

A winter landscape featuring a dark, narrow river or stream winding through a dense forest of snow-covered trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The text "IN THE NAME OF GOD" is overlaid in a bold, blue, sans-serif font across the lower right portion of the image.

IN THE NAME OF GOD

Coping With Stress In Athletes

R. Ramzanejad

M.A. Besharat

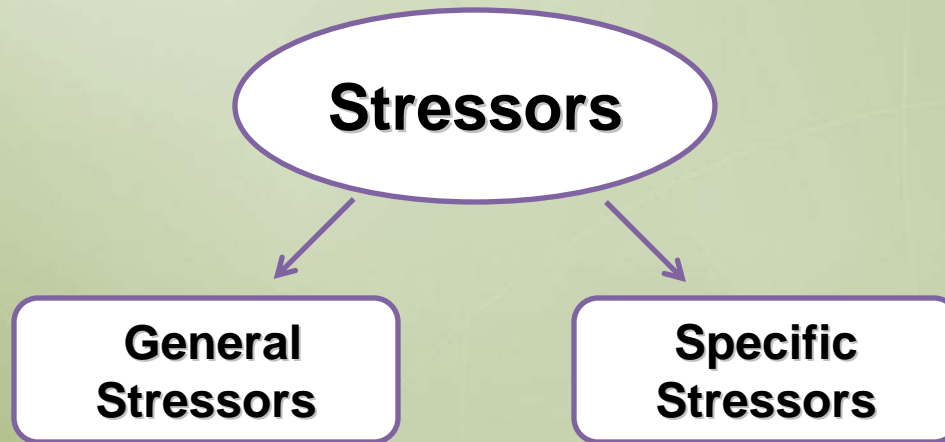
R. Balighi

Guilan and Tehran Universities

E-mail: ramzani@guilan.ac.ir
rramguil@yahoo.com

What is Stress?

Stress is an extreme or unusual external stimulus perceived as treating or harmful (Stressor) and will be caused significant changes in psychological, physiological and behavioral responses * .



* Aldwin, 1999; Lazarus & Folkman, 1989; Wheaton, 1997

Participating in competitive sport is very stressful. These stressors will influence athlete thoughts and actions*:

- Coach Reprimand
- Comments from Spectator
- Experiencing pain or injury
- Opponents
- Making an Error
- Poor Relationship with the Coach
- Daily Pressure to Succeed
- Fear of failure
- Bad Call from Referee
- An Important Game
- Verbal Abuse from Players
- Threat of Abuse



* Anshel, 2001; Gottlieb, 1997; Weinberg, 1996; Delany 2001.

Excessive Stress Can Cause*:

- Psychological and physiological Disruption
- Leading to Performance Difficulties
- Chronic Fatigue
- Injuries
- Emotional Control Problem
- Burnout and Drop-Out of Sport
- Decreased Enjoyment
- Heightened Unpleasant Emotions such as Anxiety and Depression
- Decrease Self-Esteem, Confidence, and Perceived Self-Control



* Crocker, Alderman, & Smith, 1988; Gould, udry, & Loehor, 1996; Hanin & Syrja, 1995; Heil, 2000; Henschen, 2000; Isberg, 2000; Smith, 1986; Gottlieb, 1997. ◦

Coping With Stress / Stress Management

- Coping is a process consisting of numerous **cognitive** processes, and is influenced by an array of personal and situational factors.
- Coping strategies can be adaptive and maladaptive coping.
- The best approach to reducing an athlete's psychological and behavioral responses to **perceived** stress, is to use effective **coping strategies**.

Coping strategies can be categorized according to similar characteristics:

- **Problem Focused and Emotion Focused** (Lazarus & Folkman, 1989)
- **Active and Non-active** (Aldwin, 1987)
- **Direct and Non-direct** (Yoo, 2000)

Coping strategies can be categorized according to similar characteristics:

- **Attention and Detraction** (Mc Crae, 1992)
- **Sensitization and Desensitization, and Engagement and Disengagement** (Carrer, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989)
- **Approach and Avoidance** (Anshel, 1996)

