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10-5-2018

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Recommended Citation

Hilty, Dale and Kovalchin, Katherine, "Preliminary Investigation of Continuous Self-Improvement & Problem-Focused Coping Styles" (2018). *Scholars Showcase 2018: Innovations in Leadership and Learning*. 37.

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Preliminary Investigation of Continuous Self-Improvement & Problem-Focused Coping Styles

Dale Hilty, PhD ~ Katherine Kovalchin, BSN Candidate



Background

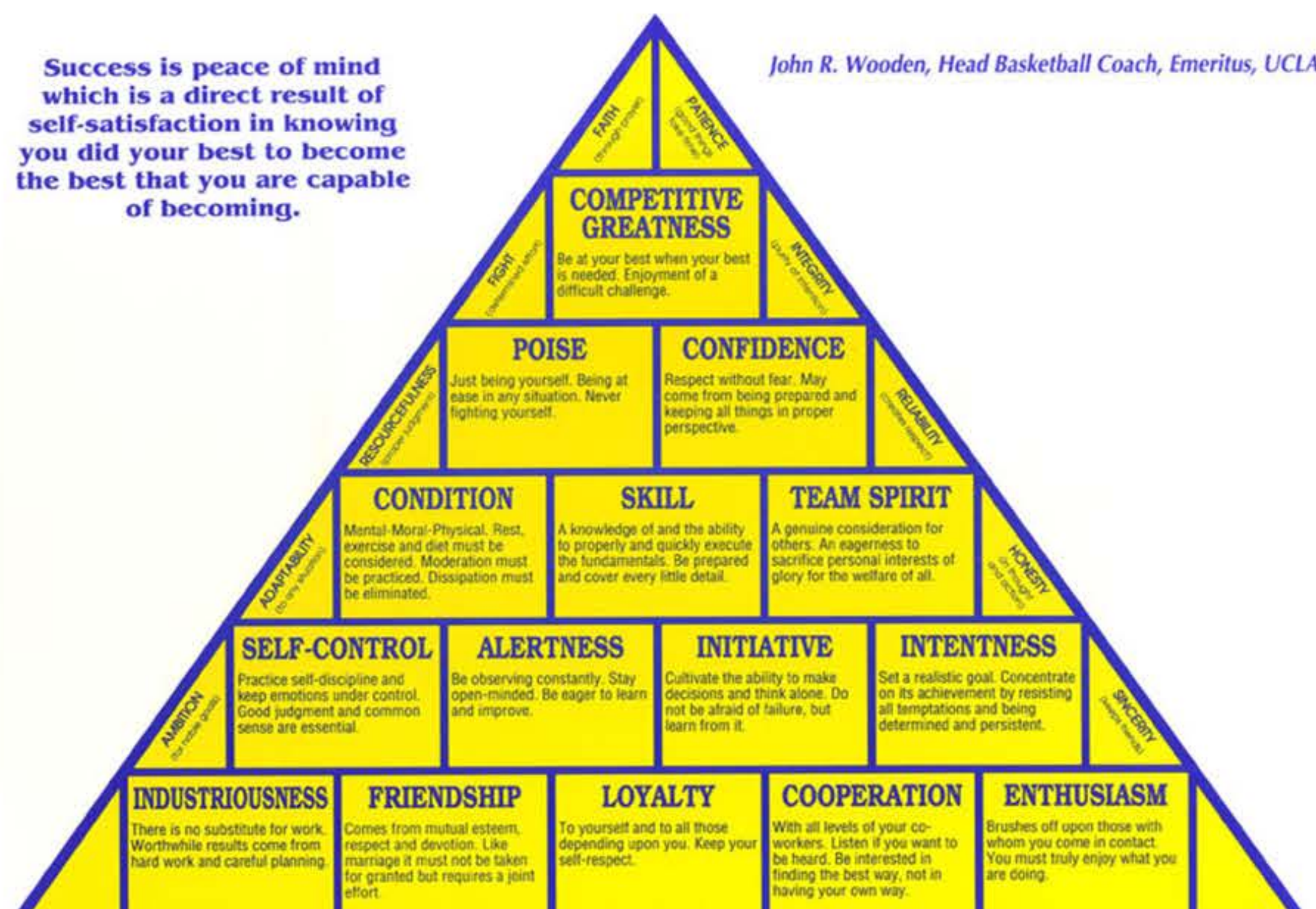
Competitive Greatness

John R. Wooden's father shared two principles which were a major influence for his life: (1) "Don't try to be better than someone else, and (2) Always try to be the best you can be" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 17). The first principle was a reminder that a successful life does not find peace of mind by comparing one's self to others. There is an interconnection between the second principle and Wooden's competitive greatness construct (CG). The definition of CG: "Be at your best when your best is needed. Enjoyment of a difficult challenge" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 90). Wooden created a pyramid of success as guide to the continuous self-improvement process.

Competitive greatness is linked to continuous self-improvement. By making the focus of life primarily on individual growth and development, there are endless opportunities to expand our skills and abilities. In Wooden's words: "We don't have to be superstars or win championships to reach competitive greatness. All we have to do is learn to rise to every occasion, give your best effort and make those around us better as we do it. It's not about winning. It's about learning to give all we have to give" (Wooden & Carty, 2005, p. 91).

Continuous Self-Improvement (CSI)

In the academic environment, Wooden's competitive greatness can be linked to Continuous Self-Improvement (CSI). By focusing on individual growth and development, there are endless opportunities to expand our skills and abilities.



