

Welcome to *JCSP*!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*! This is an exciting time for both Human Kinetics and myself, as we embark on this wonderful yet challenging new mission. So what is this mission? Well, that's a topic worthy of much elaboration. Please take the journey with me.

What is the *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*?

A number of very fine peer-reviewed journals already exist that address the complex world of the sport psychologist. Like many of you, I think that I personally own just about every issue of the major sport psychology journals since their inception, and am constantly seeking additional crevices in my home and office to store them. So you may be asking why we dare introduce yet another journal that will take up precious space and exhaust even more of your free time. Well, the reason is simple... while a number of quality journals exist, there is no clear home for articles that take a comprehensive approach to understanding and promoting the global well-being of athletes and related populations. A perusal of the major sport psychology journals often leads to the realization that while great studies are plentiful, they often do not directly note the practical utility of their findings or how their findings advance our quest to promote the general psychological, physical, and social health of athletic participants. In fact, that is precisely the mission of *JCSP*, to address the psychological care and overall well-being of athletes, coaches, and sport organizations by advancing the *integration* of clinical and counseling psychology, sport and exercise science, and sport psychiatry. When research from these distinct fields is reported separately, readers are provided with information that advances our precise understanding of that particular domain. Yet, the field of sport psychology is not a one dimensional field—it is a field that benefits from (and requires!) a sophisticated incorporation of information from content areas such as motor learning, motivation, goal orientation, psychopathology, performance enhancement, exercise adherence, substance use, psychological aspects of pain and rehabilitation, retirement issues, exercise physiology, coping and stress management, information processing, classical and operant conditioning principles, group dynamics and cohesion, personality theories, and sports medicine and psychiatry (to name a few). I am a firm believer in the old phrase, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” Thus, the goal of *JCSP* is to publish research and practice articles that make a strong effort to integrate these various domains so that readers not only learn about *specific* aspects of sport participation, but also learn how these distinct components come together to advance their understanding of the *whole* athlete.

Perhaps it would be useful to define *clinical sport psychology* to help clarify our goal. *Clinical sport psychology* has been defined as (Gardner & Moore, 2006):

The application of knowledge and methods from the various substantive fields of psychology for the promotion and maintenance of psychological and physical

health and well-being; the optimization of athletic performance for individuals, families, and organizations involved in sport; and the prevention, assessment, and amelioration of personal or performance difficulties which psychological influences either contribute to or relieve. (p. 9)

As can be seen from this definition and the mission of the journal, *JCSP* is certainly not intended to exclusively be a “clinical” journal discussing disease, dysfunction, and psychopathology at the exclusion of sport-related constructs. It is also not intended to exclusively be a sport journal focusing on human performance and mental skills at the exclusion of more comprehensive psychological issues and processes. Instead, our goal is to *embrace* the multidisciplinary nature of the field of sport psychology. Why is this our goal? Well, athletes, coaches, and sport organizations do not exist in a bubble. These individuals and groups are just as likely to experience psychological distress, buckle under pressure, have family and relationship difficulties, possess maladaptive coping strategies, and maintain dysfunctional leadership styles as any other individual, group, or corporate entity. So why should we restrict our understanding of these phenomena and processes by investigating only *pieces* of greater constructs? The use of the term *clinical sport psychology* is meant to signify the reality that we cannot simply view athletes as either healthy or unhealthy. This view has been an impediment to the scientific advancement of the field, has contributed to the external marginalization of sport psychology, and has led to a discipline fraught with internal conflict. Athletes, like all human beings, experience a full range of psychological struggles. Some manifest the signs and symptoms associated with full clinical disorders, some present with difficulties that are just below a diagnostic threshold (subclinical), and some have few intrapersonal or interpersonal challenges. In actuality, a full range of psychological and behavioral processes impact sport performance, and sport performance impacts psychological processes as well. This is the essence of *JCSP*—our eye is on the true integration of science and practice, where scientific study informs professional practice, and in turn, professional practice informs scientific study.

To highlight our goal of integration, let me introduce you to the topic areas represented in the inaugural issue of *JCSP*. First, a memorial for Michael Mahoney is included at the beginning of this inaugural issue. Michael Mahoney was a giant in the field of cognitive-behavioral psychology and was one of the first clinical psychologists to apply the principles and practice of cognitive-behavioral therapy to the athletic domain. This memorial is in response to his recent death and is more than appropriate for our inaugural issue, as I believe that he would have fully and completely embraced the mission of *JCSP*. The memorial has been written by Dr. Arthur Freeman, who many of you know as one of the original fathers of cognitive therapy. Dr. Freeman is a member of our editorial board, and was a close personal friend of Michael Mahoney.

