

# Assessment in Applied Sport Psychology

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**National Brain Mapping Laboratory**  
**IBMS**  
Will hold:

**A Study Assessment in Applied Sport Psychology**

Neurosport Working Group Meeting (Book Reading) Scientific Meeting

**Speakers**

**Hediyyeh Dabagh**  
· M.Sc. of Sport Psychology  
University of Tehran  
· Secretary of Neurosport Working Group

**Dr. Masoumeh Aliasghari Toyeh**  
· PhD in Motor Behavior from Kharazmi University of Tehran  
· Lecturer at Mazandaran University  
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**ASSESSMENT IN APPLIED SPORT PSYCHOLOGY**  
Jim Taylor, PhD Editor

**Tuesday 7th September, 2021; 16-18.**

• The invitation link will be sent via email & sms.

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# Part 1

## Importance of Assessment in Sport Psychology Consulting

- Is there anything more important to quality sport psychology consulting than assessment?
- To be sure, consultants need a deep knowledge of mental skills and how to use them with an athlete or team.
- Assessment is vital because it lays the foundation for all effective consulting: an understanding of the client.

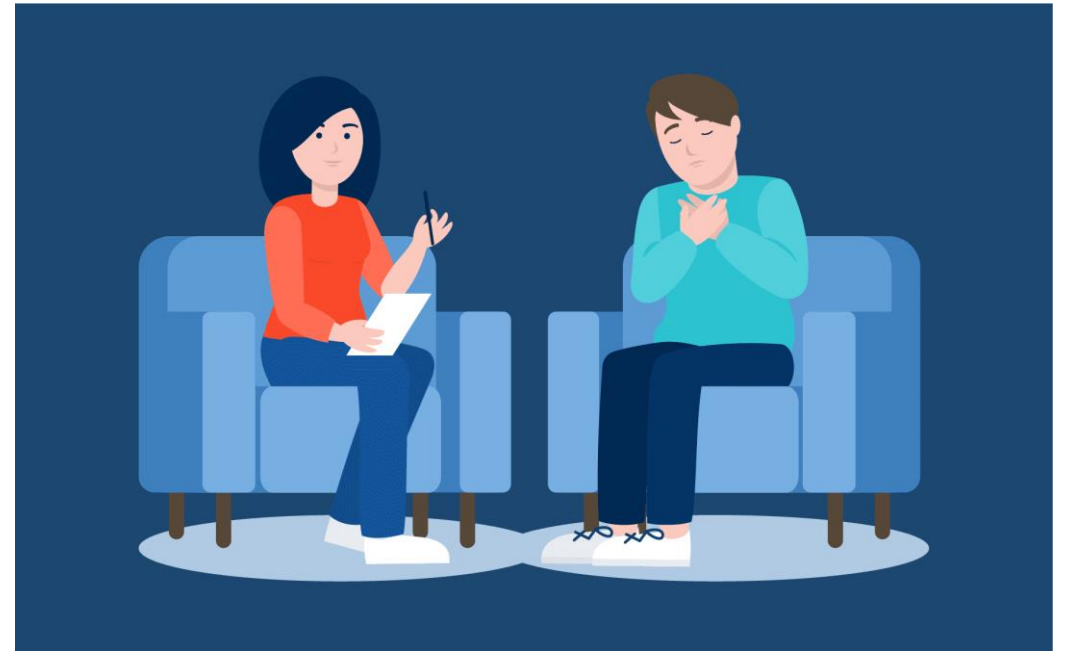


- **Evaluation** is the analysis, integration, and interpretation of the data collected from assessment or measurement.
- It involves using the gathered data to make a judgment about their meaning and value to clients.
- It creates a cohesive understanding of clients in relation to their performance challenges, needs, and goals.
- In a sense, evaluation is the end product of the data-collection process for the purpose of, for example, developing intervention plans.



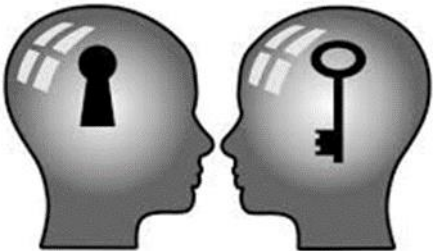
# Purpose of Assessment

- **Understanding the Person as an Athlete**
- **Understanding the Athlete as a Person**



# How Clients Understand Themselves

- Self-knowledge on the part of athletes is an essential piece of the sport performance puzzle.
- Yet, the mental can lag behind the physical and technical facets of sport performance in terms of the athlete's appreciation, understanding, and development.







