, because they saw how broken I was.”. They were still supportive of him to keep playing back home. Reflecting back on his and his brother’s sports, he heard how his dad would say in the present, now that they are older, how he always admired the

way his son played and everything he had achieved. They believed it was a sense of pride to have raised men of high character.

In describing his parents' support, the athlete states the way his father would talk to him made him motivated as it fostered him to act upon his emotions. For example, he stated "Anger is a tremendous source of motivation for me". He discusses that his dad would encourage him in that way. While his mother was seen as a safety blanket for him, she would provide more emotional support and be more empathetic with her maternal instincts, he states she was a very nurturing person. He expressed "she would remind me that there are a lot more things in the world than just playing football.". The athlete expressed the only thing that truly put a rift in their relationship was that his mom developed a drinking problem once his grandmother passed away. He believes she used the wrong form of coping, and she admits that now that she is better.

As the athlete discusses his parents' attendance at games, he felt they were present 40% of the time while he was 13-15 years old, once he played elite football they could not be present because of the distance. He reflects upon the question further and realizes that his parents usually made an effort to stream his brother's baseball games while they never bothered to watch him play semi-professional football when he played in the same stadium as the Chicago bears "you get resentful not towards my brother but them, kind of like did either you ever play at soldier field? Like what are you doing that's more important than that?". He describes how he felt angry towards them for this experience and could not understand their reasoning for these actions. He sometimes felt overshadowed by his younger brother who played an elite level of baseball, and felt this sport was easier to recruit for as opposed to football. He believed they were both great athletes with decorated amateur careers. However, he felt that a lot of family money was invested into his brother as oppose to him "And I always felt that I was equally impressive

as my brother, but I never garnered the validation and respect that he did". To get to games, the athlete would usually get a ride from other players or coaches. when describing his parents role in the sports his sister were involved in, he believes they were put into feminine sports such as figure skating and artistic gymnastics, but he feel that this was common in the 1980s as females were seen as more delicate then.

The athlete shares a memory of a time where during a game, an opposing player tackled him and practically wrecked his ankle, and his father started yelling and swearing at the referee and the player, at this moment the athlete felt he was being supported by his father. Whereas his mother would often cry when he got hurt and run down to make sure he was okay, he felt as if his mother lived vicariously through him, when he felt pain she could feel it too. When he played in England, he describes his calls with his parents as his mother asking about sites and the country but his father focusing on his performance and putting anxiety into his head. The athlete shares emotional comments regarding how he felt about his parents' support, he stated "I would say I still have supportive parents but just didn't support me as a young man and as an athlete in the ways that I really needed." He continued to say "parents have a way of making you feel really special amongst a lot of extraordinary people... It's not that I ever felt unsupported, but I didn't feel supported in the ways that as an athlete, as a human being I personally needed... like the type of support that I was getting did not align with the support that I needed.". He felt he needed positive reinforcement and someone to speak to him about the concept of being moral, making mistakes in sports as opposed to how taking specific action should lead to specific roads. He expressed "yeah, I always seek validation, like that's my biggest weakness, in my personality, external validation. And it was tough to feel validation when people who don't really matter to you are the ones congratulating you all the time.". He described his father as a dreamer

for him and when he felt he was not good enough to keep playing he broke down attempting to tell his dad he no longer wanted to play. Having a similar conversation with his mother, he remembered the exact words he shared with her when he contemplated quitting football. He stated “I have a broken body and a broken self-esteem and I just don’t want to play anymore.”.

The athlete described how his competitive sport took away other portions of life that most teens got to experience and made it difficult for him to take school, relationships, and friendships seriously. He felt he missed out on a lot of fun things the average teenager would do. Reflecting on the positives of the sport, he believes that the sport brought him discipline and fulfillment of accomplishments. He further goes onto describe how it brought a lot of negatives as people would label him as a dumb jock, it brought him anxiety, and felt neglected by many people throughout his life. Going off on a tangent he describes how most of his teammates looked up to him and his maturity level despite being younger. He would say that 95% of them were proud of him as a captain, however he got angry at some for not taking the sport seriously and implied some partook in drugs and drinking alcohol when they should not have been “I’m not going to go out there separate my shoulder for the third time this season while you’re out there drinking, partying probably doing illegal drugs cause most of them did, till 3 am.”

When describing his parental support compared to his teammates, he believed they were not much different. He gave an example where one player’s parents attended games, but his mother would say nasty things and his father would be preoccupied by his blackberry for most of the games. whereas his parents were absent but did not behave in a negative way. He expressed, “So I think my parents were more invested in my career but were absent physically a lot more than other parents, but that absence for me was really what hurt me the most.”. The athlete

discusses how other people's perceptions of him or his inability to do things motivates him the most, as he does things for himself he also tries to prove people wrong.

Speaking of the present time he feels that his parents have been showing more support towards his academic career than they did for his sports and he finds the support motivating. speaking about his parents absence, he relates it to a fear of loss in time, he believes that the way he thought of his parents not watching him play was because they felt it was a loss of time by stating "you're using your time to do something better than supporting me. So therefore, supporting me is not a good use of your time, and that's how my brain rationalizes that absence." This further hurt the way he felt within sports. The athlete discusses his parent-based experiences and how his parents absence provided him motivation to perform better as he looked forward to telling them about his success, however he realized that they still did not show much care or guilt after not being present, which made him resent his parents more. The athlete shares another memory of how he loved hearing his mom cheer him on when he was very young, and his dad was very analytical and often busy with work. As he got older he had other people such as coaches supporting him, for example being recruited in Michigan his coaches went with him, however he compares it to his brother where his parents sent out tons of videos to NCAA D1 school to aid his recruitment. He felt he built himself a community of people who did support him. He felt his brother was given more opportunities to succeed, he also supported his brother. In concluding statements, the athlete felt that if there was something he could change about his parental support and involvement it would be for them to be present and prioritize spending time watching their kids. He relates this to the way he would act if he had children and they were in multiple sports "I just think that if I was a parent with multiple kids, with being athletes, I think it's imperative that one parent goes to one thing and another goes to another one and then they

alternate afterwards. If you can do it". He further compares how each parent acted differently and they could have learned from each other to balance out the support he needed "I kind of wish she learned about the game more like my dad did. I kind of wish my dad learned to chill more like my mom did". The athlete feels that if his parents were overly involved or stepped out of line, he would resent the sport more, he states that every time his father had a conversation with him which was slightly negative it pushed him towards not wanting to play. The athlete reiterates the point that although he was getting support from his parents it was not the support he needed, regardless he appreciates all they have done for him. During the present time he believes his family, his colleagues and his academic supervisors provide him with a good support system.

The athlete defines his interpretation of motivation as "any way to take a factor or entity of some kind that makes you want to perform better... Whether it's like pain or turning depression into something constructive but I feel like motivation is this innate process where you're taking something negative in your life and turning it into something constructive". He associates motivation to a positive idea and good intentions. The conversation starts to focus on motivation and the athlete describes himself as being very motivated and proving that with his work ethic as he would spend hours training, training with athletes outside of his sport and felt that the confidence he had elevated his capabilities. In comparison to his teammates the athlete felt that he ranked a 9/10 for being motivated, he justified this ranking as he felt he sacrificed a lot to be an elite athlete, he refrained from drinking, smoking and eating unhealthy foods. since the athlete could no longer participate in competitive sports due to his head trauma and other injuries, he still feels motivated to be involved in sports and looks forward to the future of taking up the sport of golf. In his leisure time he focuses on fishing as it provides a similar sense of

calmness that football once brought and allows him to peacefully reflect on his thoughts and emotions he would otherwise take out in sports.

Reflecting back, the athlete believes he was most motivated to win while playing at a lower level than usual, because they were versing a rival team whom upset him in a previous season, him and his teammates were excited to win the game. He further does not relate some experiences to positive ones as he expresses “England because it left such a bad taste in my mouth, and because it was really the beginning of the end at such a young age, it did the opposite of motivate me for a while, it discouraged me.”. When asked what has interrupted his motivation levels in the past, the athlete described his experience with depression and anxiety have affects it 150% of the time. He further states that because he is an empathetic person, if someone he is close to is going through something difficult, he feels for them and triggers many emotions in himself that he cannot fully control because he cannot solve other peoples problems. Both the interviewer and the athlete discuss how they take emotion and turn it into a positive form of exercising, and they have used sports a both a distraction and a coping mechanism. In continuing the conversation of sport as a coping mechanism, the athlete believes he needs to develop mental resiliency skills to overcome his current issues. He further stated “I need to develop some mental resiliency skills so exercise doesn’t become the combative strategy to mental health problems... needless to say the mental clarity you get from exercising, and I usually take emotional pain and turn it into resilience”. He wants to associate sport with more positive things as he plans to be a sustained active person during his life.

As part of a reflection, he believes that his traumatic injuries have impacted his motivation levels and is curious to see how they will unfold in the future. He believes he will always have a love for the sport as he stated, “the desire to play is there, you don’t lose the love

for something that was your life at one time.” He continues to describe how having a partner in life could be motivating in life, it would motivate him to do certain activities he once enjoyed. Through his eyes the world is more beautiful when you have someone to share it with. He continues to say that with the right person in his life, someone who he could compete with to be a better version of him, along with the right environment, his motivation levels will be good. The athlete continued to state, “I just want to appreciate what life offers because it can change in a day, it can change any time. I try I don’t like clichés but they become clichés for a reason. I’m not a goodbye kind of person, I’m a see you later, kind of guy. I’m very paranoid in that way. I hate when people say goodbye to me, and more importantly, it plays into sports, where I had to say goodbye. It’s me facing a fear of sorts, and that was motivating in a way, to have the nerve to walk away. Umm and realize you won’t die because you’re not playing and my life went back to being normal, with whatever normal is.”. He expresses that life goes on after sports, and it should not be something to fear. Looking towards the future, the athlete, although loving the sport of football, does not believe he would get into coaching or even putting his own kids into the sport due to the amount of injuries that could come from the sport. After experiencing concussions firsthand, he believes the sport needs to be refined and prioritize some safety aspects. In concluding statements, as a retired athlete, the individual has been learning and trying out other sports and realizes the amount of work and dedication each sport needs, this increases the amount of respect he has for others.

Athlete #5

The athlete is a male who is 26 years old, he described his experience competing in triathlons at the national level. He states that he started running when he was in grade nine and

had focused on cross country and track and field in university. He shares some logistics of the sport and states the longest he has run has been 95km which took him about 12 hours. The athlete describes his background training for his sport, stating he usually weight trains about three times a week doing cleans, deadlifts, bench press, squats, and practices Jiu Jitsu once a week. He expresses he got into Jiu Jitsu when he was in the army, but it is tough on his joints now. Going back to the logistics, the athlete had participated in five main competitions the previous year, after realizing that was too much, he had decided to participate in two or three this coming season. On top of labelled competitions, he labels his own training sessions and bike tours as competitions because he times himself. The athlete would like to qualify for the Olympic distance which is held summer of 2021. He explains the Olympic distance as a shorter triathlon that is more focused on transitions and speed. Olympic it's a 1.5k swim and the ironman is 4k and the bike is 50k and ironman it's 180k and the run is 15k and ironman is 42k so it's a marathon. The interviewer and athlete discuss how yoga plays a huge role in your athletic performances, he states that he often calls in a yoga instructor for him and to his friends. He describes his experiences with taking marijuana edibles before some classes to feel ultra Zen. He can no longer do that because of his involvement with the army.

The athlete describes the sport of long-distance running and his interest in it because it fucks with your mind, "okay yeah it fucks with you hard, to the point where you kind of feel like with your core self and you don't really experience that until you really deprive your body from comfort in that way. When you're depleted, you're like the biggest asshole in the world". The athlete states that keeping calm during long races is key when you are trying to maintain a relative high speed for hours on end. The athlete describes what sparked his interest in running, stating that he got into triathlons because he got bored of running. While living in Montreal he

became accustomed to the biking society there and would often bike up hills. His main downfall of triathlons is the swimming portion, which he was planning on training for before the Covid-19 lockdown occurred. Living in Canada, the athlete discusses how training in the winter is much harder due to the cold climate, he still trains indoors as much as he can. The athlete believes that his sport has become a huge part of his identity and it boosts his ego knowing he is one of the few individuals who can succeed in this sport. He also believes that he has earned his spot in the sport through all his hard work. He expresses his feelings towards being an athlete “honestly I think it’s become such a huge part of my identity that I do find pride in it like being able to label myself as a person who does all these things, like it kind of boosts your ego a little bit and yet you earn it, as opposed to something that’s just given to you, like you work hard for it”. He also discusses how others might perceive his training as an addiction due to the long hours needed to excel as a triathlete, however he states “oh fuck yeah! Like you have to be right, you have to have some pride and just be like fuck you”.

The athlete describes his family background, he states that his parents originated from Columbia, his parents used to work in the Supreme court, during the well-known work-crisis with Pablo Escobar. The athlete describes his experiences growing up and that he experienced the switch from being in a high class status with maid when he was little to seeing his mother work as one in Canada was a complete switch and showed him to appreciate all his parents had given up to grow up in a country like Canada. The athlete feels his Dad instilled the idea of him “being beyond mediocre”. Both the athlete and interviewer agree that as parents grow older you have limited time with them. He continues to describe his mature thoughts on his parents “when you’re a teenager and you’re a dumb fuck, you do under appreciate them and take them for granted but now its like fuck that, these people did a bunch of shit for me so I have to return the

favour whenever I can. Although some actions do not make sense in the present, his parents see them once goals are achieved. He then gives the example of having two degrees from McGill and ranking in the Ironman.

He believes that his father took pride in him playing soccer, however in his other interests he did not have the same joy, “There really wasn’t like a sense of hey you participated in this, good for you! It was more like you did this, you did this right, congratulations and if not do it better next time”. He shares that his mother had a neutral perspective on sport. He describes an argument he had with his dad when his dad became overweight. He stated “Don’t be a fat fuck, there’s no positive thing that could come from here, learn to appreciate and love yourself. Relying on my mom to take care of himself, I didn’t speak to him for like three weeks cause I was pissed.” His father later lost weight with the support of his mother and started to train for Ironman like his son. He felt he gave his dad an eye-opening lecture about his health. Relating to health, the athlete goes off on a side note that while he was working with a co-worker who was ill, he then started to feel sick and had to take a few days off because he experienced trouble breathing, he did not get tested for the Corona virus but his colleague later found out that he did have Corona “he hit me up two weeks later saying he tested positive so like you fucker, you got me sick you know”. Both him and his parents were sick but came out healthy after a week. He assumed that they all had Corona and believes their healthy active lifestyles helped them fight off the virus. The discussion of the corona virus reflected the athlete’s overall ideas of living a health lifestyle.

