



BRINGING SPORTS TO THE HEART OF MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATION

While it's widely recognized that sports offer engagement, enjoyment, and physical well-being, its contribution to mental health is often overlooked. In a world where mental health challenges are as pressing as physical ones, it's essential to view sports as a tool for mental wellness.

Just as sports build our physical strength,
it also nurtures our mental resilience.

HOW CAN SPORTS BOOST YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

In Latin, "mens sana in corpore sano"
(a healthy mind in a healthy body)



Enhances cognitive functioning

Sports can boost your mental clarity, vision and working memory as well.

1



2

Promotes Social interaction

Through the medium of sports, one can get socialized in the industry. This will give an additional support system to the individual.

Feels the happy hormones

The happy hormones like Dopamine, Endorphins makes an individual feel happy after playing a sport.

3



4

Reduces stress

Sports can help in catharsis of emotions and stress.

Improves sleep

Sports can improve sleep efficiency and duration, irrespective of the level of physical activity.

5



6

Increases your self confidence

Sports can contribute to an improved body image and self compassion.

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WHERE AND HOW TO START:

START SMALL - START SOMEWHERE



Choose a Sport You Enjoy

Find an activity you enjoy, like swimming or cycling, and do it daily for 30 minutes. Experiment with different activities until you discover what brings you joy.



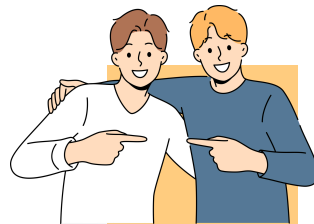
Start Small

Start with manageable activities like a 15-20 minute walk or jog before diving into intense workouts.



Set Realistic Goals

Set achievable goals for yourself. Maybe it's increasing the duration or intensity of your physical activities gradually over time. Celebrate your progress along the way.



Find a Buddy/Partner

Having a friend or family member join you can make physical activities like jogging, walking, running more enjoyable and provide you with the motivation you need to stay consistent.



Listen to Your Body

Listen to your body during physical activity. If something feels off, don't overexert yourself. Challenge yourself while prioritizing your well-being.



Focus on the Present

Practice mindfulness through sports by focusing on body sensations and the present environment, instead of past stressors or future worries.

CELEBRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

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LIFE SKILLS THROUGH SPORTS

Life skills support psychosocial well-being, promoting good communication, positive thinking, analytical skills goal setting cooperation and coping.

Few transferable skills through playing sports:

RESILIENCE



DISCIPLINE



GOAL SETTING & LEADERSHIP



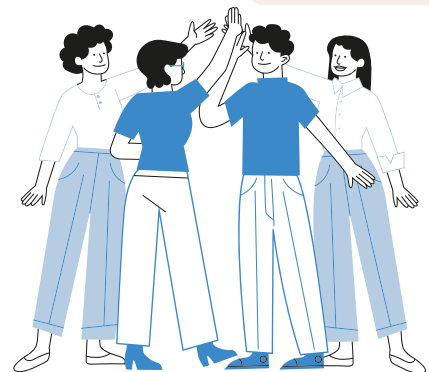
TIME MANAGEMENT



SPORTSMANSHIP



TEAMWORK



COMMUNICATION



HANDLING PRESSURE



ADAPTABILITY



PROBLEM SOLVING



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EXPERT'S DIALOGUE

RAHUL RAMUGADE

Player- Indian Wheelchair Cricket Team
Captain- Mumbai Wheelchair Cricket Team



I have been playing Wheelchair Cricket at the National & International level since 2017. Playing wheelchair cricket has boosted my self-esteem and confidence. Being part of a team I have combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, which are common among individuals with disabilities. Engaging in physical activity has helped me to reduce my stress. Focusing on the game distracts me from everyday stressors and worries. The concentration required during play acts as a form of mindfulness, promoting relaxation and reducing symptoms of anxiety.

