

**EXAMINING FEMALE COACH BURNOUT EXPERIENCES AND COPING  
MECHANISMS**

by © Amanda Miles (Thesis) submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
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## Abstract

In 2019, the World Health Organization added burnout to its classification of chronic diseases as a workplace illness explaining that it is the result of chronic stress from the workplace that is left unmanaged. Recent research has considered the effects of burnout in various professions. However, research on the effects of burnout in the profession of coaching is still in its infancy. Even less research has been done on burnout in elite female coaches. Using semi-structured interviews, this study examined 14 elite female basketball coaches' experiences with burnout, how they have managed it, and what they feel is essential for other coaches and organizations to know about burnout. Interviews were conducted over Zoom, and the results were combined and coded into 4 significant themes: *Experiences* (participants experiences with burnout), *Management* (ways participants managed/coped with burnout), *Education* (ways participants would like to receive information about burnout), and *Recommendations* (recommendation participants had for coaches and organization about burnout). The results provide advice to coaches and organizations based on the experiences of coaches who have reached (or are on their way to reaching) some of the highest levels of coaching in Canada.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Mental illness occurs when a disturbance in an individual's mental health (the balance between emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental wellbeing) causes them to struggle to complete daily tasks or make decisions (Mood Disorders Society of Canada, 2019). As 1 in 5 Canadian adults experience some form of mental illness (Mood Disorders Society of Canada, 2019), it is not surprising that mental health research has recently increased. One area of mental health that has been focused on is burnout. Burnout is a mood disorder and is defined by Maslach and Jackson (1981) as a syndrome that occurs in individuals who work with people and experience feelings of reduced personal accomplishment (e.g., feeling your work is never good enough), emotional exhaustion (e.g., feeling mentally drained by everyday tasks), and depersonalization/cynicism (e.g., feeling detached from your duties, blaming others for issues, making negative comments towards others).

Burnout research began with the healthcare profession (e.g., Freudenberger, 1975) and was further explored in the area of sport starting in the 1980s (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984; Smith, 1986). More recently, the World Health Organization added burnout to its 11th version of the *International Classification of Diseases* (World Health Organization, 2019). Areas such as stress, commitment, and motivation are just some of the models researchers have taken to understand burnout (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Schmidt & Stein, 1991; Silva, 1990; Smith, 1986).

This thesis is structured in a manuscript style in accordance with Memorial University of Newfoundland requirements consisting of 5 chapters: Chapter 1, Introduction, provides an overview of what is to come throughout the manuscript.

Chapter 2, Literature Review, is a detailed description of the past research that has influenced this thesis. In this chapter, I will provide an overview of definitions and predominant models of burnout, followed by a summary of relevant research among athletes', coaches, and female coaches. These studies will justify the purpose for the main manuscript presented in Chapter 3, in which I explore the burnout experiences of 14 elite female basketball coaches, including how they coped with and managed their burnout and any recommendations they have for organizations as well as other coaches. Chapter 3 is a manuscript that has been written to submit to the International Sport Coaching Journal for publication based on the present study. By understanding participants' everyday experiences, I will offer recommendations that current and future coaches can adopt to manage their careers better and reduce the likelihood of burnout. I will also provide guidance for organizations to provide better education and support for their elite female coaches. Chapter 4 is a section for additional results and discussion that were not included in Chapter 3. There in I will review the main findings from Chapter 3, explore some additional findings from the participants, as well as talk about the effects of the COVID pandemic and my experiences as a researcher throughout this project. Chapter 5 is the appendices including the interview questions and participant responses.

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## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

Burnout research has been explored over many years in many different forms. While the initial research on burnout was conducted by Freudenberger (1975), burnout research in sport came a few years later, in the 1980s, when athletes' and coaches were studied (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984; Smith, 1986). Within sport burnout research, many leading models were derived from researchers who focused on the human services field (Freudenberger, 1975; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). This section will introduce the influential definitions and models of burnout that have been proposed over the years, as well as provide a summary of the leading research conducted on sport burnout and suggestions for future research. The section ends by explaining the limited research on female coach burnout and the influence of female coach research on the field.

### **Burnout Definitions**

Researchers have proposed several definitions of burnout. Freudenberger (1975) provided an early definition of burnout, describing the overwhelming feeling of frustration or state of fatigue someone experiences when they are devoted to something that fails to produce the expected reward. The most popular burnout definition comes from Maslach and Jackson (1981), who stated that people who do “people work” (p. 99) go through increases in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization/cynicism, with decreases in feelings of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion occurs when an individual's mental capacity to deal with everyday things is drained. Depersonalization or cynicism is evident when individuals are no longer invested in their work, leading them to

pull away or become cynical. Decreased personal accomplishment occurs when individuals believe that their actions have little meaning or worth.

Building on previous work, Silva (1990) defined burnout as the individual's psychophysiological response to a failure to reach excessive demands placed on oneself concerning competition or training. Burnout is the third and final stage an individual enters when unable to manage stress adequately. The first stage, staleness, is when individuals no longer progress towards their goals and their bodies stop responding to training. Individuals who cannot overcome staleness enter overtraining (the second stage). Overtraining occurs when individuals increase training loads but cannot overcome staleness or see positive results. Overtraining leads to burnout (the third stage) when individuals have exhausted all resources that allow physical and mental recovery. Essentially, the body and mind can no longer cope with the demands, often leading to the removal from the activity causing burnout.