The athlete described his parents as having a positive reaction to his early interest in sports, however during his ongoing involvement they believe he should be focusing on other things in life as the sport of triathlons does take up a lot of time. He senses there is some

resistance. He describes his parents' present perspective on sport as being fairly supportive however there is some resistance. His dad often shows up to his competitions as his support crew. The athlete expresses how his father has always been involved even when he was younger, he would often pick him up from cross country races. He describes his mother as being less involved and doing her own things. He believes she holds a neutral perspective on his sporting life. He states that when he runs marathons he rather have his dad present than his mom "I feel like she wouldn't be able to relate in some things, like if you meet someone who's had similar experiences in some things, it's easier to get, especially when you're doing a 50, 60k run, and you're all sorts of fucked up, the last person you want to talk to is someone who has no idea what you're feeling." in this case his mom would not understand his feelings during a race. He continues to discuss how he does not like his girlfriend or mother being present during his races because once you are depleted you become an asshole and he knows that they may take it personally. The athlete describes his mother as being protective and not wanting him to travel long distances when biking. Over time she has become more lenient He shares a conversation he had with his mother "I sat her down one day and said " look this is the path I'm choosing to go, and if you don't want to take this, the only thing is it's going to create this distance and resentment towards, like no matter what this is going to be the outcome." His father believes he is crazy at times but still supports it. The conversations he had with his parents can be viewed as a theme of presence with a focus on a sub-theme of family communication and relations.

The athlete described his parental support, indicating his parents provide him with emotional and financial support, given he had gone away for university he has to deal with the mixes of campus life by himself, dealing with the drinking culture associated with university he said "it is nice to have parents to tell you to get your shit together and to stop being an idiot."

The athlete contrasts his involvement in XC stating he did not need much support for it as it was not as intense as his involvement with the army. he would not ask for emotion support form his parents. The athlete states that his father would show up to his events if he asked him to, however if he knew he was out of shape and would not perform his best he would omit telling his parents. His mother had shown up once when he was not taking the race seriously, otherwise he does not like her being present. He characterises his level of parental support as high for his father and found that both training for ironman has become a bonding experience for when they travel together. The athlete states that his parents seem more involved than many other athletes he competes with. He believes this makes him more obligated to win. He also states that if he had other parents, he may have been less motivated and take priority in going out and being lazy. The athlete believes that one thing he would change about his parents is the way they taught him his internal dialogue. He believes they could have influenced his self-communication to be more serious and to aim higher. "I wish my parents would have like taught me how to talk to myself in a more serious manner, in certain races or events, I don't take things seriously, which is probably better because I stay relaxed. If I wanted to be more motivated and more intuitive and, in the zone, and better at what I do I wish they changed the way I have that dialogue where I take things a little more seriously. And aim a little higher, like I wish my parents would have taught me to aim a little higher." He believes his parents had put too many limitations on what he could or could not do in life. He describes these actions as "the average bullshit of parents telling their children they need to go to school, they need to find a job, etc." he believes it took him a while to break through the stereotypical lifestyle mould they had inflicted on him. However, if his parents were overly involved the athlete predicts he would detest the sport and would not have stuck around for as long as he has.

The athlete describes his view on motivation, he states “I think its kind of a catalyst to get you into movement. I’m not a big fan, like I don’t really care for motivation. I know people seek it, but I, I think it’s so short term right, like it’s hard to explain cause it could range from so many things.” he also makes note that motivation is related to drive and commitment. He expands on his interpretation of peak motivation “ it totally varies because you can have days where you get pissed at the world because you kill your sport because there’s something external emotion fucking with you and you need to compensate for whatever’s missing and you need to compensate or whatever stupid shit is going on in life, so you take it out on your sport and it’s crazy motivation.”. He describes some of his emotions in the early stages of sport, at the beginning if he was feeling down, he would turn to his parents for motivation but ultimately states that his parents have nothing to do with the reason he gets on a treadmill. The athlete believes that his parents do play a huge role in his sport involvement and believes that due to their support he has time to train, when they are not around, he sometimes feels like a sitting duck. The athlete continues to state that he is not dependent on his parents for discipline but is dependent on his parents for his nutrition.

He believes his support system includes himself. he states “ I guess, I think it’s such an independent thing with running that external stuff can only stimulate you so much, I think it’s gotta be you, like you’re the only person you have to have that conversation with yourself, like why do I have to get out of bed today and you know why”. He does not believe his parents motivate him. When asked to describe his level of motivation the athlete described it as something that varies, he believes that when he has an external emotion, he needs to compensate for he takes it out in sport and that is a crazy motivator. The athlete ranks himself as having a 3/10 for motivation but a 10/10 for discipline. Lately he has not been feeling motivated to train,

however he has revealed that he gets excited to participate on his swift machine, where he is on a stationary bike and is able to race people around the world on a variety of trails and mountains. He finds this activity very fun and competitive for himself. He follows up with a comment stating “let’s say I wanted to win an ironman... I’d break up with my girlfriend, just be devastated, completely depressed but workout like an animal if that was the objective, that would be a 10 on the motivation scale”. He then relates to his army training as a time where you need high motivation as once you are out in the woods for seven weeks and have barely any sleep and are expected to march 25km, you need that internal dialogue to push yourself through. The athlete does not believe he has ever felt highly motivated in terms of being a 10/10 on a scale, however he most likely felt motivated when he was trying to beat someone in a race. He shares his thought on the necessity of being highly motivated in the army “at that point you have to be extremely motivated like be an 8 or 9 or 10, or else you’re fucked. But yeah, I think people are capable of being at a 10, cause I’ve seen some people do crazy shit and I don’t think they would have done it for no reason”. The athlete states that his lack of focus has interrupted his motivation and that his greatest distraction in the past has been a girlfriend, he believed she was getting in the way of his training. He reveals that his current distraction has been the coronavirus as it has interrupted his training routines.

The athlete foresees aging as scary and states that he feels he is 26 and has not done anything worthwhile because he has been trying to fulfill everyone’s aspirations instead of his own. Therefore, he had to sit his mother down and tell her that he was choosing to train for triathlons. He describes these actions to a minor mid-life crisis he sees with his older colleagues in the army. The athlete displays his anxiety when he says “I think it’s just being aware of the limited time we might have, and I rather have that now and have the urgency now than later, like

I get anxiety watching Netflix. I'm like fuck this, I should be doing something, like something worthwhile". He shows that he is uncertain of what the future will bring in terms of his motivation to stay involved with sports. He says once he finishes participating in triathlons he would no longer feel there is a mystery and believes that once he is older, having his own children will become a distraction but he will choose to pay more attention to his relationships and his social life. The athlete predicts he will always stay physically active as he states "I see the benefits, I do appreciate a higher quality of life, I see the benefits of exercising as opposed to people who don't. umm so yeah, I'll keep that up for the simple sake of keeping up the quality of life I have, maybe aim higher, I think it provides a cool life". He gives a description of sport and time, he understands that as a triathlete, sport is short, and time goes by quick. He understands he will need to switch his focus from his hobbies to greater life experiences as he continues to age.

Athlete #6

This 23 year old athlete describes her background of sport involvement indicating that while she was in high school, she participated in multiple sports such as skiing, rugby, figure skating and cheerleading. Her involvement in sports was highly influenced by her friends, she wanted to feel part of their circle through sports and often tried out because of her friends. She stated "I wanted to do it because my friends were doing it. Once I got to university it was because I wanted something to do for myself". She wanted to do sports for herself to gain more structure in a new life stage. She admitted that even in university, she decided to try out for a Canadian Football League (CFL) cheer team as one of her friends was on it and knowing that made her confident in trying out. In some ways joining a sports team was described as a coping

mechanism by both the interviewer and the athlete. Throughout the athlete's athletic journey and participation in a variety of sports, she realized her affinity for the combination of sport and audience performance during her early involvement in figure skating which later transferred to her involvement in cheer. The athlete believed the combination of sport and audience performances was an extension of her personality.

The athlete describes the various positions on a cheer squad and provided some of the physical abilities that are required to be a good performer at those positions. She also described what her role was as a 'base'. The more information she shared the greater the interviewer and athlete began to digress into discussing new Netflix documentaries and shows that are centered on the "Cheer World" and the influence they have on others who do not believe cheer to be a real sport, for example the athlete's boyfriend. She then described the adrenalin rush of cheer, plus the satisfaction of performing something that she has worked so hard on for so long and seeing it come to fruition in an intense and time compressed 2:40 minutes at a competition. She mentioned uniforms which may be a connection to the strong connection with teammates and the public demonstration of teamwork and hard work. The interviewer diverts into her own background in cheer, more so promotional cheer which the athlete was also familiar with as she was part of the CFL Cheer Squad. The athlete describes her experiences with the CFL cheer team, a more professional and glam based experience that was not the same as the athletic form of cheer she was used to. She describes some of the 'perks' of being on the CFL cheer team and some of the frustrations. In her description it seems that the glam was more important than the physicality of cheer. She goes on to describe the physical efforts of practicing competitive cheerleading and how many practices and rehearsals become a good workout. In order to qualify for Worlds, teams require a lot of training and it is important for every athlete to show great

dedication towards the team. The athlete describes the main differences between Canadian University cheer teams and American University cheer teams, where American teams are taken a lot more seriously, train harder, recruit better athletes and often compete at the highest national level. The athlete stated that only one Canadian university team, from London Ontario, trains and competes in a similar fashion.

The athlete expresses that her relationship with her mother was very close in terms of sport involvement, and overall support. Both parents were actively engaged in sport and liked physical activity, which is why they promoted physical activity to their daughter and their son. The athlete's parents were divorced, and the dad would find bonding moments with his children by taking them swimming to the pool, as he once was a swimmer. The athlete also stated that growing up she was very close with her older brother and did many activities together. She explained "My dad he was mostly working on himself, he wasn't involved much", her father was often absent and could be described as someone with selfish characteristics. Throughout her sporting life, the athlete experienced conflicts among her family. The first conflict described was that although her mom encouraged her to participate in sports, she did not agree with some sports the athlete chose. Her mom approved of figure skating but was not happy with the athlete's choice to participate in a rough sport such as Rugby. The athlete could differentiate her mother's approval levels through her involvement in her sports "it was only if she didn't approve of a certain sport that she wouldn't show any interest in it, like rugby for example. I could tell. That was a big difference she never showed up to any of my rugby games, but she would usually show up to my skating. So, I knew that was what she approved of."

The athlete's parents, especially the mother, although surprised, were happy to hear when the athlete chose to participate in cheerleading in university. Looking back the athlete describes

how she interpreted her parents' feelings and support over time. She describes the mother as someone who showed support by driving and attending competitions while stating her father never attended her sporting events. She expressed that her mother provided her with emotional support through being at competitions and talking to her about them after. The mother was said to show a lot of emotion when the athlete would perform in front of audiences as she stated, "anytime I performed she would always cry". She contrasts her mother's support by describing her father's role in her sports. She stated "I don't think he really cared. He was never the one to come to any of my games or see me cheer or anything. So, for him, I don't think he understands, like I think he is very focused on himself and he doesn't understand my, like when something is important to me." She believed he lacked to think of her feelings and the importance on cheer and sports in general, iterating that he did not show his care for her interests. She also stated, "he wouldn't know anything unless I told him". The athlete shared a recollection of her experiences when she realized her dad had showed more interest in her brother's sporting events than hers. She ends off with stating that if she played soccer, a sport her dad truly loved due to his Spanish culture, he may have been more vocal and passionate about her sports.

The athlete believed that parental support was "always there but wasn't fully vocalised, they were there just reserved". She continued to describe how other cheer moms may have shown different styles of support rather than only emotional support. She continues to say that money played a role in support but not entirely, because the presence of her family would influence her performance and influence her sport motivation the most. The athlete agreed that her dad played a role in her motivation as an athlete because she would aim to succeed and perform better in order to talk to him about it, hoping to connect with him through sports. she expressed her thoughts on being a part of a professional cheer team for a football team, she

“thought he would be more excited or be excited in general cause he hasn’t been with anything else”. The athlete paints a scenario by discussing that if someone would tell her they will be there and do not show up it causes her to be upset, however she would not be as upset if she knew they were going to be absent, hence the effect of absence. The athlete stated that she would not change the way her mother played a role in her motivation as she felt she was adequate, however, she would change the role her father played in her motivation and the wanted changes of him being more interested in her activities. She imagines if her parents were more present during her competitions or practices it could have been helpful in her sport development. The athlete makes two predictions, one being that she would be a better athlete if her dad was more involved and her parents were more present, she believes she “would give 110% effort” if so. The athlete describes how she might have felt with her mother’s presence, “If my mom was always there I’d feel more pressure, like I was happy with how much she was there but compared to everyone else, it was different. Her second prediction was that if her parents were overly involved, sport would be considered a job and would not be enjoyable. She reflects on the concept of absence and family support when indicating how her father’s presence could positively impact her performances, “If he showed up then I would know that he cared and it would make me want to just yeah do better and show him”.

The athlete defines motivation as something you do for yourself and a describes motivation as a driving force to do things. She continues to elaborate on what sport means to her, “if I don’t have sports I don’t have something that I’m accountable for, like okay yeah I have jobs but with sports it’s something you want to do”. Her association with sports reflects on the sub-theme of intrinsic motivation. She further describes her level of sport motivation as being high when she is passionate for sports, and states her motivation for things not sport related can

be mediocre, she finds motivation in things she wants to do over things she knows she has to do. She ranks herself out of 10 compared to highly motivated teammates she ranked herself as a seven as she knows she was not the best athlete on the team but still took things seriously. In continuation she discusses her ideal ranking as a nine and further states she would not be a 10 because it may be annoying, and everyone is flawed. As an athlete she feels most motivated when she knows people know what she is trying to do or doing for example her boyfriend, she doesn't want to disappoint someone by failing. This is one reason why she decided to omit telling her close ones that she was trying out for the CFL cheer team, as she fears disappointment.

The athlete explains her hunger to be a part of a cheer team as “ you just want to do it, cause you see a vision, that's also a thing, like for me I saw this vision, and of like how it would be if I was on it, so that also motivated me more, to want to be on it.”, having a personal vision for things she wants to do is another motivating factor. She describes her experience with marijuana, in the past she says that in all honesty drugs have interrupted her motivation, but family interruptions and issues can demotivate her entirely as she spends more time thinking about how she could help them. When she feels her motivation start to drop, the athlete uses recreation as a motivator and a pick-me up. This relates back to the theme of intrinsic motivation. She reflects back on how her mother influenced the idea of transforming outside emotions into sport motivation and she feels that this has impacted her effort when experiencing different sets of emotions. She expands on how different emotions generate different behaviours and feeling in sports, when angry she is seen as most motivated, when sad she feels she is distracted and when happy she feels she lacks a true drive and has mediocre motivation.

Looking into the future, both interviewee and interviewer joke about how they may be as parents, and how coronavirus has shut down sports. Both the Interviewer and interviewee describe the time length of sport as a short life, almost like a “window” and reflect on current world issues of the coronavirus and its impact on the Olympics and older athletes in the Olympics. The athlete shares her experiences of being an elite skater but fearing that she had hit her peak performance, this generated her thoughts of becoming less involved in sport because she knew she would be unable to be good all the time, “I felt less motivated because I knew I already hit my peak”. This could be a demotivating fear and a strong depiction of the concept of time. She further expressed “if I got into my peak in cheer, it would have been hard for me to continue that if I knew I wouldn’t be able to beat it”.