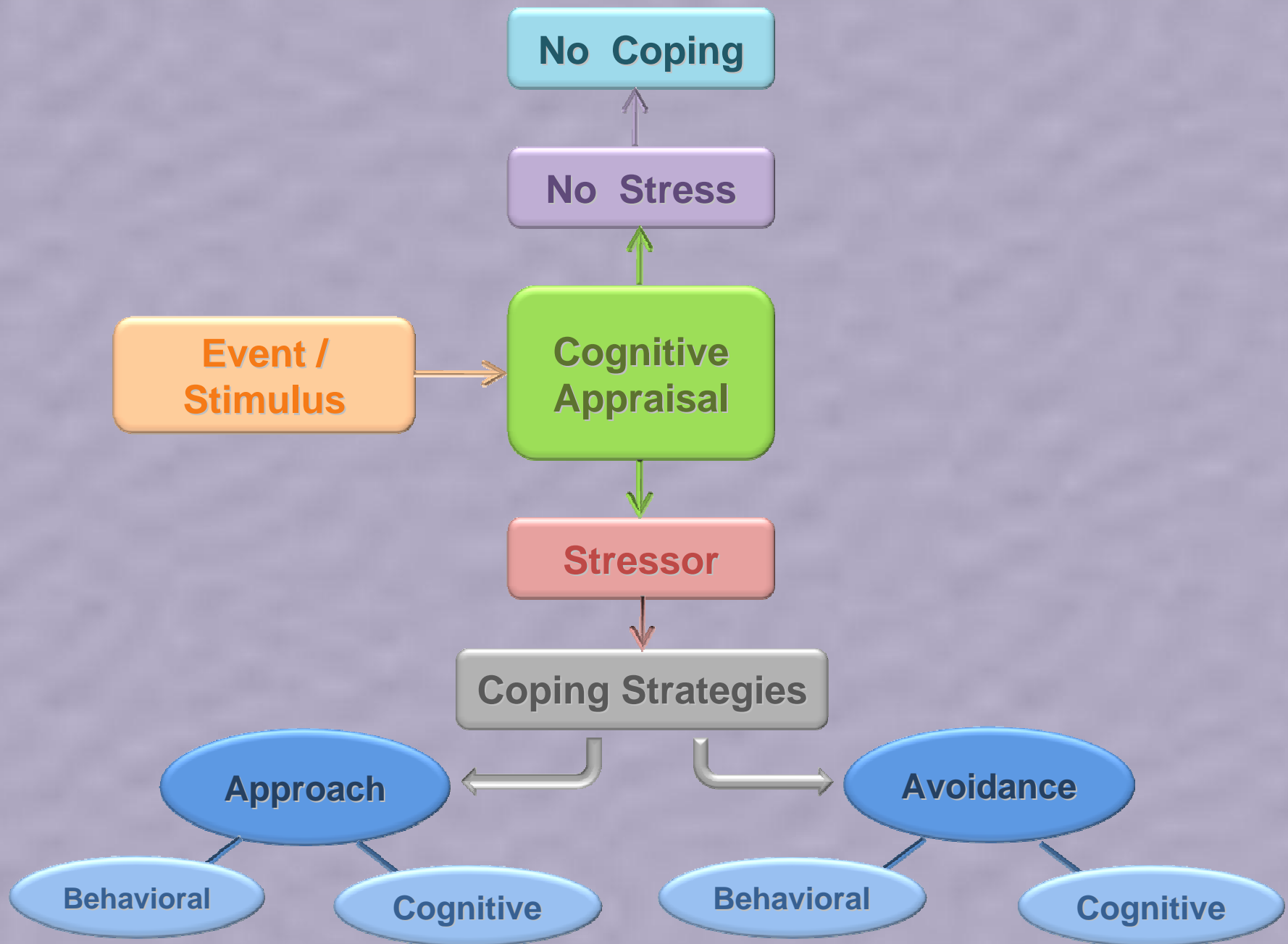


Fig 1: Model of the Coping Process in Sport

Approach Coping

- Approach coping strategies reflect the intensified intake and processing of unpleasant or threatening information*
- To improve understanding or control of the stressful situation is the main objective of approach coping.
- An approach strategy consists of confronting the source of stress and attempting to reduce it deliberately**
- Approach coping style consists of the stressor and may include increasing one's efforts of the initiating direct action to identify the source of the stress and prevent its recurrence.

* Anshel, 2001.

** Krohne & Mindel, 1997.

Approach Coping

Anshel (2001):

1. Approach – Behavioral Coping (Examples include arguing and soliciting further information)
2. Approach – Cognitive Coping (Examples include planning, and self-talk)



* Anshel, 2001.

** Krohne & Min

Avoidance Coping

- Avoidance coping strategies reflect a consistent attempt at physically or mentally turning away stressful sources*
- Main objective of avoidance coping is to maintain and focus on the risk.
- Avoidance coping consists of avoiding of the anxiety-including stimuli**
- Avoidance coping involves ignoring or shunning the stressor and may include moving to different task or mentally distancing oneself purposefully, known as cognitive distancing, in an attempt to remove oneself from the stressful situation.

* Anshel, 2001.

** Anshel & Kaissidis, 1997.

Avoidance Coping

Anshel (2001):

1. Avoidance – Behavioral Coping (Examples include avoiding the stressful situation and moving to different task)

2. Avoidance – Cognitive Coping (Examples include selective attention and distraction)



* Anshel, 2001

** Anshel & Ka



Is there any difference between approach & avoidance coping strategies with 7 stressors events in Guilan athletes?