Following the memorial, the first article highlights the importance of critical thinking and introduces the reader to evidence-based practice in sport psychology. Evidence-based practice is a critical thread that will run throughout *JCSP* for many years to come. The second article introduces an intervention for youth sport coaches, which promotes a mastery motivational climate among athletes. Widespread implications include higher intrinsic motivation, prosocial competitive attitudes, lower performance anxiety, and increased self-esteem and perceived competence. The third

article in the issue investigates the relationship between cognitive schemas, coping strategies, and emotional response to injury among competitive collegiate athletes, and provides implications for developing both preventative interventions for at-risk athletes and psychological treatments for athletes experiencing heightened levels of post-injury emotional distress. The final article examines psychophysiological stress response to sport injury and discusses the similarities between athletic injury and other traumatic events. As you can see, each of these articles addresses specific aspects of the sport experience, yet also includes clear implications for the comprehensive understanding and overall psychological well-being of athletic participants. Finally, following the last article, we include (in each issue) a brief “News and Notes” section relating to the International Society for Sport Psychiatry.

Journal Content

JCSP welcomes theoretical, empirical, and review papers that address topics relating to psychological health and well-being of athletes and coaches, psychological aspects of athletic performance, and issues and concerns that connect physical and psychological processes. In addition, to further promote the integration of clinical and counseling psychology, sport and exercise science, and sport psychiatry, a unique aspect of *JCSP* will be the inclusion of case studies in which performance issues and psychological processes intersect. While applied and research papers will often discuss traditional constructs, we also encourage the submission of manuscripts that describe creative/novel research and experiential programs and protocols. We intend to include special issues, special sections, and occasional invited addresses by renowned colleagues. We are particularly committed to contributing to the evidence-based practice of sport psychology, and are especially interested in manuscripts that allow sound scientific advancements to directly inform practice decisions. Finally, we seek to include manuscripts that are not only methodologically sound, but also make a marked contribution to the greater sport psychology community.

Esteemed Members of the Editorial Board

No journal can reap the benefits of success without the commitment and thoughtful professional efforts of its editorial board. I am honored to report that this editorial board is made up of the best research scholars, practitioners, and educators across the various domains of sport and exercise science, psychology, and psychiatry. Since the mission of the journal is to be a forum for cutting-edge research and practice from the integrated fields of clinical and counseling psychology, sport and exercise science, and sport psychiatry, each reader is likely to be familiar with a number of the members of the board, and perhaps question other members who appear unfamiliar because they practice outside of your areas of interest or training. To assure you that the board is comprised of professionals who have reached the highest levels of competence in their chosen areas, let me take a moment to list some of the demographics and astounding achievements of our editorial board.

From a training perspective, among the 25 editorial board members, the 2 associate editors, and the editor-in-chief, we are represented by clinical psychologists, counseling psychologists, sport and exercise scientists, and sport psychiatrists.

Primary professional work responsibilities include college/university educators/administrators, private practitioners, organizational administrators, research scientists, and practitioners in organizational settings. We are also a geographically diverse board cutting across four continents.

Among this esteemed group of professionals, areas of expertise include child sport participation, wellness, neuropsychology, psychopharmacology, eating disorders, athletic performance enhancement, depression, goal orientation, substance and alcohol use, collegiate mental health, anxiety disorders, behavioral psychology, youth sport and coaching, retirement and sport transitions, and professional athletics.

With respect to professional achievements, I am happy to announce that we have eight board-certified psychologists/psychiatrists; three past-presidents of the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP); three past-presidents of the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT); four past-presidents of Division 47 (Exercise and Sport Psychology) of the American Psychological Association; one past-president of Division 12 (Clinical Psychology) of the American Psychological Association; the current president of the International Society of Sport Psychiatry; one past-president of the International Society of Sport Psychology; one past-president of the American Psychiatric Association; and one of the original fathers of cognitive therapy.

Putting together this editorial board was a remarkable achievement, and I have full confidence that this special group of people will be influential in shaping *JCSP* for many years to come.

Acknowledgments

There are a number of important individuals who deserve appreciation. First, I would like to thank Rainer Martens for his forward thinking vision and willingness to tackle such an expansive new project. I would also like to thank Donna Loyle, Jack Wolowiec, Cathe Capel, Tonya Horn, Monica Wells, Brian Holding, and the rest of the *JCSP* publication staff for their dedication and perseverance.

I also could not have conceptualized and followed through with the vision for this journal without the help and advisement of my *Clinical Sport Psychology* (2006) co-author and *JCSP* Associate Editor Zella Moore, who has been instrumental in shaping *JCSP*'s mission and focus. In addition, I am thankful to be working with Eric Morse, Associate Editor of Psychiatry, and Don Marks, my often overworked but never undervalued editorial assistant.

Finally, no vision can become a reality when held by just one person. It is therefore with great reverence that I thank the esteemed members of the *JCSP* Editorial Board for their dedication to the *JCSP* mission and commitment to its success. Not only are you first-rate professionals, you are also dynamite people with whom to work.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be the founding Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*. My long-range goal is for psychologists, psychiatrists, and sport and exercise scientists to feel that this journal is their home. Please take the journey with me... everyone is welcome.

Frank L. Gardner
Founding Editor-in-Chief

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