She describes her future intentions, “I’m really motivated to stay healthy, and even with my kids in the future, I want them to be an overall good athlete, go into different sports like I did and just be healthy as a family.” The athlete understands from her experiences that sports play a big role in personal and family development. While discussing the possibility of having her own family, the concept of time is enhanced. The athlete also understands that as she gets older, she knows it will be harder to stay physically fit, she assumes this because she discusses her potential of a family future. She discusses her predictions for her future motivation in terms of staying physically active and partaking in recreational activities, further relating this to family activities and how she would act with kids. She describes an image she has of going on family bike rides with excitement and a positive attitude.

Step 5: Composite Description

Once all individual textural descriptions were completed a composite description was created to integrate all individual structural descriptions. This presented a universal description of the lived experiences of the athletes.

Participants between 20 and 28 years old and currently or formerly competing in sports at the semi-elite or elite level provided descriptions of their experiences relating to parental support and motivation. Sport is a complex entity, and, as many athletes realize, parents and parental figures become a part of their athletic development to a greater or lesser extent. Informants recalled that when they were growing up, some families created vivid experiences within sport, while other families were less invested in their children's sport participation, be it practice or competition. Some parents were busy working and could not attend practices or games while others chose to spend their time running errands such as grocery shopping, or watching their other children play. This felt sense of presence or conversely, the felt sense of a lack of presence, absence, was described by all the informants. Participants would describe presence as physical, mental and emotional. Many times, the athletes would state that while they all had supportive parents who would financially provide for them and their sporting needs, the physical absence of their parents is what hurt them the most. Some informants revealed that their mothers were more emotionally present while fathers decided to critique sporting techniques and tactics. Related to presence were the associated experiences of obligatory family support, communication, and absence. Informants expanded on how they would try to communicate with their parents but felt that their emotions and/ or their commitment to their sport was misunderstood by their parents. Some informants described the logistics of the sport to help parents understand their sports, parents admitted that information was irrelevant to them. The athletes identified that as they

believed they received support, they never received the support they needed or desired, they often felt that their parents had different beliefs of what they should be focusing on, for example, school, work and family. Each athlete shared that they wished their parents could have communicated better with their coaches and or have been more physically present and more invested in their sports. Participants described authentic presence as being physically there, being attentive to the sport, being emotionally invested and providing for the sport financially. Athletes would go to great lengths to get their parents attention; some athletes would try out for well known professional teams in hopes of inspiring their parents' interest. They were disappointed to see their sport-related achievements did not create the attention they craved. Many of the athletes stated they would value their parents' involvement more so than their coaches and teammates. They stated, when your parents say the same as your coaches it has a different value and connotation to it, these athletes seem to appreciate advice that comes from their parents more than their coaches. Informants described how they learned to compensate for their parental absence, many of them learned to become more independent and grew up to know not to rely on anyone except yourself, others built a circle of involvement with their teammates and coaches.

As athletes become more competitive in their desired sports, they described how they developed a certain mindset. Each athlete shared a glimpse into their own specific or personal mindsets but also had overlapping relevant and associated experiences. These included motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motives and ability. They define motivation as an innate process which drives you to set and achieve goals, a process where you take something negative and turn it into something constructive. The athletes strongly linked the concept of goal setting to motivation, they also stated that motivation is based on doing something you enjoy, in this case they enjoy sports. They believed that they have always used sports as part of an escape from

reality. Informants indicated that they are empowered through emotions, including sadness, anger, and happiness. They expressed how the emotion of anger has given them the most drive to progress in their sport and to train. These informants described learning the mindset of using emotions as a driving force from their experiences with their parents. Many athletes had also indicated that they experience emotional rollercoasters through caring for others and being concerned over someone else's well-being, they found that this had interrupted their motivation within sports. The participants indicated that they find motivation through recognition, when they get complimented for all the hard work they put into their sport, they feel higher levels of motivation. Unfortunately, they do not always feel they get equally recognized as their sibling or as their teammates which adds to a negative mindset. The athletes discussed how when others doubt their abilities, they become more motivated to prove them wrong and succeed at their sport. These athletes would go to great lengths to gain attention from their parents and to prove to them that they can be skilled and successful during their sports and throughout life. While discussing individual sports, the athletes stated that they need to have a strong independent mindset to excel in their performances, and since they are already alone in some competitions, they feel having others there to support them adds value and pushes them to show to their superior athletic abilities to those they care about. As the discussions progressed, the informants also discussed their sense of not only dwelling time but also the passing of time. Related to concept of family, the time parents dedicated towards their children's' sports, the time athletes sense is available for them be semi-elite or elite level athletes, and the concept of overall time, with an emphasis on the future. The participants being young adults all realized that time spent in Sport is short. The athletes confirmed that they have all experienced a "window" of time in which they felt they could excel within their sports. They specified that once the window is

closed, they would no longer be competitive or participate in their sports. They discussed time in terms of their athletic abilities and the connection between body and health, they stated that injuries often forced them to take time off from sport at the most crucial times of their seasons. With time, the athletes realize their bodies will not be able to keep up the same routines of training and exercising as they do in the present. As they grow older, they realize that they will start to prioritize other aspects of life, such as, work and relationships. Many of the athletes revealed how they plan to act once they have families and children of their own. They each specified that they would want to provide their children with the opportunities to play sport and will continue to live a healthy active lifestyle.

As lived experiences are discussed, the concept of body, space, time and relation become heavily intertwined and become a part of the experiences, feelings and topics discussed above. The athletes revealed that with the influences of their parents, they were motivated to be physically active, however, their own intrinsic motives played a big role in their continuation of sport at the university level. As athletes progress over time and enhance their skill sets, they begin to develop other relations outside their immediate family. The environments in which they perform in influence their mindsets and who they believe they value most during their games and competitions. The way they communicate with their families shows how athletes are still dependent on both physical and emotional support although they are young adults. The participants selected had discussed how injuries during their sporting careers affected the way they perceive their sport and the realization of how much time they dedicate to sport and keeping their bodies healthy. The discussion of past, present and future sport involvement had triggered ideas of what they want their futures to look like, they all discussed the potential of having their own families and keeping relatively fit and acting more supportive than their own parents did.

Step 6: Themes

The final step of the analysis included reflectively integrating the composite textural and structural descriptions to develop a synthesis of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon. The themes that emerged from the study were linked to universal themes of relationship to self and others, bodily concerns, space and time. The first main theme was the concept of “Presence”, it included sub-themes of absence, obligatory family support parental communication and sibling rivalry for some participants. This theme related to the phenomenological universal theme of relationship to self and others. The next theme related to the universal themes of relationship to self, and bodily concerns. The theme of “Mindset” became more prominent in each interview with sub-themes of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motives and ability. Another theme which connected to the universal theme of bodily concerns and space included the theme of Health and Body. Lastly a strong connection was made between the universal themes of time and space and the study’s theme of “Time”. Within the theme of time the past, present and future was discussed from the athlete’s own perspective. Throughout the analysis it was important to stay open-minded towards new meaning that were seen to be beyond common sense. Each step of the analysis was crucial in presenting the data accurately and in providing more insight into the lived experiences of sub-elite and elite athletes’ motivation levels and their parental support. In the next chapter, findings will be discussed in greater detail and will be compared to previous literature in this domain. Implications of the study and recommendations will also be discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Body, Space, Time, and Relation

Using a phenomenological lens, several themes were discovered within the analysis.

These themes relate to the guided lifeworld categories of phenomenology; body, space, time and relation (BSTR).

Body

The category of body was portrayed throughout the study as participants related their experiences of sport to the amount of “work” they put their bodies through. Participants discussed the effect physical injuries had on their bodies along with the training it took to build their body for their sport. As athletes aged some described that injuries such as, broken ankles, concussions, and muscle strains persuaded them into leaving the competitive level of play. Others described mental injuries as discouraging them from continuing their sports. Some continue to participate in their sports but understand that long-term involvements and repetitive training can lead to chronic injuries over-time. Athletes associated injuries to negative impacts on their overall mindset. Alongside mindset, some athletes felt they became less motivated to continue their sports after a certain age. Younger athletes were seen to use injuries as a form of increasing motivation because they wanted to prove to themselves, they can recover and come back stronger. The theme of Health and Body also relates to this category. Athletes discussed the experience of sport in a positive light while relating physical activity to both physical and mental health. They claimed that while they push their bodies to the limit, they feel sport will provide them with a long-lasting goal of being physically fit. In general sport participation provided athletes with an overall concept of mental well-being. Many athletes would use negative emotions as motivators to train and participate in sport. At some points it brought them into a

state of relaxation and gave them satisfaction. It gave them a sense of relief from everyday stressors.

Space

Van Manen (1990) states “lived space” is the existential theme that refers us to the world or landscape in which human beings move and find themselves at home. Each sport creates its own unique environment. For example, an ice-rink played a role in a participant’s sport of figure skating and was used as a stage, likewise, a gymnastics gym and floor mats were also seen as a stage for performing. These two buildings had different uses but provided the same type of environment for some of the participants. One participant described the five senses that came along with playing on a professional football field. He described walking into the stadium, the smell of wet-grass and the vision he had of becoming a professional athlete. This stadium provided the participants with a unique environment where the participant felt he was at “home”. Other participants could relate their sporting environments, such as track and field facilities and racecourses as a stage for performance. Each sport has its own stage of performance as it displays each athletes’ abilities and draws a crowd along with an array of emotions. Space becomes a lived dimension associated to each athletes’ experience. The physical environment an athlete is provided with can affect the way the athlete trains and is motivated. The physical presence within the environment can also affect the mindset of athletes and the emotions they feel or later relate to when placed in the same of similar environment.

Time

The temporal dimension of past, present and future constitute the horizons of a person’s temporal landscape (Van Manen, 1990). The category of Time contributed to the major theme of

Time. Athletes' descriptions of their lived experiences heavily intertwined their perceptions of lived-time. Each interview gave a brief descriptions of the athlete's family history and the history of their sport participation, this referred to the past tense. In the past, athletes saw parents as figures of obligation, when they were little parents often had to be more present physically and financially. Athletes then provided a current, present outlook on their sport participation, their motivation levels, and their parental support. In describing their past, athletes realized that the window of time for parents to be present had passed. There was a contrast of time throughout the interviews which showcased the way athletes perceived their parents' value of time. One athlete explicitly stated that his mother's absence showed him that, watching him play football would be a waste of her time, therefore he was not worthy of her time. This correlated to a negative lived experience and mindset. Athletes referred to sport as a "window" meaning that sport is short, you only have a specific time frame for when you are physically and mentally able to compete at an elite level. Each participant understood that because sport was short, they place sport with a high value and high importance during their prime years of involvement. When you look at University and collegiate sports, as a student-athlete you only have four or five years to be and excel as an athlete. The concept of future became a prominent discussion where athletes described their sport intentions, future aspirations, and future family predictions.

Relation

Through lived experience, including space, we refer to the relation we share with others. Relation to others was discussed in the theme of presence and sub-themes of absence, obligatory parental support, parental communication and relation and sibling rivalry. Athletes discussed their personal relations of family members and how it influenced their sport participation. In many cases, it was found that athletes experience positive sport relation and added value from

early parental support. If a parent placed an emphasis on sport and physical activity, participants were seen to stay in the sport longer and gained their own intrinsic motives to stay in sports. These intrinsic motives carried through different levels of sport. Intrinsic factors are seen to represent the relation one has to oneself. The relation to self was displayed through the described emotions and experiences of participants, how they felt in their sport, why they chose the sport, why they continued the sport, why they chose to stop participating in the sport, and what emotions were drawn from sport. Extrinsic factors were linked to the relation athletes made to their parents, coaches and friends. As human beings we seek relations to gain a greater social sense and purpose to life. Athletes who claimed they lacked support from their parents, often saw they were missing a specific sense of relation and would try to compensate for it through their new social groups who carried acceptance for example, teammates and coaches. Each athlete believed they needed recognition from people they cared about. Many athletes realized that their internal, own appreciation of self was not enough to keep them motivated. The participants expressed that through relations they experienced disappointment and acceptance. From this acceptance they learnt to be more dependent on themselves.

Relation to Eccles' Expectancy Value Theory

The purpose of this study was to understand how athletes may substitute family support systems for others and the effect they have on their performance and well being. The study aimed to answer how the lived experiences of elite and sub-elite athletes who lacked parental support triggered motivational tendencies. The results of the study are seen to match Eccles' expectancy value theory that confirms the connection between achievement performance and choice directly to individuals' expectancy related and task value beliefs (Eccles & Harold, 1991). Many of these beliefs are formed under parental influences, as Fredricks and Eccles (2004) state,

parents are a) providers of experience, b) interpreters of experience and c) role models. All participants discussed common ideas of all three experiences. Five out of six athletes felt that their parents contributed in some way towards their sport involvement, in most cases, they all had one parent who was predominantly involved in their sporting lives. One athlete believed he was independent on all spectrums of becoming involved in his sport. Growing up athletes felt that their parents tried to provide them with tangible support by financially providing for them, as they grew older some no longer provided financial support for sports but did provide financial support for their post-secondary education. As athletes moved away from home during university, they received less physical and emotional support from their parents. They often continued to seek recognition and praise from their parents but accepted recognition from their coaches and teammates which also increased their motivation to continue participating in sport. Each participant believed their parents upheld a value of playing sports to promote physical activity and fitness, and encouraged them to play a variety of sports, this proved parents were treated as role models in the early development of sport. Athlete's expectancy for success within their chosen sports was not positively presented once parents knew their child was unable to reach a specific level, and encouraged their children to take other aspects of life more seriously such as post-secondary education and non-sport related careers. Although athletes did not receive continuous sport support as they aged, it became evident that parents played a role in increasing their child's achievement related behaviours in a long-term time frame. This was shown as athletes continued to participate in sports and spent time in sports building up their own set of skills into their mid twenties.

Two female participants revealed how gender-role stereotypes played a factor in their sport involvement and the way their parents supported their choice of sport. For example, one

participant stated her mother approved of her figure skating and cheerleading as it combined a sense of dance and performance but did not approve of her involvement in rugby as it was seen to be a “rough” sport for girls. This finding related to some of the previous literature that examined parental support differences between male and female adolescents. This result differentiated from Eccles et al’s 1983 study as it showed female athletes do have an equal expectancy and success value as compared with male athletes. However, it is worth noting that participants in Eccles’ study were adolescents where as, participants in this study were young adults.