While cross-culture differences on methods of coping with stress have been shown in pervious sport research, research in this area of investigation remains scant.

participants

- High school athletes (N= 102 → n=92)
- University athletes (N= 86 → n=58)
- Province athletes (N= 182 → n=162)

- Guilan province male (n=149) and female (n=168) athletes ranging in a age from 16 to 32 years (M=23.8, SD \pm 5.6), volunteered to participate in the study (n=312, 85%).
- Participants in this study completed in basketball, volleyball, handball, soccer, track and field, table tennis, badminton and martial arts.

Survey development and procedure

The 40-item Sport Stress Coping Styles Scale (SCSS) which is derived from Coping Style in Sport Survey* (CSSS).

*H. Anshel, 1996 .

Survey development and procedure

The instrument was based on dimensions of coping as a function of **approach** and **avoidance**^{*}, with subdimensions of task-focused and emotion-focused coping^{**}.

^{*}e.g. Krohne, 1993; Roth & Cohen, 1986.

^{**} Lazarus & Folkman, 1997.

Survey development and procedure

The seven stressors were:

- Making a physical or mental error (**ERROR**)



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressor were:

- Being criticized by their coach (**COACH**)



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressors were:

- Observing on opponent cheat **(CHEAT)**



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressor were:

- Experiencing pain or injury (**PAIN**)



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressors were:

- Receiving a “Bad” call or performance (**CALL**)



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressor were:

- Opponent's successful performance (**OPPONENT**)



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressors were:

- Poor environmental condition (e.g. poor weather or playing conditions, crowd recreation) **(WEATHER & CROWD)**



Survey development and procedure

The seven stressor were:

- **ERROR**
 - **COACH**
 - **CHEAT**
 - **PAIN**
 - **CALL**
 - **OPPONENT**
 - **WEATHER & CROWD**
- Participants rated each item on 5-point likert scale, ranging from 1, *very untrue* to 5 *very true*.

Survey development and procedure*

- Interval consistency ($r = 0.91$, and $r = 0.89$)
- Test-retest reliability ($r = 0.76$, and $r = 0.82$)
- Predictive validity ($R^2 = 0.69$, $P < 0.001$)

* Besharat, 2005.

The subjects completed the questionnaire under the supervision of a researcher. The average time to complete the survey was approximately 15-20 min.



Results & Discussion

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviation of Coping Styles

Coping Style	M	SD	t	df	Sig
Approach	3.48	0.46	3.31	311	0.01
avoidance	3.61	0.59			

- Approach coping is more predictable than avoidance coping in accounting for both situational and personal variables (Kaissidis- Rodafinos, 2000).
- Approach coping maybe more efficient than approach coping (Madden, Summer & Brown, 1990).

Results & Discussion

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- Approach coping was more common following stressful events than reflected greater situational control, while avoidance coping was more likely under low controllable conditions (Anshel, 2001).
- Approach coping strategies are relate to high perceived stress and high perceived controllability, whereas, avoidance coping strategies are relate to low perceived stress and low perceived controllability.

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- Anshel, Williams and Williams (2000) found significant cultural differences between U.S and Australian athletes participating in an array of sports on their approach and avoidance coping styles as a function of skill levels (e.g. national, state, local) and sport type (e.g. team and individual sports).

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- Hoedaya and Anshel (2003) found that Indonesian athletes used **active coping** more than their Australian counterparts after selected stressors both prior to (pre-game) and during (game) the competitive event.
- Mexican's players prefer to modify their own thoughts, emotions or actions rather than attempting to change the situation. Conversely, Americans, through socialization, try to actively control stressful situation (Diaz-Guerrero, 1986; Diaz-Loving & Dragus, 1999).

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- Avoidance coping is an effective response to stress when athlete need to distract themselves from a stressfull encounter (Anshel, Kim, Chang, & Fom 2001).
- It seems likely past events situations that are not controllable can be selectively ignored as a way to reduce stress.

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- Avoidance coping is preferable when stressful situations are perceived highly controllable, whereas avoidance coping is preferable when there is low perceived control (Roth & Cohn, 1986).
- U.S athletes tend to use more approach coping than avoidance coping and that they did so more did their Australian counterparts (Anshel, Williams & Hodge, 1997).

Table 2. Comparison of the Sub-Dimensions of Behavioral & Cognitive Coping Strategies

Coping Style	M	SD	t	df	Sig
Approach					
Cognitive	6.09	0.59	25.99	311	.001**
Behavioral	2.87	0.69			
Avoidance					
Cognitive	3.65	0.60	4.72	310	.01*
Behavioral	3.47	0.83			

- Approach-behavioral coping consists of conscious action taken in order to confront the stressor, where approach-cognitive coping consists of conscious thought process or emotion by which the stressor is addressed (Anshel, 2001).
- Avoidance- Behavioral coping consists of conscious behaviors& actions taken to physically remove oneself from stressful situation (Anshel, 2001). Avoidance- cognitive coping consists of mentally turning away from the stressful situation (Krohne,1996).