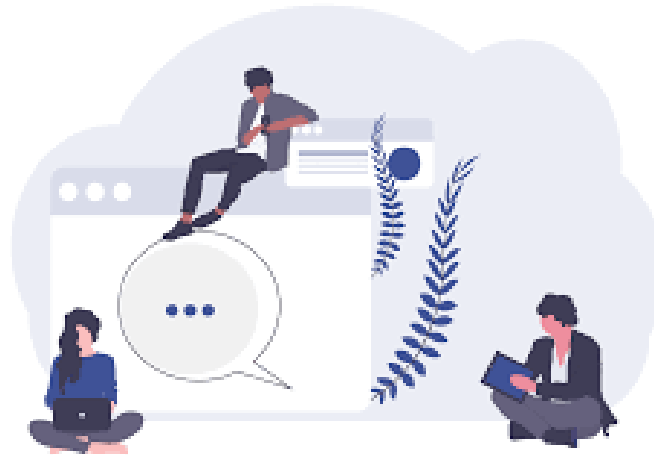
# How Clients Understand You



- The assessment tools you use also educate clients about your areas of expertise, such as whether you focus on mental skills or administer psychophysiological protocols.
- The assessments you select for clients give them their first hint at the intervention tools you may use (e.g., mental imagery, goal setting, cognitive restructuring) and how you may help the clients overcome their mental obstacles to achieve their athletic goals.

# How Clients Understand Sport Psychology

- For many athletes, sport psychology is an amorphous concept; they only hold a vague sense that their mind is getting in the way of achieving their competitive goals.
- Yes, they know that the mental side of sport is important to athletic performance and success.





# Practical Value and Use of Assessment

- Paint the Picture
- Perform Detective Work
- *Identify Patterns*
- Rule Out Possible Causes
- *Uncover the Underlying Problem*
- Form a Preliminary Conceptualization
- Develop an Initial Intervention Plan
- Give Clients Hope and Determination
- Foster Accountability

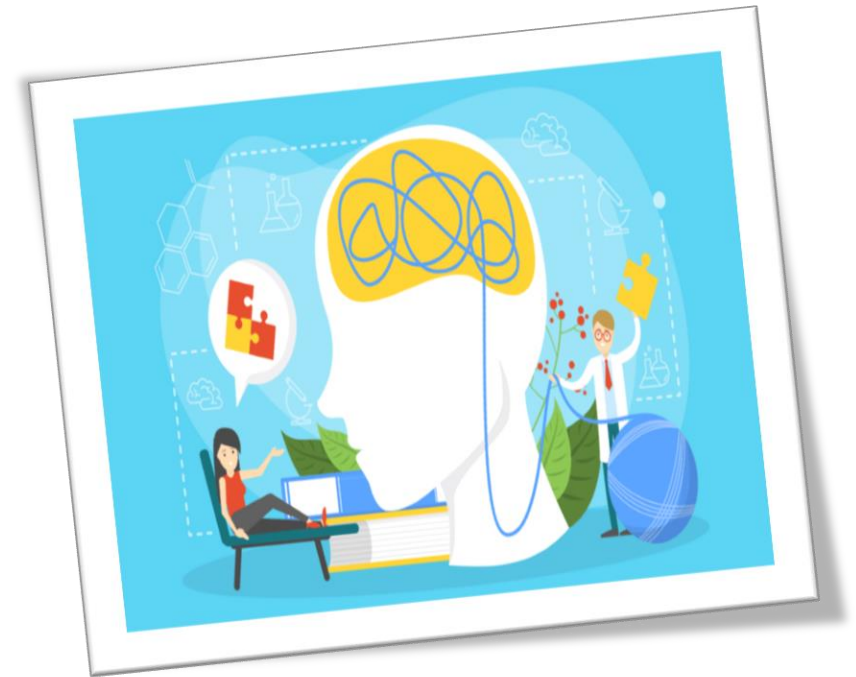


# Assessment Skill Sets



# Choosing Assessment Tools

- **Is It Valid?**
- **Is It Appropriate?**
- **Does It Match Client Goals?**
- **What Harm Could Come From Its Use?**