Part of Eccles expectancy value theory includes subjective task values, such as attainment value, interest value, utility value and cost. Each of these were revealed through the participants experiences and discussion of thoughts regarding their sports. Each participant agreed that being an athlete and competing at the elite and sub-elite level increased their attainment value as sports placed an emphasis on their overall identity. Part of this athletic identity emphasised their competence and drove them to create goals structured around their sport. Intrinsic, interest value was seen to be a strong value for each athlete. Since they enjoyed the sport and what sport offered them, they decided to continue their involvement in sport. The same intrinsic value increased their achievement motivation as the more they enjoyed the sport, they enjoyed learning new skills and ways to develop to become a more successful and well-rounded athlete. For those athletes who had finished their sporting careers, they felt they were intrinsically motivated as they knew sport provided them with an array of opportunities, such as personal growth, health benefits and social benefits. The intrinsic values they held within sports transferred towards building life and career skills, ultimately creating achievement related behaviours in wanting to become the best healthy and active individuals in the future. As they progressed into a “retired”

status, they continue to enjoy sports and claim to project sport onto their own children in the future. Utility value considers how useful the athletes believe their sport is, many saw the benefits that sport could bring such as the athletic identity, the skills associated with being an athlete that could translate into their careers, such as time management, and could relate to how putting in work into their sport can be useful in progressing them into elite-level athletes. In many cases cost is associated with a negative value, this value related to many participants' experiences in terms of "loss". Some athletes stated that sport caused them to miss out on a teenage life, social life, relationships and financial loss. They believed sport to be a financial loss because they did not achieve the expected level of success they once wished to achieve. Two out of six participants revealed that their level of success was interrupted due to injuries they attained in their late adolescents and carried over to their mid-twenties where they realized their bodies could no longer handle the physical pressure of elite sports.

Overall, many factors shown within Eccles expectancy value model displayed how they link towards achievement related behaviours such as sport commitment, time spent in sport, and participation on sport teams. Many aimed to master challenges with newfound relationships in sports, school, and careers. All athletes described their plans to achieve a high standard of excellence for the remainder of their life, with a heavy focus on positive family development and sport-filled lifestyles.

Relation to Literature Review

The literature that was reviewed in chapter one, related to parental support systems and Eccles' expectancy value theory. In many cases the participants in the study were adolescents and were heavily dependent on their parents for physical and financial support. Most of the studies discussed did not factor in the considerations of future participation. This study focused

on the young adult age group and although participants provided a history of their parental upbringing which related and proved Eccles expectancy value theory, it elaborated on the lived experiences, young adult athletes such as collegiate and post collegiate athletes feel towards parental support and their own levels of motivation towards sport. Five out of six participants agreed that they valued sport because of their upbringing and parental influences. All six participants felt that overall, their motivation levels are intrinsically driven, there are extrinsic factors such as parents that can alter their motivation levels. For example, if parents were more present at sporting events, they would feel more pressure to do well, therefore would take competitions and training more seriously to enhance their performance. Each athlete stated that they always felt the need to prove to their parents, coaches or colleagues that they could perform and excel in their sport. Studies that were previously discussed about NCAA athletes also revealed how parents played a factor in a child's decision to play at the university level. Omar-Fauzee et al.'s (2009) study indicated majority of athletes were motivated to play university sports by their parents. In this phenomenological study most, athletes decided to be part of university sports for their own benefits, meaning parents were not heavily influential in their sports as adults. This may have differed because the value of OUA (Ontario University Athletics) and USports (Canadian university sports) is seen to have lower value and be less competitive than NCAA sports. Morgan and Giacobbi's (2006) study on talent development, also complimented this study as it highlighted that athletic success is dependent on a variety of factors including, parents, coaches, teammates, skills, and mental characteristics. Hence, parental support does play a large role in motivating and supporting athletes throughout their sport involvement, but it is not the only factor that can determine success. In relation, the results of this study agree with Rees and Hardy's 2000 study revealing that athletes need four dimensions of

social support, those being: emotional (comfort and security), esteem (confidence), informational (advice) and tangible (resources), also indicating that athletes need parental support and approval at the collegiate level. Moller and Sheldon's (2019) study related to this present study as it showed that athletes who played for more extrinsic factors negatively associated the sport years after retiring. One out of six participants felt some resentment towards their specialized sport, although they felt this due to political issues in the sport and injuries they encountered throughout their career. A few differences worth noting between these two studies includes the level of parental support, the intrinsic versus extrinsic motives the athletes felt and the level of play of the sport. The study showed that participants would go to great lengths to gain parental attention in their sports, this triggered an increase in sport activities and enhanced motives to train.

The present study can be linked to previous studies as it has stayed consistent with Eccles' expectancy value theory. The lived experiences discussed have related to concepts that lead up to sport involvement. Athletes despite their age, continue to be influenced by parental support and previous involvement. In most cases athletes can relate to both negative and positive family support. Those athletes who experience early support and were shown sport-related values and beliefs about physical activity were seen to continue being physically active through their experiences and participation on sports teams. This study remains consistent with Wolfden and Holt's, 2004 study as it shows both coaches and parents fulfill different roles in developing sub-elite and elite-athletes. An observation from the gathered experiences reveals that although each athlete agrees supportive coaches are appreciated throughout their athletic careers, these athletes prefer to have parental support and criticism as they state parental actions have more personal connotations.

Babkes & Weiss, (1999) revealed that children who had lower levels of parental pressure enjoyed sports more, in this study, athletes lacked parental support, hence did not have as much parental pressure in their sports and did state they fully enjoyed their chosen sports. Therefore, the impact on enjoyment from levels of support and levels of pressure are found to be consistent with previous literature. As previously mentioned, the studies found in the literature review were focused on adolescents, therefore it is difficult to compare the consistency of results as the participants being studied were from different age groups. The participants used in this study are labelled as young adults and not adolescents. Hence, the maturity level of participants differed, hence impacted the results found.

Majority of studies discussed results based on team-sports, where as this study had participants from both team and individual sports. There is no concrete evidence that suggests team sports are more parent supported than individual sports. This is also why there is some inconsistency within the results. As this study included both female and male participants, certain sport involvement experiences shined light onto the role of gender stereotypes as discussed by Bhalla and Weiss, 2010. This study was inconsistent in proving that mothers rate children's ability higher when the stereotype favours the child. Both female participants took part in female dominated sports such as cheerleading, gymnastics and figure skating. One participant agreed her mother was more supportive in cheerleading than in rough sports such as rugby. While another participant revealed that her older sister was put into more traditional sports such as soccer and hockey and had greater support from her mother and father than she did for her involvement in cheerleading.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of the study reveal the true complexities of lived experience for sub-elite athletes, hence there are a multiple directions future researcher can take from here. Due to the time-length of the study and difficulties in recruiting, minimal participants were chosen to complete the study. Although the recommended number of participants for a phenomenological study is between six to nine, I believe six participants reached saturation and provided a great depth of experiences and was enough for this type of study. The study involved athletes from a variety of sports with a mix of both individual and team sports. For future studies it would be interesting to divide individual and team sports in a comparison study. Majority of athletes in this study focused on an individual sports at the young adult age and indicated that their parental involvement was missed because they were already relying on themselves to maintain confidence in their sports. The participants in this study were not currently playing at the professional level and had only reached a sub-elite or national level. It would be interesting to see how professional athletes such as those at the Olympics or those playing in the NHL, NWHL, NBA, WNBA or MLB define motivation and how their parental support played a factor in their athletic success. Likewise, comparing athletes with strong parental support systems and those without any parental support systems would strengthen findings within this field of research. This study had a broad criterion in terms of how participants would define parental absence, many defined their parents as being there but not physically or emotionally being invested. In future studies it may interesting to see how those who lacked parental absence due to a death of a parent or being raised by an adoptive family creates a different emotional experience in their sport involvement. The study recruited both female and males and although some gender differences were spotted, for example female athletes' parents promoting more feminine sports

such as figure skating or cheerleading, there were no real differences among their descriptions of parental support and motivation levels. Specifying future studies to one gender may offer greater descriptions. Lastly, I would recommend doing a comparison study on athletes' success in sports between those who have strong parental relations and those who lack parental relations. Each type of phenomenological study would bring forth a new lived experience and is worth being discussed.

Relation to Personal Outcomes

The study highlights the lived experiences of sub-elite athletes and adds value to Eccles' expectancy value theory as it confirms the concepts that lead up to sport involvement and the complexity of factors that relate to valuing a sport. The study allows others in the health and sport industry understand how parental involvement can influence achievement related behaviour and achievement motivation. The study is beneficial for not only the academic world but for participants themselves. The interviews gave participants a reflective outlook on the past, present and future of their sport experiences, their motivation levels, including structuring goals and allowed them to reflect on their support systems. In some cases, athletes became very nostalgic in reliving certain experiences and regained value for their experiences, ultimately becoming grateful for all sport has given them. The study showcased how parental support changes throughout each athlete's life and support levels may differ depending on the individual's age and situation. Participants felt that sport did shape them to be well-organized and driven human beings. Some participants revealed that while their competitive sport experiences may die due to age and responsibilities the love for sports and living a healthy active lifestyle will live on. The study will aid other academics in understanding the benefits sport can bring and how motivation levels can be altered through lifeworld categories such as body, space, time and relation.

Relation to professional outcomes

The knowledge gained from this study is useful for educators, coaches, and sport-psychologists as it allows them to understand some aspects of athlete behaviour and athlete thought processes. The study also allows them to understand what can alter motivation levels throughout a season and when athletes are nearing retirement. Knowledge on sub-elite athletes, collegiate athletes helps those in the sporting profession understand that each athlete no matter the level of play needs a strong support system to fully excel in sport. It is important to give athletes recognition to promote positive mindsets and further encouragement in the sport. Being able to identify why an athlete is suddenly lacking motivation to train or to compete will help not only the athletes but coaches and trainers recommend proper tactics for training and advice. It is important to remember as a coach if you are there for one athlete you should be there all athletes. The study highlights the importance of communication and surrounding oneself with others who understand the sport. Knowing the position, the athletes put themselves in and how they feel will aid in developing individualized training programs for not only building the athlete physically but preparing the athlete mentally to enhance their emotional strength.

Social meanings and relevance

To relate the study to social meanings and relevance, there lies an importance of understanding lived experiences for three groups of people: 1) Athletes (participants) 2) parents 3) potential coaches or trainers. As an athlete it is important to recognize the feelings you hold, whether that is resentment, happiness or fear and how those feelings can play a role in labeling you as an athlete and developing you into a successful athlete. The difficult part of a phenomenological study is that it is very eye-opening as it showcases similar lived experiences of a chosen phenomena but also highlights that each human being has a unique set of lived

experiences. This unique set of experiences cannot always be categorised or grouped into one, that is what makes this type of study both frustrating and beautiful. As parents or future parents, it is important to understand the effect that presence and absence has. There is a direct effect either way, however, each individual is open to interpreting what they qualify as being present or being absent. As mentioned in the study, even when someone appears to be physically present it does not mean they are, they can be distracted and working on their phones or not paying attention to the sport their child is participating in. As children age and rely less on mandatory presence, parents may start to believe that their presence does not make a difference and choosing to be absent reflects their priorities of that day. Each parental action will have a direct impact on an athlete's involvement and value in their sport. As coaches who play a parental figure when on the road or when parents are absent, it is important to recognize what each athlete needs and how they take criticism and what type of support they could use to establish a more positive environment. Understanding lived experience will allow coaches to adjust to different athletic personalities and ultimately create coachable athletes.

Closing remarks and future directions

The study provided several findings that were eye-opening emotional statements. All participants expressed a sense of parental absence in a unique way. Mary Ruefle states "Feelings seem to represent a place where emotions combine with intelligence and experience to create a highly personal thought process that results in an individual's worldview" (2012, p.107). Each participant provided an inner look into their worldview and experiences as athletes and what parental support, motivation and sport all mean for them. Although this study may not foster innovative change, it allows us as human beings to gather an understanding of what it means to be present and supportive of others and ourselves. It allows us to understand factors that lead to

sport value and how intrinsic factors can be influenced by extrinsic factors. Motivation although primarily intrinsic can be scaffolded by the extrinsic experiences' athletes gain from parents. A heavy theme of time and the presentation of time as a "window" was seen as a loss of time for parents and athletes to be present in sport. However, an interesting viewpoint on windows is that some argue they present complete objectivity regarding removal and distance, while others argue they complete framing and viewpoints. As Ruefle, 2012 states, windows have two sides subsumed in both the object desired for and the subject of its own activity. Perhaps, looking at time of a "window" could incorporate looking into the future on a positive note of how athlete's personal experiences can lead to their future experiences with their own families. For future directions, it would be interesting to see how individuals modify their support systems to increase motivation and structure sport and life related goals.

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AN=edjsr.23359359&site=eds-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.brocku.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edjsr.23359359&site=eds-live&scope=site)

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site=eds-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsgao&AN=edsgcl.20119076&site=eds-live&scope=site)
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Appendix A

Figure 1: Eccles' Expectancy Value Model for Sport Participation

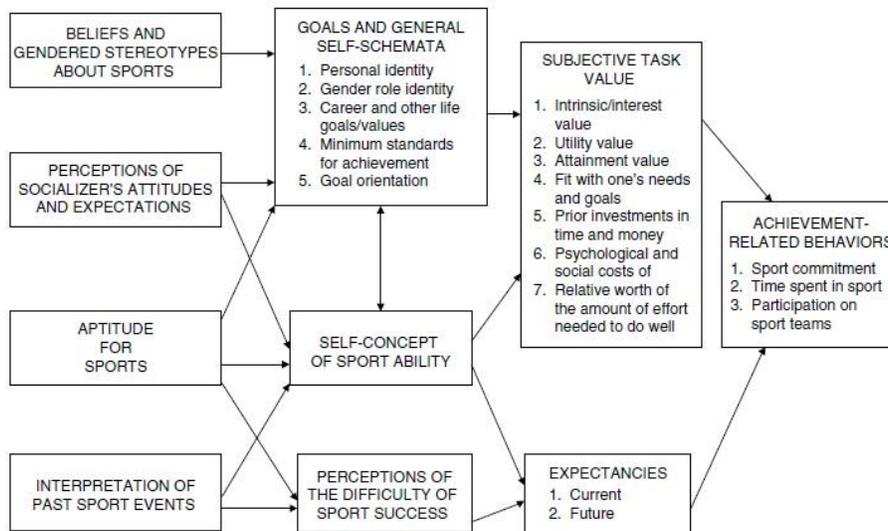


Figure 2 EEVM for Sport Participation

Source: Copyright © Jacquelynne S. Eccles.