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Notice: there is relatively less support to include Avoidance/Approach behavioral CS (Anshel, 2001; Beshrat, 2005).

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- Nichollas et al (2005) found that problem/task-focused coping was reported more often than either emotion-focused or avoidance coping.
- Holt and Mandigo (2004) found little difference between uses of problem/task (i.e. increase effort, focus on technical points and practice) and emotion-focused (i.e. thought and control, teammate and support) coping.

Table 3. Comparison of the Coping Styles between 7 Stressor Events

Coping Style Stressor	Approach		Avoidance		Z	Sig
	M	SD	M	SD		
ERROR	3.36	0.84	3.85	0.81	7.02	.03*
COACH	2.84	0.71	3.21	1.30	4.03	.03*
CHEATING	3.55	1.33	3.34	0.98	2.57	.04*
PAIN	3.13	0.76	4.01	1.09	10.10	.001**
CALL	4.22	0.81	3.68	0.87	9.35	.001**
OPPONENT	3.89	0.81	3.24	0.83	8.95	.001**
WEATHER & CROWD	3.77	0.61	3.97	0.86	4.07	.02*

- Player more likely used a style called approach coping after receiving a bad call or after experiencing physical abuse, whereas avoidance coping was used more frequently after they missed an easy basket or lost the ball (Anshel & Well, 2000).

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- Anshel (1996) and Anshel et al (1997) found that approach strategies were more common following stressful events that reflected greater situational control (e.g. making a physical or mental error, responding to pain), while avoidance coping was more likely under low controllable conditions (e.g. a coach's reprimand, poor weather, a referee's penalty).

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- Anshel, Jasmieson and Raviv (2002) have shown that two stressors (opponent, coach) have high threat and low challenge on athletes.

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- Avoidance and approach coping strategies were reported to similar extent when faced with “Opponent abuse” and “Bad call”. However, when experiencing the stressors “Missed basket” and “Lose possession” players reported significantly more approach CS.

Table 4. Comparison of the Athletes by Sex on the Coping Styles

Coping Style	Female n= 144		Male n= 168		T	df	Sig
	M	SD	M	SD			
APPROACH	3.48	0.43	3.49	0.49	0.16	310	0.86
AVOIDANCE	3.67	0.58	3.56	0.60	1.51	310	0.13

- Some researchers reported that females apply more avoidance coping than do males. Other researchers go the contrary results; and some others suggested that there is no significant difference between male and female on coping strategies.
- Recently, Lopez; Mauricio, Gormley, Simko, and Berger (2001) found that no gender differences in coping. Gender differences in coping with stress is still an attractive research topic up today.

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- Several studies found that females used more emotion-focused CS, where males used more problem-focused SC (e.g. yoo, 2001). Other studies found that males used more approach coping whereas female used more avoidance coping (e.g. Anshel et al, 1998).
- Croker et al (1998): Female athletes use more emotion-focused coping seek social support than males do.

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- Anshel and Sutars (2001) found that both male and females were most likely to use an behavioral coping response when faced with either a coach- or performance-related stressor. However, males were also likely to use approach-cognitive and avoidance-cognitive CS in response to these stressors whereas females were not.

Table 5. Comparison of the Athletes by Sport Type on the Coping Styles

Coping Style	Team sport n= 175		Individual sport n= 137		T	df	Sig
	M	SD	M	SD			
APPROACH	3.48	0.49	3.49	0.42	0.15	306.77	0.87
AVOIDANCE	3.68	0.60	3.52	0.52	3.2	370	0.02*

- The effectiveness of a particular coping style may depend on the situation or the type of sport (Roth & Cohen, 1986).
- Competitive basketball players used more approach coping during the game (Krohne & Hindel, 1988).
- Youth cricket players used both the problem- or emotion-focused CS (Holt & Mandigo, 2004).
- French soccer player changed their CS and high-level players used cognitive techniques (Louvet & Genty, 2001).

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- Nicholls et al (2006) found that among rugby players, problem-focused CS represented 70% of all reported CS with emotion-focused & avoidance coping responses representing 14% & 16% respectively.
- Lack of consistency in the use of CS in different situational, cultural and personal context has been reported in the most of research.
- Further researchers in the area of athletics should include both personal & years of experience type of skill / sport, skilled / Non-skilled variables. These information (during & post game) should be obtained as soon as possible after experiencing the event.

There wasn't any significant relationship between age, competition levels and years of experience and coping strategies.



Thanks