Wheelchair cricket allows me to interact with others who share similar experiences. Socializing with teammates and opponents is enhancing my social skills and providing emotional support, which is crucial for my mental health. Setting and achieving goals within the sport, whether it's improving my batting technique or fielding skills, is providing me with a sense of purpose and direction. Accomplishing these goals fosters a positive mindset and motivation to continue striving for success.

Overcoming challenges and setbacks in wheelchair cricket, such as losing a match or facing tough opponents, is building resilience. I have learned to adapt to different situations, bounce back from failures, and develop coping strategies, which are valuable skills for maintaining my mental well-being. Participation in wheelchair cricket empowers me by demonstrating my abilities and breaking down stereotypes. I feel empowered and valued.

But the lack of support from able-bodied cricket associations for our wheelchair cricket makes me feel discriminated against. There are very less wheelchair-accessible facilities like cricket grounds and indoor training & recovery centres for wheelchair cricketers like me; it makes it very difficult to maintain my physical & mental conditions at par. My dream is to play wheelchair cricket professionally & make a career in it but the lack of support from the government & cricket association has an effect on my game as well as mental health. I have to keep searching for the support I need for my cricket.

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HOW DOES SPORTS IMPACT MENTAL DISORDERS?

"It is exercise alone that supports the spirit, and keeps the mind in vigor." - Cicero

Engaging in sports and physical activity can be immensely beneficial for mental health challenges.

Depression is a mental health condition where a person feels sad, hopeless, and uninterested in things they used to enjoy. It can affect sleep, appetite, and energy levels, and sometimes leads to thoughts of self-harm.



BIO

Regular physical activity enhances brain function and reduces symptoms of depression.

PSYCHO

Engaging in physical activity provides structure, purpose, and a sense of achievement, which can combat depressive symptoms.

SOCIAL

Group sports and physical activities can reduce isolation and loneliness in people with depression while promoting social bonding and empathy.

Anxiety is a mental health condition characterized by excessive worry, fear, and physical symptoms like palpitation, increased heartbeat and sweating. It can make everyday activities challenging and affect overall well-being.



BIO

Sports and physical activity encourage coping strategies and resilience-building, reduce anxiety, and increase stress tolerance.

PSYCHO

Engaging in physical activity and sports reduces stress, enhancing coping mechanisms, ultimately reducing anxiety and improving stress management skills.

SOCIAL

Group activities promote teamwork, community, social engagement, and skill development, reducing social anxiety.

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Anger Management Issue:

Anger management issues involve difficulty controlling anger in healthy ways, leading to frequent outbursts, irritability, and problems in relationships and daily life.



BIO

Physical activity can help regulate anger by reducing physiological arousal and facilitating emotional regulation.

PSYCHO

Sports and physical activity can help release pent-up emotions and reduce aggression by providing a productive outlet for channeling anger.

SOCIAL

Team sports and group activities promote cooperation, communication, and conflict resolution. They improve relationships and reduce conflict.

ADHD is a condition that affects attention, impulse control, and activity levels. People with ADHD may have trouble focusing, staying organized, and controlling impulses, and may be hyperactive. It can impact school, work, and relationships.



BIO

Physical activity can enhance brain function and neurotransmitter activity, improving attention, impulse control, and functioning in individuals with ADHD.

PSYCHO

Sports and physical activity can help regulate sensory processing, reduce hyperactivity, and promote focus and concentration.

SOCIAL

Group sports and physical activities can improve social skills, peer relationships, and self-esteem in individuals with ADHD through cooperation, collaboration, and social learning.

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EMINENT SPORTS PERSONS SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



MEG LANNING

AUSTRALIAN FORMER CRICKET CAPTAIN



In a stunning disclosure, Australia's six-time World Cup-winning former Women's Cricket team Captain Meg Lanning said that her early retirement at 31 was forced by bouts of depression and weight loss due to "over-exercising and under-fuelling".

Lanning took a six-month mental health break after winning the 2022 Commonwealth Games Gold in Birmingham to work in a coffee shop. She eventually retired after skipping three international assignments, including the Ashes, in 2023 but did not disclose her reasons at that time.