Figure 2: Eccles' Parent Socialization Model

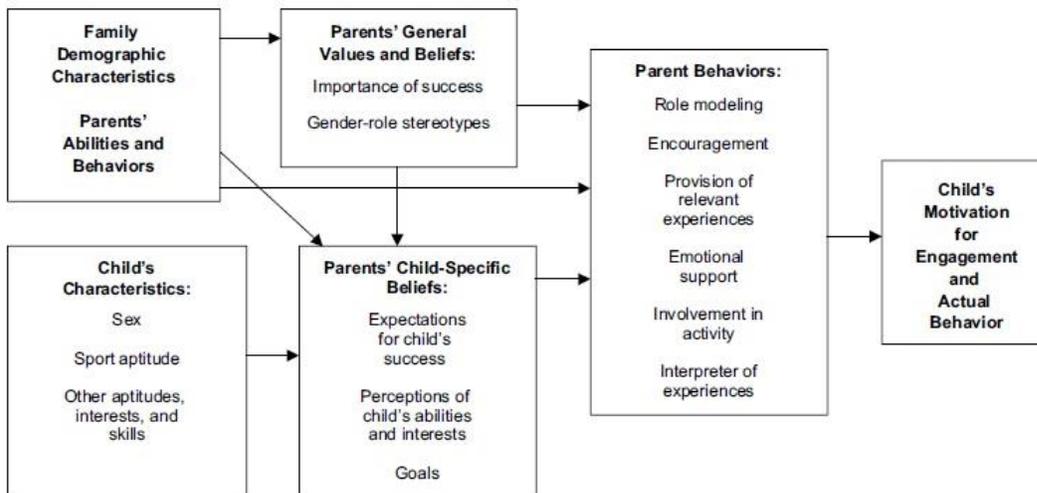


Figure 3 Eccles Parent Socialization Model

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Appendix B

Recruitment Poster



Parental Influences & Athlete Motivation Study

Motivation has been defined as a hypothetical construct that describes both internal and external forces that produce the initiation, persistence and direction of behaviour. Both intrinsic and extrinsic forces can be influenced by parents and one's upbringing throughout their youth. Many athletes often rely on parental support to generate motivation. Motivation is not always generated through parental influences at the adult age.

- This study is aiming to recruit 8-10 elite or former elite athletes
- Athletes must be between the age of 19-28
- Must have competed at an elite level for at least two years
- Athletes must believe that they lack parental support in their athletic careers

As a participant, you will be asked to complete a Sport Motivation Scale (SMS-6) questionnaire along with a semi-structured interview. This will all be done in one session that may last one hour to one hour and a half. Interviews will be taking place in a laboratory research room.

In appreciation participants will receive a \$10 Tim Hortons gift card

If you are interested in participating and/or have additional questions, please contact us:

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Appendix C

Interview Guide

Introduction questions

1. Can you please state your name, age and what competitive sport you play along with at what level? For example, USports, provincial, national?
2. How long have you been participating in this sport and level?
3. How many times per week do you practice and weight train?
4. Is this the only sport you have invested your time into, why have you chosen this sport or sports?
5. How did you get into the sport?
6. What do you love most about the sport?
7. How long is your season, how many games or competitions do you have?
8. What levels would you like to get to within your sport?
9. What do you believe motivation is?

Questions of Retrospective view

10. Tell me about the family you grew up with. What were your relationships like?
11. In what way did your parents foster the way you view sport? How did they show their perspectives on sport?
12. Describe how your parents reacted to your early interest in sport... to your ongoing interest and participation?
13. Describe your parents present perspective on your participation in sport. In what ways has it changed and in what ways has it stayed the same?
14. Describe how each of your parents demonstrated support for your sport participation.
15. Describe your parents' attendance at games or practices. How has this changed or stayed the same over time?
16. How would you characterize the level of parental support you received over your years of participation? Provide examples... how was your parental support alike or different you're your teammates'? How so?

17. Describe how your parents played a role in your motivation for competition and training.
18. How does parental support influence your motivation? How does its presence or absence affect your motivation?
19. Describe the ways in which your parents might have been/could be more involved in ways that would have been helpful for you.
20. What would you say your greatest support system includes? Ex. Coaches, friends, trainers?

Motivation based questions

21. How would you describe your level of motivation?
22. Rank yourself out of 10, in comparison to your teammates (10= very motivated)
23. What level of motivation would you like to get up to/feel?
24. Tell me about a time where you felt most motivated to win and to train
25. What has interrupted your motivation level in the past?
26. What would you do differently to increase your motivation?
27. How do you foresee aging affecting your motivation?
28. What is one thing you would change about the way your parents played a role in your motivation?
29. How might have your motivation been different with parents who were more involved? Who were too involved?

Appendix D

*Step Two***Horizontalization and Saliences***Athlete # 1*

1) motivation to me is achieving a goal that I set out for me for a specific day, umm it's in me to better myself every time I get out there in practice, it's the need to prove to other people, yes I am here for a reason, I am not just here to have fun. I'm here to prove something. And mostly I just want to prove myself, that yes, I can do it, I can still run fast, and proved to my parents that I am a good athlete, I guess

2) I've felt that sports was the one way to get out of it, or every time I did some sport physical activity, or played a team sport or ran or whatever, I could forget about what was happening at home and just be myself

3) not being at a competition or a single competition for the last 5 or 6 years, so kind of showed that they are not happy with it and they don't see me succeeding so they don't want to support the idea of me running track

4) because it doesn't help me motivate myself a lot, if anything it makes me... demotivated

5) I would be over the moon, and then if they did show up to one of those races

6) I want to show the what I love, I want to show them what I love doing, what I am good at

7) I would say this year she really did pressure me into quitting...

8) like my parents are there but not fully invested in something that I want to do

9) My parents aren't there when I need them to be, I guess. But when I need need them.

10) my mom does tell me to never stop, doing something that I love to do just cause I can't do it

11) I feel like that would force me to improve myself even better so I can prove them that I'm just, I'm even better than what they just saw

12) I feel like if my parents were there it would just be a special kind of motivation that I've never had

13) I have learned how to compensate for my parents not being there, in a way that. There's just one

thing that my mom told me when I was a kid, it was that “if you do something, do it the best way you can, or don’t do it at all” umm I actually do imagine my mom saying this, like I can visualize my mom saying that, I play that in my head when I’m warming up in order to motivate myself even more. I don’t know if that makes sense

14) I feel like that recognition that I’ve been putting in myself and working and becoming a good hurdler that’s motivated me as well and being recognized by coaches on the good things that I do that also motivates me

15) about self-affirmation first thing in the morning, and having that thought through the day like oh yes you deserve to be here, there’s a reason why you’re here.

16) I’ve had some thoughts about quitting track this year because it just got too much, like I can’t juggle being at practice, being at a school, being at work and doing all the volunteer work and also at the same time not having enough time for myself.

17) the one real change is that I’d want them to be with me at a competition, and just like be there to support me

18) if my parents were involved a bit more involved my motivation definitely would have been high and I’d be more confident, and if they were too involved then I feel like at some point I would feel, I would start feeling some resentment that

Athlete # 2 – Direct Quotes

1) ugh especially in track, even though its an individual sport, there’s still a team dynamic, there’s that connectivity, there’s that togetherness when it comes to being with your team mates and your fellow athletes, and you still have that feeling that your like it’s a team sport but in a sense its individual

2) I guess like the actual ability that sort of transferred over but not like, it wasn’t really imprinted in my head like basketball! Like that’s my thing

3) I find that it helps me kind of just, helps me stick to a routine

4) I just want to excel towards the top of the sub-elite level, I don’t expect to go Olympic bound

5) it’s something that just gives you a kick in the pants to just keep going, keep ugh enduring, keep ugh yourself on track, just keep doing what you want to do whatever that may be. Motivation comes in lot of different ways, depends on how you perceive it

6) my motivation is within recognition

7) typical nuclear family

8) we're the type of family, like we eat dinner together once a week, we ask about each others day, ugh that's about it, we try to be involved in one another lives as much as we can

9) in the morning they'd see each other then they'd drop me off and it was just a cycle that keep on Going

10) kind of hard to see if from their perspective, their trying to do everything that they can to jut make a living, pay bills, that sort of thing, I guess it's a little selfish of me to ask so much of them to be there,

11) its just acknowledgement factor, it's no more beyond that

12) cause she can connect with me on that personal level, she's like really big raptors fan

13) nostalgia factor and like we have a conversation about that and oh what you did versus what I did, and what you do versus what I do , but that sort of things, I don't think it goes beyond that

14) they're like what are we supposed to do with this piece of information, this is more vital to you than it is to us

15) So, as I transitioned to where I am now, my dad is usually at work and stuff but like I usually don't talk to my dad when I call, I just talk to my mom, she's more chatty and intuitive

16) It's a rare occurrence, even if there are in the area, so

17) factor of independence so, kind of just find your own way

18) as I said earlier, my parents are rarely there, even if they can wing me a message before I even start my event, or leave for my event, that in itself, it goes a long way.

19) then you're able to do it cause you're an extension of us

20) yeah like it's in your blood, that sort of thing. That's something that you can always think about, like yah they're right, if they ca do it, I can do it. It's something that helps you drive your mentality, You need all the help you can get

21) I mean, just the fact that they're there, and that like you see them, you just see them cheering, even if they're there watching, the fact that they made the effort to even se you come out and see,

come out and experience, that in itself is

22) physical presence is just as important as the mental presence

23) an individual sport like track. You're already in an individual mindset, when you start so when you're running or jumping, it's just you out there

24) it gives you a lot to think about, but the fact that they're not there for that, it's something that is like a lingering factor

25) lingering like in the back of my head I guess, like this is okay, this is good, I'm pumped I'm ready to go, I'm looking around like okay, I got my teammates here, they're supporting me too, and then you kind of just think about it and like who would I really value to see here?

26) fill that void yeah, they're just there strictly to help you when it comes to succeeding in whatever event that your participating

27) primarily its performance and mental aspect

28) Motivation kind of goes hand in hand with recognition as I mentioned earlier. The more recognition that you receive the more motivation you'll receive

29) little more push and motivation compared to other athletes who are just doing their best but at the same time, not reaching that level that everybody hopes to achieve.

30) its only it only exists if that intense training transfers over to the actual skill level or application

31) I just kind of looked at it and maybe I, maybe I found my niche here, like this is something, it's an opportunity to excel on this.

32) he's like a typical dad, a very strong silent type.

33) I mean hearing it from one person compared to someone you actually value, that's something. Even though it's the same message it has different connotations.

34) seeking help for my weaknesses rather than just being hard-headed and just being like your strengths outweigh your weaknesses

35) I don't expect to go the Olympics anyways so what would be the point in doing all this

36) they could just be there a lot more.

37) I want them to kind of just make the effort themselves rather than just telling me would you like it if we came

38) maybe I might be a lot better at my event, for all I know because they're constantly critiquing and thinking about and trying to just really be involved and see success in that sense. Cause like what they see, they don't see my effort at practice, they only see the perspective from what I tell them at the meet, but if they're able to see what happens at the meet and they see me at home

39) like it gives me motivation to keep up my physical standing, as well as its something that I can push myself towards, achieving a common goal, a goal I've set for myself

40) trying to apply and use this knowledge that I've gained. So, it doesn't go to waste and it isn't there

Athlete # 3

1) I tried it at the gymnastics academy and we just did stunting so the lifts, and I was a flyer so the person being lifted in the air and I just loved it!

2) I loved learning new skills, working with teams, being able to be the flyer the one up in the air, I loved performing, being able to compete and put on a wonderful performance, and you know that if you have a good performance that you and your team put on, it's honestly the best feeling in the world

3) I totally agree 100%, especially in cheerleading or dance that sort of thing, you work so hard like months and months for your routines and they're 2 minutes long and that's all you have to prove how hard you've worked

4) I had pretty much the highest-level tumbling that I could, which was a round off handspring full, a standing tuck, pretty much everything that could guarantee you a spot on a highest-level team and I fell and I did hurt myself and I scared myself and through that time I developed a tumble block and honestly had to return how to tumble and never got back up to the level I was once at.

5) I think motivation is finding the strength within yourself to be able to succeed at whatever you want to do. If you don't have motivation to do something, you're not going to do it

- 6) It was tough for me to find a sport to stick with, that kept me entertained, and I you know quit a lot of things, like soccer, ballet
- 7) My mom didn't really get the chance as a kid, her parents didn't really agree with sports. she was very active with us as kids, so they definitely, encouraged us to play sports
- 8) umm but definitely not as supportive as they were for my sister, because they knew the sport, they understood it, and obviously my dad was the coach and they have a lot of responsibility for those sports.
- 9) they were maybe hesitant because I had to go to all these extra lessons and practices, and I had to keep pushing myself and travelling to. to be on the competitive team, I think it was just a lot for them
- 10) they basically told me I should just quit
- 11) obviously not happy, because they just didn't understand it, I felt not very supported.
- 12) Something really special that shocked me was that, my last race in university, it was like 3 hours away and my dad actually came to it and saw me race, he showed up which I didn't expect.
- 13) I was the only kid in the house so they definitely came out to more then
- 14) I think they realized I wasn't happy that they weren't being involved so they decided to do that to support me.
- 15) I would talk about things sometimes and he just wouldn't get it.
- 16) I mean we would talk about it, but it wasn't like they were invested in it, like they didn't want to know my times, or the workouts I was doing or ways to improve.
- 17) I'd say it was physical support, they provided me with things that I needed, they payed for it, they drove me, but maybe they weren't emotionally invested or necessarily interested in it.
- 18) But I think as I got older, parents did not really need to be there, so they wouldn't
- 19) couldn't tumble, they were honestly at the point of not wanting me to continue and they weren't going to pay for it. So, I didn't have much motivation that way

20) I think a big thing was that they thought you know, also cheerleading isn't going to get you anywhere, it's not going to get me a scholarship, it's not going to help me in life. It's not gonna make me get paid to play sports. whereas my sister could have gone to school for free.

21) . So it's funny because you know they told me to quit something that I absolutely loved, when I was younger

22) I did have strict parents where I wasn't allowed to go out and party and stuff or be around people they didn't accept. So, it was a big shock for me, being on a team with older girls, and with people who party, it was a normal thing, but sports weren't a big thing for them

23) Come on guys, we got this! 10 more lemon squeezes

24) I just tried to be the best athlete I could, make the coaches happy. Be a coachable athlete

25) I was so motivated to prove to these coaches, even tho I was only a part of this organization for two years that I was really trying to get ahead in that sport

26) I felt like I did motivate my team, I felt as if I was a leader. And we came second again! Which really sucked

27) When I was in university, I didn't really enjoy the team, I was motivated to do well and prove to myself but that was about it. I didn't feel a connect with my team, track and field I just wanted to motivate everyone to enhance friendship and the team vibe, but I knew I wasn't going to be special, I knew I wasn't going to do well but I wanted to be that motivating person for the team, for everyone.

28) that it's really hard, you know its tough to be a motivating factor when you're just screaming on the inside

29) That's always been my main goal, to try to do my best and take improvements and work on things so I was motivated to get back into it, I do love the sport of track but it was tough because I wasn't getting the results I wanted.

30) I think just knowing that I was going to be my last chance to do competitive sports. After university there was nothing, there still is nothing for me to do to be in a competitive sport

31) you know as you get older people have different priorities.

32) I feel like I'm a 100 years old, A: and you're 24.

33) For me, personally, working full time and another job, and running my household, it's exhausting. You know I get to the gym once a week these days and it's just my body. I just have

a lot of aches and pains and being diagnosed with hypo-thyroidism that's affected my energy

34) So if I had kids who did sports that I knew I would be more motivating, even if they didn't then I would still try to be more motivating towards them than what my parents were for me.