## Part 2

# Mental Health Screening: Identifying Clinical Issues





- “The most profound aspect of mental illness is that it occurs in people who are otherwise functioning well, even in those possessing outstanding abilities in specialized and creative endeavors” (Burton, 2000, p. 61).
- Anyone can be vulnerable to mental illness, including athletes.
- A mental health screening helps identify potential issues early, allowing you to treat those issues if you are appropriately trained or to refer the athlete to a professional with specialized mental health training if you are not.

# Stress

- The central concern in addressing stress among athletes is differentiating reasonable responses to the rigors of training and competition from those that suggest a need for psychological evaluation and treatment.



## One measure that can be used to evaluate stress in athletes is the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10; Cohen & Williamson, 1988)

- The PSS-10 is a 10- item self-report inventory that measures perception of and ability to cope with stress over the past month.
- The PSS-10 is easily administered and readily available. Because the time frame is one month, results cannot be generalized over time; however, the PSS-10 can be administered periodically as athletes' circumstances change.





# Depression and Suicide

- Major depression (also referred to as *depression*) is a period of at least two weeks with depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities and five of the following symptoms in the same two-week period (APA, 2013):
  - Change in weight or appetite
  - Change in amount of sleep
  - Psychomotor agitation or retardation
  - Fatigue or loss of energy
  - Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
  - Difficulty concentrating or indecisiveness
  - Recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal ideation, or a suicide attempt or plan to die by suicide





One example of a screening measure used to evaluate depression is the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale Revised (CESD-R; Eaton, Muntaner, Smith, Tien, & Ybarra, 2004).

An example of a screening measure for suicide is the Suicidal Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R; Osman et al., 2001).



# Anxiety

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*, or *DSM-5* (APA, 2013), includes diagnostic criteria for three anxiety disorders reviewed in this chapter

**1. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)**

**2. Panic disorder**

**3. Social anxiety disorder**



**A number of screening measures have been developed to evaluate the anxiety disorders mentioned earlier. Examples of these tools include the following:**

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7; Spitzer, Kroenke, Williams, & Lowe, 2006).
- Panic Disorder Severity Scale—Self-Report (PDSS-SR; Houck, Spiegel, Shear, & Rucci, 2002).
- Social Phobia Scale (SPS-6; Peters, Sunderland, Andrews, Rapee, & Mattick, 2012).



# Disordered Eating and Eating Disorders

The *DSM-5* (APA, 2013) includes diagnostic criteria for four eating disorders and related concerns reviewed in this chapter:

1. Anorexia nervosa (AN)
2. Bulimia nervosa (BN)
3. Binge eating disorder (BED)
4. Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID)





**A number of assessment and screening tools have been developed and validated for the general assessment of eating disorders, and many have been used in studies with athletes (see Pope, Gao, Bolter, & Pritchard, 2014). Examples of these tools include the following:**

- Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26; Garner, Olmstead, Bohr, & Garfinkle, 1982).
- Eating Disorders Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q; Fairburn & Beglin, 1994).
- Female Athlete Screening Tool (FAST; McNulty, Adams, Anderson, & Affenito, 2001; Robert-McComb & Mitchell, 2014).



# Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder commonly diagnosed in children, but it can also be present in adulthood.
- One example of a screening measure for ADHD is the Adult ADHD Self- Report Scale (ASRS-v1.1; Kessler et al., 2005).
- A second screening measure that can be used for ADHD is the Conners' Adult ADHD Rating Scales (CAARS; Conners, Erhardt, & Sparrow, 1999).





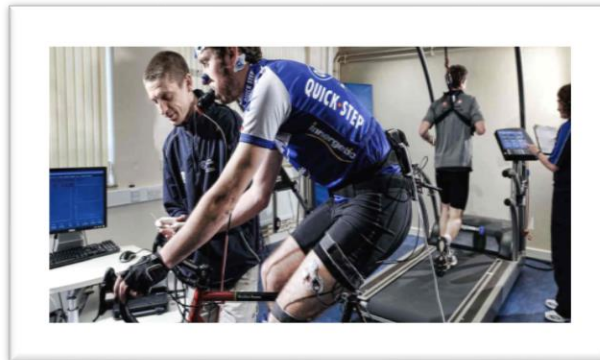
# Substance Use and Abuse

- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT; Babor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders, & Monteiro, 2001).
- Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST; Skinner, 1982).