Background (cont'd)

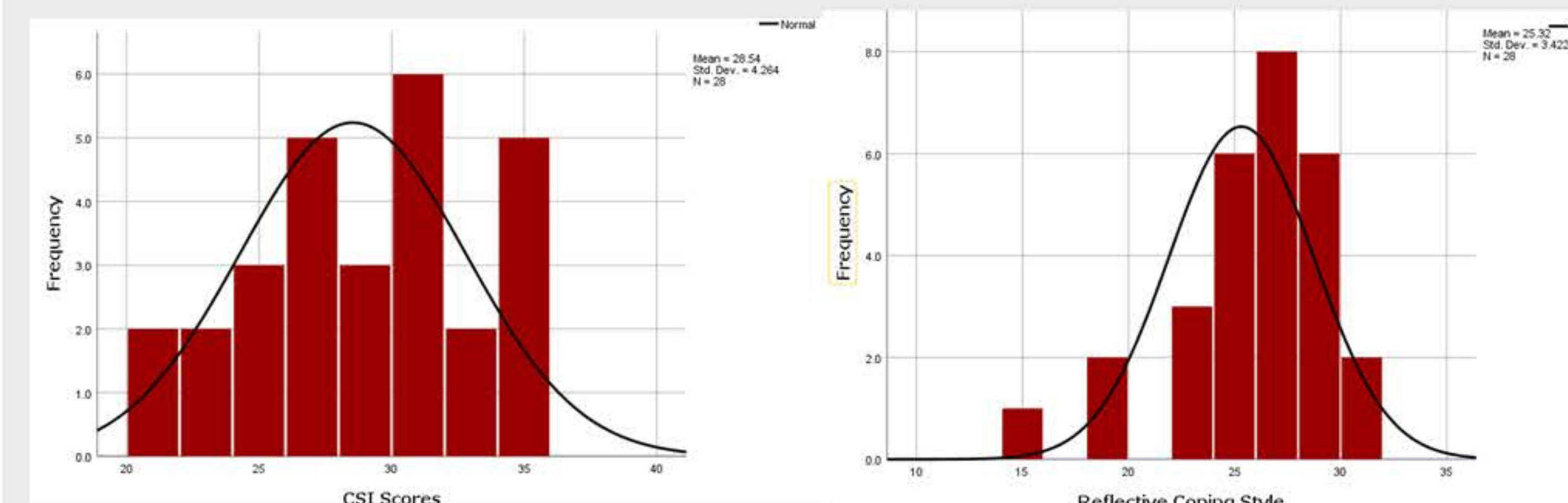
CSI nursing students function at an exceptional level of engagement and deeper learning processing of material from textbook readings and lecture presentations. Using an intrinsic reward system, they internalize content and concepts and continuously apply them in new, unique ways. These students appear to feel the satisfaction and receive the validation they are going to be excellent nurses. Not only do they understand the scientific and theoretical aspects of nursing, but they also demonstrate the art and caring nature of an excellent and compassionate nurse.

Problem-Focused Styles of Coping

Heppner et al., (1995, p. 282) found psychometric support for a set of 18 items named the Problem-Focused Style of Coping (PF-SOC). In Table 2 of their article, the three subscales (Reflective Style, Suppressive Style, Reactive Style) appear with the seven, six, and five items respectively. The operational definitions for the three subscales were: (1) "Reflective Style ... tendency to examine causal relationships, plan, and be systematic in coping", (2) "Suppressive Style ... tendency to deny problems and avoid coping activities", and (3) "Reactive Style ... tendency to have emotional and cognitive responses that deplete the individual or distort coping activities."

Methods

The participants in this educational intervention were Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students. Instrumentation: CG/CSI and Confidence scales were measured by the Wooden Pyramid of Success Questionnaire (Hilty, 2017). The quantitative measurement of problem-focused style of Coping (Heppner et al, 1995) is PF-SOC questionnaire.



Using SPSS 25 Chart Builder, histograms were created for the CSI and Reflective Coping Styles data distributions. In both cases, SPSS determined the distributions were normal. The CG/CSI scale was used to form two groups (i.e., high and moderate-low).

Hypothesis 1: There would be a difference between CSI groups and the three Reflective Coping Styles.
 Hypothesis 2: There would be a relationship among CSI, Reflective, Suppressive, and Reactive Coping Styles.

Methods (cont'd)

Using multiple regression with CG/CSI as the dependent variable and the Reflective, Suppressive, and Reactive Coping Styles as predictor variables, the outcome will be significantly different from zero.

Results

- Hypothesis 1: The CG/CSI scale was used to form two groups (i.e., high and moderate-low). Using SPSS 25 (independent t-test), a significant difference was found with the CG/CSI scale and Reflective ($p=.040$), Suppressive ($p=.008$), and Reactive Scales ($p=.018$). Students scoring high on CSI also had high Reflective Scores. Non-CSI students had high scores on the Suppressive and Reactive scales.
- Hypothesis 2: CG/CSI correlations were either marginally or significant with the Reflective, Suppressive, and Reactive Coping Styles.

	CSI	Reflective	Suppressive	Reactive
CSI	1	.371	-.459	-.408
Sig.		.052	.014	.031
Reflective		1	-.288	-.105
Sig.			.137	.595
Suppressive			1	.756
Sig.				.001
Reactive				1

- Hypothesis 3: Using SPSS 25 regression with CG/CSI as the dependent variable and Self-Efficacy and Anger as predictor variables, the findings were ($F(3,24) = 3.310$, $R = .541$, $R\text{-squared} = .293$, $p=.037$).

References

- Heppner, P., Cook, S., Wright, D., & Johnson, Jr., W. (1995). Progress in resolving problems: A problem-focused style of coping. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 42(3): 279-293.
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- Wooden, J. & Carty, J. (2005). *Coach Wooden's pyramid of success*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.