35) maybe if my parents would talk to the coaches, I know they didn't talk about the teams and choose them or give much input but maybe if they talked to the coaches for me then it would have maybe could have made an impact. Again, maybe they weren't comfortable with doing that because they didn't know the sport

36) It may have been better it may have been worse

Athlete # 4

1) So, it wasn't professional in the definition being compensated, but it was professional in aspirations of being the best in the world.

2) the desire to play is there, you don't lose the love for something that was your life at one time.

3) I loved the discipline and the culture of it and the international flavour of it,

4) that it's one of the only places that I find completely peaceful.

5) Most people don't realize, and girls, forgive me, they could be dancers in the Russian ballet, if they weren't professional athletes.

6) And you think about the titles and trophies, and the nostalgia, like you said you smell that wet grass there, there's something special about just playing there

7) is it's any way to take a factor or entity of some kind that makes you want to perform better

8) Whether it's like pain or turning depression into something constructive but I feel like motivation is this innate process where you're taking something negative in your life and turning it into something constructive

9) he did, he would kind of plant the seeds of aggression into your head, like play with a chip, do some things that were a little dirty, kind of encouraging whatever it took to get an edge,

10) he just didn't respect me enough to realize I could handle my business if it was something that concerned me.

- 11) they never did anything for themselves because they gave us everything they had.
- 12) They definitely felt that it broke me and they were broken by it too, because they saw how broken I was.
- 13) they felt the loss of that dream with me
- 14) Anger is a tremendous source of motivation for me
- 15) she would remind me that there are a lot more things in the world than just playing football.
- 16) you get resentful not towards my brother but them, kind of like did either you ever play at soldier field? Like what are you doing that's more important than that?
- 17) yeah I always seek validation, like that's my biggest weakness, in my personality, external validation. And it was tough to feel validation when people who don't really matter to you are the ones congratulating you all the time.
- 18) I would say I still have supportive parents but just didn't support me as a young man and as an athlete in the ways that I really needed.
- 19) "I have a broken mind, a broken body and a broken self-esteem and I just don't want to play anymore"
- 20) And umm, it cost me her, costed me friends, costed me girlfriends in general the ability to put a teenage guy, like forced me to grow up quick, even as an adult now, there are a lot of shortcoming that you know some 18-20 year olds do to get out of there system. So I feel like I pressed fast forward from the time I was in 8th grade to the time I was in university
- 21) I'm not going to go out there separate my shoulder for the third time this season while you're out there drinking, partying probably doing illegal drugs cause most of them did, till 3 am.
- 22) So they were there because their asses were in the seats but were they really there? I would debate not.
- 23) So I think my parents were more invested in my career but were absent physically a lot more than other parents, but that absence for me was really what hurt me the most.
- 24) Where do you think you stand amongst the other guys so far? Build any connections with the coaches or the staff? Hear anything from past guys that were shit and got cut? Just kind of putting anxiety in my head. Like it didn't have to be that way.

- 25)** Which is basically just go back to the people who have doubted me for a lot of things in my life and, I want to do a lot of things for me, but it's kind of fuck you, I'm going to show you too cause mi so sick of you looking at me that way, or perceiving me that way, or capping or limiting me that way.
- 26)** you're using your time to do something better than supporting me. So therefore, supporting me is not a good use of your time, and that's how my brain rationalizes that absence.
- 27)** parents have a way of making you feel really special amongst a lot of extraordinary people
- 28)** And I always felt that I was equally impressive as my brother, but I never garnered the validation and respect that he did
- 29)** It's not that I ever felt unsupported, but I didn't feel supported in the ways that as an athlete, as a human being I personally needed
- 30)** like the type of support that I was getting did not align with the support that I needed, and the offered type of support is always useful and helpful but its not the support that you need, and you know deep down and that's where I'm going
- 31)** confidence turns into elevating your capability
- 32)** because I literally sacrificed so much, didn't drink, didn't smoke, didn't eat shit food. Didn't do anything that could be self-destructive at all.
- 33)** England because it left such a bad taste in my mouth, and because it was really the beginning of the end at such a young age., it did the opposite of motivate me for a while, it discouraged me.
- 34)** And it's unhealthy because its not completely for me but it's constructive because it gets me into a better place to leverage other things.
- 35)** needless to say, the mental clarity you get from exercising, and I usually take emotional pain and turn it into resilience
- 36)** I need to develop some mental resiliency skills so exercise doesn't become the combative strategy to mental health problems
- 37)** like I can be okay being alone, but, I think life is a lot mor enjoyable, interesting and beautiful with someone else
- 38)** I just want to appreciate what life offers because it can change in a day, it can change any time. I try I don't like clichés but they become clichés for a reason. I'm not a goodbye kind of person, I'm a see you later, kind of guy. Im very paranoid in that way. I hate when people say

goodbye to me, and more importantly, it plays into sports, where I had to say goodbye. It's me facing a fear of sorts, and that was motivating in a way, to have the nerve to walk away. Umm and realize you won't die because you're not playing and my life went back to being normal, with whatever normal is.

39) I just think that if I was a parent with multiple kids, with being athletes, I think it's imperative that one parent goes to one thing and another goes to another one and then they alternate afterwards. If you can do it

40) I kind of wish she learned about the game more like my dad did. I kind of wish my dad learned to chill more like my mom did

41) I think if my parents were overly involved I don't think I would have been able to walk away the way I wanted. So my motivation for the sport would really change because I imagine I would learn to resent it a lot more than I actually did

42) I think overly involved parents are just as bad as absent people, you have to establish boundaries,

Athlete # 5

1) okay yeah it fucks with you hard, to the point where you kind of feel like with your core self and you don't really experience that until you really deprive your body from comfort in that way

2) I get out of the water like with Karen and Susie with 50 year old women like fuck! I'm slow right and now I have to catch up to everyone else

3) honestly I think it's become such a huge part of my identity that I do find pride in it like being able to label myself as a person who does all these things, like it kind of boosts your ego a little bit and yet you earn it, as opposed to something that's just given to you, like you work hard for it

4) by September my energy levels were so low, it was a mess. So this year I've decided to limit it to 2

5) I think its kind of a catalyst to get you into movement. I'm not a big fan, like I don't really care for motivation. I know people seek it, but I, I think it's so short term right, like it's hard to explain cause it could range from so many things, like it could be from you sitting back and listening and you'll be motivated for 10 minutes to do something, like perceived motivation but that's not going to really help you. Then there's drive and commitment or, so motivation is just a load of shit to be honest.

6) do you remember when Pablo Escobar blew up the supreme court? she was pregnant with me at the time

7) eventually we came form a perceived high status to my parents having to wash toilets

- 8) In Canada, to having to see the contrast of the upbringing where I was surrounded by maids, and then I'd have to see my mom cleaning houses right, complete switch. And my dad at the time was trying to get me out of, like he always kind of instilled in me the idea of not being mediocre because I was given this opportunity to be in this country and umm I guess without him saying it they had sacrificed so much for me without him saying it, and my brother, there's an appreciation there for it
- 9) when you're a teenager and you're a dumb fuck, you do under appreciate them and take them for granted but now it's like fuck that, these people did a bunch of shit for me so I have to return the favour whenever I can.
- 10) Even though it doesn't feel like I'm doing things for them because I'm doing things I want to do, and it may not make sense to him, at the end of the day it justifies the big picture and they see it once I pull it off
- 11) it's a pretty cool atmosphere, it's a little spot missing where people are driven and focused cause Quebecois culture is a little lazy, I found
- 12) There really wasn't like a sense of hey you participated in this, good for you! It was more like you did this, you did this right, congratulations and if not do it better next time
- 13) I think she was kind of neutral for it. But over time as I went away to university, my dad was kind of overweight. like get your shit together, I don't want to see you drop dead at 50 now.
- 14) Don't be a fat fuck, there's no positive thing that could come from here, learn to appreciate and love yourself. Relying on my mom to take care of himself, I didn't speak to him for like three weeks cause I was pissed.
- 15) she didn't really help me, but she helped my dad a lot
- 16) he hit me up two weeks later saying he tested positive so like you fucker, you got me sick you know.
- 17) they kind of want me to head into another dimension right now, like in regards to focusing on other stuff because it does take up so much time, so I do feel that resistance.
- 18) like you gotta let me live my life man.
- 19) I feel like she wouldn't be able to relate in some things, like if you meet someone who's had similar experiences in some things, it's easier to get, especially when you're doing a 50, 60k run, and you're all sorts of fucked up, the last person you want to talk to is someone who has no idea what you're feeling.
- 20) when you're depleted, you're like the biggest asshole in the world
- 21) But I sat her down one day and said " look this is the path I'm choosing to go, and if you don't want to take this, the only thing is it's going to create this distance and resentment towards , like no matter what this is going to be the outcome
- 22) "you're crazy, you shouldn't be doing this stuff".

- 23) Sometimes you get celebrated sometimes people think you're nuts but fuck them.
- 24) I don't know it was weird it was hard for them to do anything but give me advice and kind of throw money on me and that's it
- 25) ? Like especially with the army on the other hand, like you're just getting fucked sideways for life, so like doing XC is like oh thank God, what's the worst that can happen? I finish not where I want to be? Like at least I get to sleep at night.
- 26) my mom and I aren't on the same frequency on that, that way, but she'll stay out of the way so it's dope.
- 27) I feel like it becomes a bonding experience maybe not so much for the sporting event but being accompanied
- 28) ughh I think initially when I was finding it hard to do certain things, I got into a dark place, so I'd use them for motivation. But now it isn't really that much, like if I'm in trouble I'm more concerned about the moment than my parents, it doesn't, they're not the reason I get up and get on a treadmill.
- 29) So like, they play a huge part in their support for me to be able to maintain what I'm doing. Yup
- 30) Like the logistical parts or other parts of it. I am dependent on it.
- 31) I guess, I think it's such an independent thing with the running that external stuff can only stimulate you so much, I think it's gotta be you, like you're the only person you have to have that conversation with yourself, like why do I have to get out of bed today and you know why
- 32) totally varies because you can have days where you get pissed at the world because you kill your sport because there's something external emotion fucking with you and you need to compensate for whatever's missing and you need to compensate or whatever stupid shit is going on in life, so you take it out on your sport and it's crazy motivation.
- 33) In motivation. like 3, but discipline 10. like I'm not motivated I just do it.
- 34) oh, fuck yeah! Like you have to be right, you have to have some pride and just be like fuck you.
- 35) let's say I wanted to win an ironman... I'd break up with my girlfriend, just be devastated, completely depressed but workout like an animal if that was the objective, that would 10 motivated
- 36) I yeah, think at that point you have to be extremely motivated like be an 8 or 9 or 10, or else you're fucked. But yeah, I think people are capable of being at a 10, cause I've seen some people do crazy shit and I don't think they would have done it for no reason.
- 37) last thing that distracted me was a girlfriend, like just occupying too much of my time, so like we either stop texting all the time here or we break up cause you're getting in the way of my training

- 38) Oh that definitely affects me, like the idea like fuck I'm 26 now and I haven't done anything worth while because I've been fulfilling people's aspirations, cause I'm a dummy
- 39) I think it's just being aware of the limited time we might have, and I rather have that now and have the urgency now than later, like I get anxiety watching Netflix.
- 40) I'm like fuck this, I should be doing something, like something worthwhile.
- 41) I'll always have that, like I'll have to be outside, like I spend a lot of time outside, so I think I'll still have a positive motivation for that. I get fuelled by that so yeah
- 42) I wish my parents would have like taught me how to talk to myself in a more serious manner, in certain races or events, I don't take things seriously, which is probably better because I stay relaxed. If I wanted to be more motivated and more intuitive and, in the zone,, and better at what I do I wish they changed the way I have that dialogue where I take things a little more seriously. And aim a little higher, like I wish my parents would have taught me to aim a little higher.
- 43) I wish my parents hasn't put so many limitations on what I could do, and by limitations I mean, not giving me the idea that I could do anything in my life as opposed to like ok you have to go to school, go to work, like for me to break that mould, it took a lot of effort and I wish it hadn't. so, I wish my parents were more willing and open-minded and giving me that idea that I could do more than that average bullshit
- 44) umm just cause I see the benefits, I do appreciate a higher quality of life, I see the benefits of exercising as opposed to people who don't. umm so yeah, I'll keep that up for the simple sake of keeping up the quality of life I have, maybe aim higher, I think it provides a cool life.

Athlete #6

- 1) "friends have always been a big motivation for me"
- 2) "I wanted to do it because my friends were doing it. Once I got to university it was because I wanted something to do for myself"
- 3) "you just need that structure"
- 4) "I can compete and perform in front of people"
- 5) "everything that I learned was very minimal compared to people who have been doing it from the age of 5 or 6"
- 6) "My dad he was mostly working on himself, he wasn't involved much"
- 7) "...at least communicate if I don't see them much"
- 8) "he knew he could always take us to the pool and we'd be happy with it."

9) “I don’t think he really cared. He was never the one to come to any of my games or see me cheer or anything. So for him, I don’t think he understands, like I think he is very focused on himself and he doesn’t understand my, like when something is important to me.”

10) “he wouldn’t know anything unless I told him”

11) “thought he would be more excited or be excited in general cause he hasn’t been with anything else”

12) “then I would know that he cared and it would make me want to just yeah do better and show him”

13) “was only if she didn’t approve of a certain sport that she wouldn’t show any interest in it, like rugby for example. I could tell.”

14) “That was a big difference she never showed up to any of my rugby games, but she would usually show up to my skating. So I knew that was what she approved of.”

15) “because anytime I performed, she would always cry”

16) “just surprised that I had continued on and did things for myself.”

17) “I didn’t want to tell anybody because I didn’t want to disappoint anyone”

18) “always there but wasn’t fully vocalised”

19) “they were there just reserved”

20) “If my mom was always there I’d feel more pressure, like I was happy with how much she was there but compared to everyone else, it was different”

21) “like if my mom was coming to my cheer competitions, then you know I’m making sure I’m on my A-game”

22) “I feel like it would make me perform better”

23) “I’m still doing my job but not like a 110%”

24) “If I don’t have sports, I don’t have something that I’m accountable for, like okay yeah I have jobs but with sports it’s something you want to do”

25) “I felt most motivated when I had something to prove”

26) “you just want to do it, cause you see a vision, that’s also a thing, like for me I saw this vision,
and of like how it would be if I were on it, so that also motivated me more, to want to be on it.”

27) “use that fuel yourself”

28) “I think it’s also good motivating to go do something when you’re in a bad state.”

29) “. It’s something I worry about for sure, like finding the balance, and just your body, like obviously, I’m going to be super sad when I can’t flip the way I used to before, you know”

30) “Window!”

31) “doing it more as a job instead of doing something you like”

32) “I’m really motivated to stay healthy, and even with my kid sin the future, I want them to be an
overall good athlete, go into different sports like I did and just be healthy as a family.”