"It sort of just spiralled and I was in denial, even though everyone kept telling me something wasn't quite right. I was not in a place to be able to go on tour and play cricket and give the commitment levels required for the Ashes series, mentally and physically," Lanning told 'The Howie Games' podcast.

She mentioned that it reached a point where she lost her appetite and began eating only two meals a day after running around 90km a week, which led to significant weight loss. "I was over-exercising and under-fuelling. I got down to about 57kg from 64kg. I did not realise (it affected) my ability to concentrate. I didn't want to see other people. I disengaged a lot from friends and family".

"It was just all out of whack and I kept sliding. At some point, it's got to stop," Lanning said candidly. She also battled insecurities like a lot of other elite sportspeople and all of it primarily boiled down to one question -- "What after when all this is over?" "I felt very out of control in terms of what my future looked like: 'If it's not cricket, what does life look like if I am not playing?'."

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VIRAT KOHLI
INDIAN CRICKETER



Virat Kohli, 36 years old former Captain to the Indian Cricket Team. During Covid-19, he was struggling and battling through his Mental Health. In a few of his interviews, he did mention about how he feels mentally and physically.

"For the first time in 10 years, I didn't touch my bat for a month. I came to the realization that I was trying to fake my intensity a bit recently. I was convincing myself that no, you had the intensity. But my body was telling me to stop. My mind was telling me to take a break and step back."

"I was experiencing that I'm not excited to train, I wasn't excited to practice, and that really disturbed me because this is not who I am, and I literally needed to step away from that environment."

"We're so caught up with performing and winning, that we actually become egoistic maniacs," says Kohli.

"When you begin to sit together and have discussions, share experiences so that you know you're not the only one feeling this and you can help each other out, that's when things start getting better," says Kohli.



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HOW CAN SPORTS PERSONS LOOK AFTER THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY BONDING SESSIONS



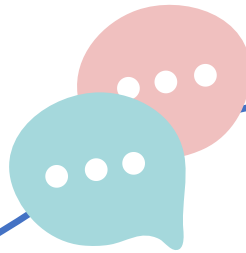
SET YOUR GOALS AND MOTIVATION



PRIORITIZE ME TIME



JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS



CONNECT WITH YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIENDS



SCHEDULE YOUR TIMETABLE WELL IN ADVANCE



Seek help when needed



DECREASE THE SCREEN TIME



KEEP YOURSELF HYDRATED

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MINDSPORT: NAVIGATE YOUR WAY TO BETTER MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH SPORTS

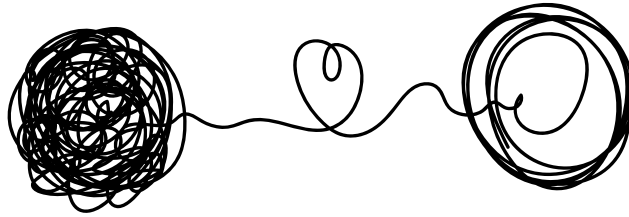
BETTER MENTAL HEALTH



START

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Help is a call away



PROJECT MUMBAI IS HERE FOR YOU!

If you or any adolescent you know is experiencing any mental or emotional distress, kindly call on Project Mumbai toll-free mental health helpline number:

SAMVAAD **A Helpline for Adolescents** **1800-102-4040**

This helpline is active from 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week and is handled by counsellors with varied expertise.

In case of any mental health related concerns, please feel free to reach us on mentalhealth@projectmumbai.org

- **ICALL HELPLINE (GENERAL COUNSELLING)- 02225521111 (MON-SAT, 8AM-10 PM)**
- **HUMSAFAR TRUST (LGBTQIA+)- 0226673800 (MON-FRI, 10 AM-8PM)**
- **ARPAN (CSA)- +91-9819086444 (MON-FRI, 9AM-6PM)**
- **AASRA (SUICIDE PREVENTION)- +91-9820466726 (7 DAYS A WEEK, 24 HOURS)**

Do you want to contribute to making Mumbai the Kindness capital?

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or

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