

DEALING WITH DE-SELECTION & STRENGTHENING YOUR COPING SKILLS



Dealing with not being selected can be both a challenging and determining time for an athlete's sporting development. Below are some tips to help you strengthen your coping skills to effectively deal with non-selection and build ongoing motivation and commitment to continue to strive to achieve your goals in sport.

1. UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT YOUR EMOTIONS THAT MAY ACCOMPANY NON-SELECTION

Elite athletes invest a lot of time and energy striving to achieve their sport goals. It is only natural that after not being selected to feel a variety of emotions ranging from disappointment, sadness, confusion, anxiety, frustration and shame. While these feelings may be unpleasant to feel, they are very normal given the situation and typically pass with time and a return to daily routines. After initially hearing the news about non-selection it's important to give yourself an opportunity to experience these feelings knowing that they represent how much you valued achieving your goals.

2. BE PROACTIVE IN CONNECTING WITH YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Be proactive in connecting with your support network (e.g., family member, friend, teammate, coach) and express how you are feeling when ready. Tell those you care about what support you need from them. Be kind to yourself and allow some time to digest and accept the situation before resetting your goals.

3. KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

After non-selection it is important to keep perspective and see the situation as an isolated event that is unrelated to future possibilities and your future potential in and outside of sport. Seeing your failures as specific and time-limited allows you to see the situation for what it really is and gain important perspective. Consider for a moment that Michael Jordan wasn't selected from his college basketball team and went on to become one of the most successful NBA player in his generation.

4. USE NON-SELECTION AS AN OPPORTUNITY

"I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that's why I succeed" (Michael Jordan)

While it may be hard to appreciate at the time, non-selection situations offer athletes powerful opportunities to learn and grow their skills. After understanding and dealing with the initial emotions of the situation, make sure you clearly understand why you were not selected and what specifically you can improve in future. If this information hasn't been provided or you require further clarification, be proactive and arrange an opportunity to speak with your coach/selector. Use this information to reset your goals with renewed drive and commitment.

If you are experiencing significant disruption to your life after selection and would like to speak with a sport psychologist, see below for contact details based on your home state location:

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