

FROM BURNOUT TO BALANCE:

MENTAL HEALTH GAME PLAN FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS



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PRESENTATION AGENDA

- **Opening Whistle:** Session Goals
- **Wearing Every Hat:** The Reality of Being an AD
What are the job duties that are stressing us out?
- **What the Research Says:** Insights for the field
- **Personal Timeout:** Strategies to Alleviate Stress
- **Rest & Recovery:** Mind-Body-Spirit
- **Building Your Bench:** Who's Your Support Team?
- **The Ask:** How School Leadership Can Support ADs
- **Changing the Culture:** Mental Wellness Starts at the Top
- **Timeout Talk:** Reflection & Discussion from audience
- **Final Buzz:** Takeaways & Action Steps



OPENING WHISTLE: **SESSION GOALS**

- Understand and identify stress in our daily routine
- Learn how to get ahead of it
- Explore relief strategies and how to advocate for support



WEARING EVERY HAT:

THE REALITY OF BEING AN AD

What is the job description of an AD?

- Overseeing Athletic Department
- Managing & Hiring Coaches
- Creating practice/game schedules
- Parent Communications/Management
- Equity amongst teams/Community
- Department Budgeting and fiscal goals
- Ordering uniforms, equipment, travel



What are the job duties that are stressing you out?

Scan QR code below for response

Mentimeter Code: 5458 9576



WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS:

INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

Research Question	Codes	Themes
RQ1. What are high school athletic directors' experiences associated with the daily responsibilities of managing sports programs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Dealing with sudden changes during events•Making people happy•Lacking budget•Doing paperwork on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Frequent experiences of work-related stress
RQ2. How do complex social and cultural issues affect the work-related stress levels of high school athletics directors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Still looking forward to coming to work despite stressful incidents•Accepted that stress is part of the job•Temporary stressors•Prioritizing students•Conflicting values•Racism•Adapt to local culture•Title IX	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Understanding that work-related stress is not permanent•Awareness of social and cultural issues and the impact they have in high school athletics.
RQ3. What are high school athletic directors' perceptions of the barriers to alleviating work-related stress associated with managing sports programs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Lack of experience•Teacher training•Lacking training in management aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Lack of training specified for athletic directors
RQ4. How do athletic directors utilize various support systems to help manage their work-related stress to avoid burnout?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Spending time with family•Talk about problems•Having a system in place•Thinking of oneself•Knowing one's worth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Taking care of oneself•Relying on others for support

”There’s just not enough time in the day”

“In the public eye”

“Some coaches have their own agenda “

“We have no support from parents”

“ It seems like my admin don’t understand my job”

PERSONAL TIMEOUT: **STRATEGIES TO ALLEVIATE STRESS**



- Time-blocking and Prioritization
- Set Boundaries and Communicate Them
- Delegate and Empower Your Team
- Incorporate Small Rest Moments
- Leverage Your Support Network
- Make Time for Joy
- Celebrate Small Wins

REST & RECOVERY:

MIND	BODY	SPIRIT
Mindfulness The 4 Agreements Work 45-on 15-off	Exercise/Movement Nutrition Daily Hydration	Gratitude The 4 Agreements Positive Affirmations
Take your lunch break Music Rest/Regeneration	Breathwork Aromatherapy Regeneration/Rest	Journal/Scripting Office Decor Remove clutter
Cut off time/Start time Use a book planner	Stretch/Flexibility Vitamins/Supplements	Laughter/Joy Hobbies



BUILDING YOUR BENCH: **WHO'S YOUR SUPPORT TEAM?**



Peer AD's

School Allies

**Coaches &
Captains**

**Family &
Friends**

**Professional
Help**

THE ASK: HOW SCHOOL LEADERS CAN SUPPORT ADS

- Be honest with administration about capacity and burnout
- Offer concrete solutions:
 - Administrative assistant/shared staff
 - Clear communication flow
 - Protected time for planning & recovery
 - Regular Check-Ins with Supervisors
- Frame needs as ways to improve student-athlete experience (Athletics Department)
- Show how supporting the AD supports the entire school climate (Entire School)



CHANGING THE CULTURE: **MENTAL WELLNESS** **STARTS AT THE TOP**

- If ADs model wellness, coaches and athletes follow
- Encourage mental health days, boundary setting, and transparent leadership
- Lead professional development on wellness for coaches
- Start conversations that normalize stress and offer solutions





TIMEOUT TALK: REFLECTION & DISCUSSION



FINAL BUZZER: **TAKEAWAYS AND ACTION STEPS**