33) “if I got into my peak in cheer, it would have been hard for me to continue that if I knew I wouldn’t be able to beat”

34) “I felt less motivated because I knew I already hit my peak”

Step Three

Imaginative Variations/ Structural Themes

In the next step of analysis saliences were organized and grouped to present imaginative variations and structural themes. Some saliences were removed if they did not stand out as much as other saliences. The group of saliences otherwise known as “constituents” were grouped together into clusters that fit together in a thematic status “theme”. From the six interviews, themes of Presence, Mindset, Body and Health, and Time emerged.

Athlete #1

PRESCENCE

Absence

- not being at a competition or a single competition for the last 5 or 6 years, so kind of showed that they are not happy with it and they don't see me succeeding so they don't want to support the idea of me running track
- My parents aren't there when I need them to be, I guess. But when I need need them.
- I have learned how to compensate for my parents not being there, in a way that. There's just one thing that my mom told me when I was a kid, it was that "if you do something, do it the best way you can, or don't do it at all" umm I actually do imagine my mom saying this, like I can visualize my mom saying that, I play that in my head when I'm warming up in order to motivate myself even more. I don't know if that makes sense

Presence

- I would be over the moon, and then if they did show up to one of those races
- like my parents are there but not fully invested in something that I want to do
- I feel like if my parents were there it would just be a special kind of motivation that I've never had
- the one real change is that I'd want them to be with me at a competition, and just like be there to support me

MINDSET

- I want to show them what I love, I want to show them what I love doing, what I am good at
- my mom does tell me to never stop, doing something that I love to do just cause I can't do it
- I feel like that would force me to improve myself even better so I can prove them that I'm just, I'm even better than what they just saw
- about self-affirmation first thing in the morning and having that thought through the day like oh yes you deserve to be here, there's a reason why you're here.
- I've felt that sports was the one way to get out of it, or every time I did some sport physical activity, or played a team sport or ran or whatever, I could forget about what was happening at home and just be myself

Motivation

- motivation to me is achieving a goal that I set out for me for a specific day, umm it's in me to better myself every time I get out there in practice, it's the need to prove to other people, yes I am here for a reason, I am not just here to have fun. I'm here to prove something. And mostly I just want to prove myself, that yes, I can do it, I can still run fast, and proved to my parents that I am a good athlete, I guess
- because it doesn't help me motivate myself a lot, if anything it makes me... demotivated

- I feel like that recognition that I've been putting in myself and working and becoming a good hurdler that's motivated me as well and being recognized by coaches on the good things that I do that also motivates me
- if my parents were involved a bit more involved my motivation definitely would have been high and I'd be more confident, and if they were too involved then I feel like at some point I would feel, I would start feeling some resentment that
- I would say this year she really did pressure me into quitting...

TIME

- I've had some thoughts about quitting track this year because it just got too much, like I can't juggle being at practice, being at a school, being at work and doing all the volunteer work and also at the same time not having enough time for myself.

Athlete #2

PRESCENCE

- "I mean, just the fact that they're there, and that like you see them, you just see them cheering, even if they're there watching, the fact that they made the effort to even see you come out and see, come out and experience, that in itself is"
- "physical presence is just as important as the mental presence"
- maybe I might be a lot better at my event, for all I know because they're constantly critiquing and thinking about and trying to just really be involved and see success in that sense. Cause like what they see, they don't see my effort at practice, they only see the perspective from what I tell them at the meet, but if they're able to see what happens at the meet and they see me at home (PRESCENCE & ABILITY)

Sense of family support/ obligatory support

- "we're the type of family, like we eat dinner together once a week, we ask about each others day, ugh that's about it, we try to be involved in one another lives as much as we can"
- "kind of hard to see if from their perspective, their trying to do everything that they can to jut make a living, pay bills, that sort of thing, I guess it's a little selfish of me to ask so much of them to be there,"
- "typical nuclear family"
- "then you're able to do it cause you're an extension of us"

Parental Relations and communication

- "its just acknowledgement factor, it's no more beyond that"

- “cause she can connect with me on that personal level, she’s like really big raptors fan”
- “nostalgia factor and like we have a conversation about that and oh what you did versus what I did, and what you do versus what I do , but that sort of things, I don’t think it goes beyond that”
- “they’re like what are we supposed to do with this piece of information, this is more vital to you than it is to us”
- “So as I transitioned to where I am now, my dad is usually at work and stuff but like I usually don’t talk to my dad when I call, I just talk to my mom, she’s more chatty and intuitive”
- “he’s like a typical dad, a very strong silent type.”
- “I mean hearing it From one person compared to someone you actually value, that’s something. Even though it’s the same message it has different connotations.”
- “I want them to kind of just make the effort themselves rather than just telling me would you like it if we came”

Absence

- “It’s a rare occurrence, even if there are in the area, so”
- “as I said earlier, my parents are rarely there, even if they can wing me a message before I even start my event, or leave for my event, that in itself, it goes a long way.”
- “it gives you a lot to think about, but the fact that they’re not there for that, it’s something that is like a lingering factor”
- “lingering like in the back of my head I guess, like this is okay, this is good , I’m pumped I’m ready to go, I’m looking around like okay, I got my teammates here, they’re supporting me too, and then you kind of just think about it and like who would I really value to see here?”
- “they could just be there a lot more”.

Team

- “ugh especially in track, even though its an individual sport, there’s still a team dynamic, there’s that connectivity, there’s that togetherness when it comes to being with your team mates and your fellow athletes, and you still have that feeling that your like it’s a team sport but in a sense its individual “
- fill that void yeah, they’re just there strictly to help you when it comes to succeeding in whatever event that your participating”

MINDSET

- “an individual sport like track. You’re already in an individual mindset, when you start so when you’re running or jumping, it’s just you out there”
- “Motivation kind of goes hand in hand with recognition as I mentioned earlier. The more recognition that you receive the more motivation you’ll receive”
- “primarily its performance and mental aspect”

- seeking help for my weaknesses rather than just being hard-headed and just being like your strengths outweigh your weaknesses
- “factor of independence so, kind of just find your own way”

Motivation

- “it’s something that just gives you a kick in the pants to just keep going, keep ugh enduring, keep ugh yourself on track, just keep doing what you want to do whatever that may be. Motivation comes in lot of different ways, depends on how you perceive it”
- “my motivation is within recognition”
- “like it gives me motivation to keep up my physical standing, as well as its something that I can push myself towards, achieving a common goal, a goal I’ve set for myself

Ability

- “I guess like the actual ability that sort of transferred over but not like, it wasn’t really imprinted in my head like basketball! Like that’s my thing”
- “I just want to excel towards the top of the sub-elite level, I don’t expect to go Olympic bound”
- “yeah like it’s in your blood, that sort of thing. That’s something that you can always think about, like yah they’re right, if they can do it, I can do it. It’s something that helps you drive your mentality, You need all the help you can get”
- “little more push and motivation compared to other athletes who are just doing their best but at the same time, not reaching that level that everybody hopes to achieve.”
- its only it only exists if that intense training transfers over to the actual skill level or application
- I just kind of looked at it and maybe I, maybe I found my niche here, like this is something, it’s an opportunity to excel on this.
- I don’t expect to go the Olympics anyways so what would be the point in doing all this
- maybe I might be a lot better at my event, for all I know because they’re constantly critiquing and thinking about and trying to just really be involved and see success in that sense. Cause like what they see, they don’t see my effort at practice, they only see the perspective form what I tell them at the meet, but if they’re able to see what happens at the meet and they see me at home (+ **Presence**)

TIME

- “I find that it helps me kind of just, helps me stick to a routine”
- “in the morning they’d see each other then they’d drop me off and it was just a cycle that keep on going”

- “trying to apply and use this knowledge that I’ve gained. So, it doesn’t go to waste and it isn’t there

Athlete #3

PRESCENCE

- “Something really special that shocked me was that, my last race in university, it was like 3 hours away and my dad actually came to it and saw me race, he showed up which I didn’t expect.”

Parental Relations and communication

- “My mom didn’t really get the chance as a kid, her parents didn’t really agree with sports. she was very active with us as kids, so they definitely, encouraged us to play sports”
- “they basically told me I should just quit”
- “I would talk about things sometimes and he just wouldn’t get it.”
- “I mean we would talk about it, but it wasn’t like they were invested in it, like they didn’t want to know my times, or the workouts I was doing or ways to improve.”
- “So it’s funny because you know they told me to quit something that I absolutely loved, when I was younger”
- “maybe if my parents would talk to the coaches, I know they didn’t talk about the teams and choose them or give much input but maybe if they talked to the coaches for me then it would have maybe could have made an impact. Again, maybe they weren’t comfortable with doing that because they didn’t know the sport”
- I did have strict parents where I wasn’t allowed to go out and party and stuff or be around people they didn’t accept. So, it was a big shock for me, being on a team with older girls, and with people who party, it was a normal thing, but sports wasn’t a big thing for them (+Team)

Absence

- “But I think as I got older, parents did not really need to be there, so they wouldn’t”
- obviously not happy, because they just didn’t understand it, I felt not very supported (+Mindset)

Sense of family support and obligatory support

- “they were maybe hesitant because I had to go to all these extra lessons and practices and I had to keep pushing myself and travelling to. to be on the competitive team, I think it was just a lot for them”
- “I was the only kid in the house so they definitely came out to more then”
- “I think they realized I wasn’t happy that they weren’t being involved so they decided to do that to support me.”

- “I’d say it was physical support, they provided me with things that I needed, they payed for it, they drove me, but maybe they weren’t emotionally invested or necessarily interested in it.”

SIBLING RIVARLY

- “umm but definitely not as supportive as they were for my sister, because they knew the sport, they understood it, and obviously my dad was the coach and they have a lot of responsibility for those sports.”
- “I think a big thing was that they thought you know, also cheerleading isn’t going to get you anywhere, it’s not going to get me a scholarship, it’s not going to help me in life. It’s not gonna make me get paid to play sports. whereas my sister could have gone to school for free.”

TEAM

- I did have strict parents where I wasn’t allowed to go out and party and stuff or be around people they didn’t accept. So, it was a big shock for me, being on a team with older girls, and with people who party, it was a normal thing, but sports wasn’t a big thing for them (+**Parental Relation**)
- When I was in university, I didn’t really enjoy the team, I was motivated to do well and prove to myself but that was about it. I didn’t feel a connect with my team, track and field I just wanted to motivate everyone to enhance friendship and the team vibe, but I knew I wasn’t going to be special, I knew I wasn’t going to do well but I wanted to be that motivating person for the team, for everyone. (+ **Motivation**)

MINDSET

- I totally agree 100%, especially in cheerleading or dance that sort of thing, you work so hard like months and months for your routines and they’re 2 minutes long and that’s all you have to prove how hard you’ve worked
- obviously not happy, because they just didn’t understand it, I felt not very supported. (ABSENCE)
- “that it’s really hard, you know its tough to be a motivating factor when you’re just screaming on the inside”

Motivation

- “I think motivation is finding the strength within yourself to be able to succeed at whatever you want to do. If you don’t have motivation to do something, you’re not going to do it”
- I felt like I did motivate my team, I felt as if I was a leader. And we came second again! Which really sucked
- When I was in university, I didn’t really enjoy the team, I was motivated to do well and prove to myself but that was about it. I didn’t feel a connect with my team, track and field

I just wanted to motivate everyone to enhance friendship and the team vibe, but I knew I wasn't going to be special, I knew I wasn't going to do well but I wanted to be that motivating person for the team, for everyone. (+**Team**)

- “Come on guys, we got this! 10 more lemon squeezes”
- “I think just knowing that I was going to be my last chance to do competitive sports. After university there was nothing, there still is nothing for me to do to be in a competitive sport” (+**Time**)

Ability

- “I tried it at the gymnastics academy and we just did stunting so the lifts, and I was a flyer so the person being lifted in the air and I just loved it!”
- “I had pretty much the highest level tumbling that I could, which was a round off handspring full, a standing tuck, pretty much everything that could guarantee you a spot on a highest level team and I fell and I did hurt myself and I scared myself and through that time I developed a tumble block and honestly had to return how to tumble and never got back up to the level I was once at.”
- “couldn't tumble, they were honestly at the point of not wanting me to continue and they weren't going to pay for it. So, I didn't have much motivation that way” (**lack of parental support**)

Intrinsic

- “I loved learning new skills, working with teams, being able to be the flyer the one up in the air, I loved performing, being able to compete and put on a wonderful performance, and you know that if you have a good performance that you and your team put on, it's honestly the best feeling in the world”
- “It was tough for me to find a sport to stick with, that kept me entertained, and I you know quit a lot of things, like soccer, ballet
- That's always been my main goal, to try to do my best and take improvements and work on things so I was motivated to get back into it, I do love the sport of track but it was tough because I wasn't getting the results I wanted.

Extrinsic

- “I just tried to be the best athlete I could, make the coaches happy. Be a coachable athlete”
- “I was so motivated to prove to these coaches, even though I was only a part of this organization for two years that I was really trying to get ahead in that sport”

BODY/ HEALTH

- For me, personally, working full time and another job, and running my household, it's exhausting. You know I get to the gym once a week these days and it's just my body. I just have a lot of aches and pains and being diagnosed with hypo-thyroidism that's affected my energy (+ **Time**)

- I feel like I'm a 100 years old,
A: and you're 24.

TIME

- “So if I had kids who did sports that I knew I would be more motivating, even if they didn't then I would still try to be more motivating towards them than what my parents were for me.” (PARENTHOOD PREDICTIONS)
- “you know as you get older people have different priorities.”
- “I think just knowing that I was going to be my last chance to do competitive sports. After university there was nothing, there still is nothing for me to do to be in a competitive sport” (+**motivation**)
- “It may have been better it may have been worse”

Athlete #4

PRESENCE

Sense of family support and obligatory support

- “they never did anything for themselves because they gave us everything they had.”
- “They definitely felt that it broke me and they were broken by it too, because they saw how broken I was.” (mindset + body)”
- “I would say I still have supportive parents but just didn't support me as a young man and as an athlete in the ways that I really needed.”
- “parents have a way of making you feel really special amongst a lot of extraordinary people”
- “It's not that I ever felt unsupported, but I didn't feel supported in the ways that as an athlete, as a human being I personally needed”
- “like the type of support that I was getting did not align with the support that I needed, and the offered type of support is always useful and helpful but its not the support that you need and you know deep down and that's where I'm going”

Parental Relations and communication

- “he did, he would kind of plant the seeds of aggression into your head, like play with a chip, do some things that were a little dirty, kind of encouraging whatever it took to get an edge”
- “he just didn't respect me enough to realize I could handle my business if it was something that concerned me.”
- “they felt the loss of that dream with me”
- “she would remind me that there are a lot more things in the world than just playing football.”