# Part 3

## Applied Psychophysiology: Using Biofeedback, Neurofeedback, and Visual Feedback





- Psychophysiology is the study of the mind–body relationship. The central nervous system (CNS) and the peripheral nervous system (PNS) regulate brain and body processes, respectively.
- Psychophysiological assessment data are the foundation of arousal management, cognitive flexibility training, and vision training, a set of interventions that help athletes improve their training and competitive performances.

# Stress Response and Self-Regulation

- Elevated heart rate and respiration
- Decreased heart rate variability (HRV)
- Increased muscular tension
- Increased sweat production
- Reduced blood flow to the periphery
- Decreased skin temperature



## Cognitive changes may include the following

- Attention can become blank or race internally with anxious rumination.
- Attention can become inflexible and narrowly focused on perceived threats, possibly to the exclusion of other relevant stimuli.



# Visual Feedback

- visual feedback involves using technology to measure sensory perception and cognitive processing of that sensory information.
- The objective of visual feedback and training is to enhance the ability of athletes to perceive and process information in the most effective and efficient way that will ultimately lead to improved performance.



# Benefits of Psychophysiological Assessment

- *Readiness to Perform*
- *Successful Performance States*
- *Problematic Stress Responses*
- *Muscle Tension*
- *Respiration and Heart Rate*
- *Emotional Self-Regulation*
- *Flexibility of Focus*
- *Behavioral Impulsivity*
- *Imagery Capacity*
- *Anticipatory Anxiety*







# Visual Assessment

- The fastest muscle movement in the human body is a saccade at 1,000 degrees per second (Holmqvist & Nystrom, 2011).
- The purpose of a saccade is to move the eye from one relevant location (or cue) to another.



# Benefits of Visual Search Assessment

- Anticipation
- Attention
- Memory
- Pattern recognition
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Situational awareness
- Motor efficiency
- Alertness and resilience



**Table 10.2 Characteristics of Visual Perception (Gaze Behaviors) for Expert Athletes Compared With Less Experienced Athletes**

<b>Experts</b>	<b>Less experienced</b>
Fewer visual cues	Many more visual cues
High consistency in visual search	High variability in visual search
View cues in the same order	View cues in varying order
Accurate interpretation of what is seen	Guesswork
Look only at relevant cues	Many irrelevant cues
Consistent eye routines	Unsystematic visual search; no routines

# Eye Tracking

- *Gaze Location*
- *Decision Making*
- *Psychological States*



**Table 10.3 Perceptual-Cognitive Psychological States Measured Through Eye-Tracking Data**

Assessment metric	Defined	Possible indicators
Visual routine	Refers to a consistent pattern of gaze location and timing.	Without a routine there is distraction, cognitive overload, lack of skill, and stress.
Gaze fluidity	Movement of the eyes from one location to another. Reduced fluidity resembles stage fright: The eye remains still, looking at one location for several seconds.	Cognitive overload and stress; indicators include reduced reaction time.
Pupil dilation	Indication of stress. Pupil dilation is the size of the pupil, measured in millimeters.	Jomier, Rault, and Aylward (2004) show pupil dilation as an indicator of stress. Difficult to measure unless assessment is conducted in an environment with controlled lighting.
Search rate	Refers to the number of fixations divided by task time.	Increases in fixations with shorter duration could mean information overload or confusion.
Dynamic shifts	Refers to at least one repetition between a near and far target before the initiation of an action.	If absent when previously present, indicates inattention, cognitive overload, or stress.
Quiet eye	A final fixation or tracking gaze on a specific location or object within the visuomotor workspace (Vickers, 2007) allows for information processing (Klostermann, Kredel, & Hossner, 2013).	Absence of quiet eye may be related to indecision and feelings of being rushed, adding to stress levels.

# Visual and Perceptual-Cognitive Training With Athletes

There are three phases of training:

awareness, association, and automaticity



- **Tools?**





# Thanks!

## *Any questions?*

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