- “I kind of wish she learned about the game more like my dad did. I kind of wish my dad learned to chill more like my mom did”
- “I think overly involved parents are just as bad as absent people, you have to establish boundaries”
- “Where do you think you stand amongst the other guys so far? Build any connections with the coaches or the staff? Hear anything from past guys that were shit and got cut? Just kind of putting anxiety in my head. Like it didn’t have to be that way.”(+**Mindset**)

Absence

- “you get resentful not towards my brother but them, kind of like did either you ever play at soldier field? Like what are you doing that’s more important than that? (+ **Mindset**)”
- “So they were there because their asses were in the seats but were they really there? I would debate not. (Physical presence)”
- “So I think my parents were more invested in my career but were absent physically a lot more than other parents, but that absence for me was really what hurt me the most.”
- “you’re using your time to do something better than supporting me. So therefore, supporting me is not a good use of your time, and that’s how my brain rationalizes that absence.” (+ time)

SIBLING RIVARLY

- And I always felt that I was equally impressive as my brother, but I never garnered the validation and respect that he did

TEAM

- I’m not going to go out there separate my shoulder for the third time this season while you’re out there drinking, partying probably doing illegal drugs cause most of them did, till 3 am.

MINDSET

- “yeah I always seek validation, like that’s my biggest weakness, in my personality, external validation. And it was tough to feel validation when people who don’t really matter to you are the ones congratulating you all the time.”
- “Where do you think you stand amongst the other guys so far? Build any connections with the coaches or the staff? Hear anything from past guys that were shit and got cut? Just kind of putting anxiety in my head. Like it didn’t have to be that way.” (parental communication)
- “And it’s unhealthy because its not completely for me but it’s constructive because it gets me into a better place to leverage other things.”
- “I need to develop some mental resiliency skills so exercise doesn’t become the combative strategy to mental health problems”
- “, needless to say the mental clarity you get from exercising, and I usually take emotional pain and turn it into resilience” (+**Body/Health**)

- “I have a broken mind, a broken body and a broken self -esteem and I just don’t want to play anymore” (+ **Body/Health**)

Motivation

- “it’s any way to take a factor or entity of some kind that makes you want to perform better”
- “Whether it’s like pain or turning depression into something constructive but I feel like motivation is this innate process where you’re taking something negative in your life and turning it into something constructive”
- “Anger is a tremendous source of motivation for me”
- “England because it left such a bad taste in my mouth, and because it was really the beginning of the end at such a young age., it did the opposite of motivate me for a while, it discouraged me.”
- “I think if my parents were overly involved I don’t think I would have been able to walk away the way I wanted. So my motivation for the sport would really change because I imagine I would learn to resent it a lot more than I actually did”

Ability

- “So, it wasn’t professional in the definition being compensated, but it was professional in aspirations of being the best in the world.”
- Most people don’t realize, and girls, forgive me, they could be dancers in the Russian ballet, if they weren’t professional athletes.
- “confidence turns into elevating your capability” (+**Mindset**)

Intrinsic

- “the desire to play is there, you don’t lose the love for something that was your life at one time.” (time)
- “that it’s one of the only places that I find completely peaceful.”
- “Which is basically just go back to the people who have doubted me for a lot of things in my life and, I want to do a lot of things for me, but it’s kind of fuck you, I’m going to show you too cause I’m so sick of you looking at me that way, or perceiving me that way, or capping or limiting me that way.”
- “I loved the discipline and the culture of it and the international flavour of it,”

BODY/HEALTH

- “I have a broken mind, a broken body and a broken self -esteem and I just don’t want to play anymore” (+**Mindset**)
- “because I literally sacrificed so much, didn’t drink, didn’t smoke, didn’t eat shit food. Didn’t do anything that could be self-destructive at all.”
- “, needless to say the mental clarity you get from exercising, and I usually take emotional pain and turn it into resilience” (+**Mindset**)

- “They definitely felt that it broke me and they were broken by it too, because they saw how broken I was.” (+Sense/ Family support)

TIME

- “And you think about the titles and trophies, and the nostalgia, like you said you smell that wet grass there, there’s something special about just playing there”
- “And umm, it cost me her, costed me friends, costed me girlfriends in general the ability to put a teenage guy, like forced me to grow up quick, even as an adult now, there are a lot of shortcoming that you know some 18-20 year olds do to get out of there system. So I feel like I pressed fast forward from the time I was in 8th grade to the time I was in university”
- “like I can be okay being alone, but, I think life is a lot more enjoyable, interesting and beautiful with someone else” (REFERENCE TO RELATIONSHIP)
- “I just want to appreciate what life offers because it can change in a day, it can change any time. I try I don’t like clichés but they become clichés for a reason. I’m not a goodbye kind of person, I’m a see you later, kind of guy. I’m very paranoid in that way. I hate when people say goodbye to me, and more importantly, it plays into sports, where I had to say goodbye. It’s me facing a fear of sorts, and that was motivating in a way, to have the nerve to walk away. Umm and realize you won’t die because you’re not playing and my life went back to being normal, with whatever normal is.”
- “I just think that if I was a parent with multiple kids, with being athletes, I think it’s imperative that one parent goes to one thing and another goes to another one and then they alternate afterwards. If you can do it” (PARENTHOOD PREDICTIONS)

Athlete #5

PRESCENCE

- I don’t know it was weird it was hard for them to do anything but give me advice and kind of throw money on me and that’s it
- I feel like it becomes a bonding experience maybe not so much for the sporting event but being accompanied

Sense of family support and obligatory support

- eventually we came from a perceived high status to my parents having to wash toilets
- In Canada, to having to see the contrast of the upbringing where I was surrounded by maids, and then id have to see my mom cleaning houses right, complete switch. And my dad at the time was trying to get me out of, like he always kind of instilled in me the idea of not being mediocre because I was given this opportunity to be in this country and umm I guess without him saying it they had sacrificed so much for me without him saying it, and my brother, there’s an appreciation there for it
- like you gotta let me live my life man.

- “you’re crazy, you shouldn’t be doing this stuff”.
- So like, they play a huge part in their support for me to be able to maintain what I’m doing. Yup
- Like the logistical parts or other parts of it. I am dependent on it.

Parental Relations and communication

- do you remember when Pablo Escobar blew up the supreme court? she was pregnant with me at the time
- when you’re a teenager and you’re a dumb fuck, you do under appreciate them and take them for granted but now its like fuck that, these people did a bunch of shit for me so I have to return the favour whenever I can.
- There really wasn’t like a sense of hey you participated in this, good for you! It was more like you did this, you did this right, congratulations and if not do it better next time
- I think she was kind of neutral for it. But over time as I went away to university, my dad was kind of overweight. like get your shit together, I don’t want to see you drop dead at 50 now.
- Don’t be a fat fuck, there’s no positive thing that could come form here, learn to appreciate and love yourself. Relying on my mom to take care of himself, I didn’t speak to him for like three weeks cause I was pissed.
- I feel like she wouldn’t be able to relate in some things, like if you meet someone who’s had similar experiences in some things, it’s easier to get, especially when you’re doing a 50, 60k run, and you’re all sorts of fucked up, the last person you want to talk to is someone who has no idea what you’re feeling.
- But I sat her down one day and said “ look this is the path im choosing to go, and if you don’t want to take this, the only thing is it’s going to create this distance and resentment towards , like no matter what this is going to be the outcome
- I wish my parents hasn’t put so many limitations on what I could do, and by limitations I mean, not giving me the idea that I could do anything in my life as opposed to like ok you have to go to school, go to work, like for me to break that mould, it took a lot of effort and I wish it hadn’t. so I wish my parents were more willing and open-minded and giving me that idea that I could do more than that average bullshit

Absence

- she didn’t really help me but she helped my dad a lot
- they kind of want me to head into another dimension right now, like in regards to focusing on other stuff because it does take up so much time, so I do feel that resistance.
- my mom and I aren’t on the same frequency on that, that way, but she’ll stay out of the way so it’s dope.
- I wish my parents would have like taught me how to talk to myself in a more serious manner, in certain races or events, I don’t take things seriously, which is probably better because I stay relaxed. If I wanted to be more motivated and more intuitive and, in the zone,, and better at what I do I wish they changed the way I have that dialogue where I

take things a little more seriously. And aim a little higher, like I wish my parents would have taught me to aim a little higher.

MINDSET

- okay yeah it fucks with you hard, to the point where you kind of feel like with your core self and you don't really experience that until you really deprive your body from comfort in that way
- when you're depleted, you're like the biggest asshole in the world
- Sometimes you get celebrated sometimes people think you're nuts but fuck them.
- uhhh I think initially when I was finding it hard to do certain things, I got into a dark place so I'd use them for motivation. But now it isn't really that much, like if I'm in trouble I'm more concerned about the moment than my parents, it doesn't, they're not the reason I get up and get on a treadmill.
- oh fuck yeah! Like you have to be right, you have to have some pride and just be like fuck you
- honestly I think it's become such a huge part of my identity that I do find pride in it like being able to label myself as a person who does all these things, like it kind of boosts your ego a little bit and yet you earn it, as opposed to something that's just given to you, like you work hard for *it (+intrinsic)*

Motivation

- I think its kind of a catalyst to get you into movement. I'm not a big fan, like I don't really care for motivation. I know people seek it, but I, I think it's so short term right, like it's hard to explain cause it could range from so many things, like it could be from you sitting back and listening and you'll be motivated for 10 minutes to do something, like perceived motivation but that's not going to really help you. Then there's drive and commitment or, so motivation is just a load of shit to be honest.
- totally varies because you can have days where you get pissed at the world because you kill your sport because there's something external emotion fucking with you and you need to compensate for whatever's missing and you need to compensate or whatever stupid shit is going on in life, so you take it out on your sport and it's crazy motivation.

Ability

- Like especially with the army on the other hand, like you're just getting fucked sideways for life, so like doing XC is like oh thank God, what's the worst that can happen? I finish not where I want to be? Like at least I get to sleep at night.
- in motivation. like 3, but discipline 10. like I'm not motivated I just do it.
- I yeah, think at that point you have to be extremely motivated like be an 8 or 9 or 10, or else you're fucked. But yeah, I think people are capable of being at a 10, cause I've seen some people do crazy shit and I don't think they would have done it for no reason.

Intrinsic

- honestly I think it's become such a huge part of my identity that I do find pride in it like being able to label myself as a person who does all these things, like it kind of boosts your ego a little bit and yet you earn it, as opposed to something that's just given to you, like you work hard for it (+MINDSET)
- Even though it doesn't feel like I'm doing things for them because I'm doing things I want to do, and it may not make sense to him, at the end of the day it justifies the big picture and they see it once I pull it off
- let's say I wanted to win an ironman... I'd break up with my girlfriend, just be devastated, completely depressed but workout like an animal if that was the objective, that would 10 motivated
- I'll always have that, like I'll have to be outside, like I spend a lot of time outside, so I think I'll still have a positive motivation for that. I get fuelled by that so yeah

Extrinsic

- it's a pretty cool atmosphere, it's a little spot missing where people are driven and focused cause Quebecois culture is a little lazy, I found
- I get out of the water like with Karen and Susie with 50 year old women like fuck! I'm slow right and now I have to catch up to everyone else
- I guess, I think it's such an independent thing with the running that external stuff can only stimulate you so much, I think it's gotta be you, like you're the only person you have to have that conversation with yourself, like why do I have to get out of bed today and you know why

BODY/HEALTH

- by September my energy levels were so low, it was a mess. So this year I've decided to limit it to 2
- he hit me up two weeks later saying he tested positive so like you fucker, you got me sick you know.
- umm just cause I see the benefits, I do appreciate a higher quality of life, I see the benefits of exercising as opposed to people who don't. umm so yeah, I'll keep that up for the simple sake of keeping up the quality of life I have, maybe aim higher, I think it provides a cool life.

TIME

- last thing that distracted me was a girlfriend, like just occupying too much of my time, so like we either stop texting all the time here or we break up cause you're getting in the way of my training
- ohh that definitely affects me, like the idea like fuck I'm 26 now and I haven't done anything worth while because I've been fulfilling people's aspirations, cause I'm a dummy

- I think it's just being aware of the limited time we might have, and I rather have that now and have the urgency now than later, like I get anxiety watching Netflix.
- I'm like fuck this, I should be doing something, like something worthwhile.

Athlete # 6

Presence

- “always there but wasn't fully vocalised”
- “they were there just reserved”
- “If my mom was always there I'd feel more pressure, like I was happy with how much she was there but compared to everyone else, it was different”

Sense of family support and obligatory support

- “was only if she didn't approve of a certain sport that she wouldn't show any interest in it, like rugby for example. I could tell.”
- “because anytime I performed she would always cry”
- “just surprised that I had continued on and did things for myself.” (+**Intrinsic**)

Parental relations and communication

- “My dad he was mostly working on himself, he wasn't involved much”
- “...at least communicate if I don't see them much”
- “he knew he could always take us to the pool and we'd be happy with it.”
- “use that fuel yourself” (d's Mother speaking when Kids were angry before practice)
- “doing it more as a job instead of doing something you like” (D's feelings if parents were over-involved”

Absence

- “ I don't think he really cared. He was never the one to come to any of my games or see me cheer or anything. So for him, I don't think he understands, like I think he is very focused on himself and he doesn't understand my, like when something is important to me.”
- “he wouldn't know anything unless I told him”
- “thought he would be more excited or be excited in general cause he hasn't been with anything else”
- “That was a big difference she never showed up to any of my rugby games, but she would usually show up to my skating. So I knew that was what she approved of.”

MINDSET

- “you just need that structure”
- “ I'm still doing my job but not like a 110%”

- “I felt most motivated when I had something to prove”
- “I think it’s also good motivating to go do something when you’re in a bad state.”

Motivation

- “if I don’t have sports I don’t have something that I’m accountable for, like okay yeah I have jobs but with sports it’s something you want to do”

ABILITY

- “I can compete and perform in front of people”
- “everything that I learned was very minimal compared to people who have been doing it from the age of 5 or 6”
- “I feel like it would make me perform better”
- “I felt less motivated because I knew I already hit my peak” (+**Time**)

Intrinsic

- “just surprised that I had continued on and did things for myself.” (+ SENSE OF SUPPORT)
- “you just want to do it, cause you see a vision, that’s also a thing, like for me I saw this vision, and of like how it would be if I was on it, so that also motivated me more, to want to be on it.

Extrinsic

- “friends have always been a big motivation for me”
- “I wanted to do it because my friends were doing it. Once I got to university it was because I wanted something to do for myself”
- “then I would know that he cared and it would make me want to just yeah do better and show him”
- “I didn’t want to tell anybody because I didn’t want to disappoint anyone”
- “like if my mom was coming to my cheer competitions, then you know I’m making sure I’m on my A-game”

Body and Health

- It’s something I worry about for sure, like finding the balance, and just your body, like obviously I’m going to be super sad when I can’t flip the way I used to before, you know”
- “.I’m really motivated to stay healthy, and even with my kid sin the future, I want them to be an overall good athlete, go into different sports like I did and just be healthy as a family.” (+**TIME**)

Time

- “Window!”

- “if I got into my peak in cheer, it would have been hard for me to continue that if I knew I wouldn’t be able to beat”
- “I felt less motivated because I knew I already hit my peak” (+**ABILITY**)
- “.I’m really motivated to stay healthy, and even with my kid sin the future, I want them to be an overall good athlete, go into different sports like I did and just be healthy as a family.” (+**Body/Health**)