Given the prevalence and pervasiveness of burnout across careers and activities, the World Health Organization (2019) recently included burnout in their 11th edition of *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD-11), describing it as a condition that occurs when chronic stress from the workplace has not been managed. The lack of stress management is shown in the following dimensions: exhaustion or energy decreases, distancing oneself mentally from the job, demonstrating cynical or negative feelings towards that job, and decreased efficacy in the workplace.

Whereas no singular definition can be found throughout the burnout research, similarities across the proposed definitions exist. Mainly, burnout is a gradual and individualized process (Gustafsson et al., 2014) that stems from the inability to attain

performance goals (Silva, 1990) and manifests as physical and mental symptoms (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). For this study, burnout was defined based on the Maslach and Jackson (1981) framework and described to the participants as feelings of reduced personal accomplishment (such as feeling your work is never good enough), emotional exhaustion (feeling mentally drained by everyday tasks), and depersonalization (feeling detached from your duties, blaming others for issues, making negative comments towards others). Physical symptoms that could be experienced include pain, trouble sleeping, and cardiovascular disease. Participants were asked to keep this definition in mind when answering questions about their perceived burnout experiences and coping mechanisms.

### **Burnout Models**

To better understand and explain burnout, researchers have proposed various burnout models. The most prevalent models from past research and that tie to the findings of this paper (see Gustafsson et al., 2014) are presented below.

#### ***Cognitive Affective Model***

One of the most influential models in burnout research (see Gustafsson et al., 2014) is Smith's (1986) Cognitive Affective Model. Smith argued that the manifestation of burnout depends on four factors related to the perception of and response to stress: situational demands, cognitive appraisal, physiological responses, and behavioral responses. Situational demands refer to the internal or external expectations placed on individuals that might lead to stress (e.g., a final exam for a university student). The cognitive appraisal looks at the individual's thought process when deciding how to respond to a situation (e.g., studying the week before versus the night before). The



physiological response is what the individual's body does once they have chosen a course of action (e.g., the body tightens up if they feel stressed because they are not prepared for the test). Lastly, the coping behaviors are what that individual does when they feel the stress building up (e.g., a student eating excessive amounts of food the night before the exam) (Smith, 1986).

### ***Sociological Model (Unidimensional Identity Development & External Control Model)***

While many studies have shown burnout to be related to stress, Coakley (1992) believed that the roots of burnout come from the social organization rather than the individual level. Coakley argued that when one dedicates a significant amount of time to an endeavor, the social organization of that activity dictates how the individual grows and develops. When their identity is overly focused on that one thing, it controls their whole lives, and they tend to lose their sense of self-concept. Feeling a lack of control and lack of an individual identity then leads to burnout. If the organizational structure and social experiences can be adapted to create situations where individuals feel more in control, they will be less likely to burnout.

### ***Self-determination Theory***

Deci and Ryan (2000) explored burnout using self-determination theory (SDT). SDT is centered around the individual's satisfaction of their basic psychological needs in the process of attaining a goal. Three specific needs exist within SDT. The first is autonomy; an individual must feel they have some control over their situation. Secondly, relatedness is essential because individuals want to feel that what they are doing is appreciated by someone. Lastly, for competence, an individual wants to feel good about

what they are doing and that they are doing well in it. As individuals' feelings of autonomy, relatedness, and competence decrease, they lose their intrinsic motivation. According to SDT, when an individual's needs are not met, they tend to feel frustrated and unsatisfied with their current situation, thereby decreasing their feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. These feelings of frustration can lead to severe psychological and possibly physical consequences resulting in burnout (Cresswell & Eklund, 2005).

### ***Commitment Based Model***

Schmidt and Stein (1991) were the first to introduce the commitment perspective to the sporting world. They looked at burnout by first distinguishing it from dropout through the idea of alternatives and investments. When an individual has invested in an activity and begins to find it less enjoyable, there are two things they consider to determine their future in the chosen activity. The first is how much they have invested; some people will feel they have invested too much and must stay in the activity even though they are no longer enjoying it. The second is if the individual has alternative options that they find more attractive than the current activity, they will often drop out of the activity. According to Schmidt and Stein, burnout occurs when individuals lose enjoyment in an activity, do not have alternative options, and believe they must continue their unenjoyable activity. Raedeke (1997) expanded on this, stating when an individual has highly invested in training and has few attractive, alternative options, their identity becomes tied to the activity, which increases the likelihood of burnout.

## **Burnout in Sport**

Burnout research was introduced to sport research in the 1980s, with Caccese and Mayerberg (1984) exploring coach burnout and Smith (1986) looking at athlete burnout. While coach burnout was studied first, athlete burnout has received much more attention from researchers. While the focus of this paper is on burnout in coaches it is important to see what has been studied for athletes' and how it ties into coaching. Gustafsson et al. (2014) performed a citation network analysis looking for the most frequently cited articles in sport burnout literature and found that among the top 11 articles cited, nine pertained to athletes', while two were related to coaches.

### ***Athlete Burnout***

Given the extent of research performed on athletes' and that they are in similar environments to the coaches, it is important to look at some of the findings in this area as they can be applied to coaches.

Athlete burnout research became popular with Smith's (1986) research on the Cognitive Affective Model of burnout. He demonstrated how physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and situational factors exist parallel to each other and that an athlete's personality dictates how they deal with those situational factors, which can lead to prolonged stress and, possibly, burnout. Smith also suggested that future researchers focus on coping and prevention strategies that help athletes' modify their responses and control their arousal levels to decrease athlete burnout. Many of the coach burnout studies I will explore in the next section also use Cognitive Affective Models as the base for their studies (e.g. Kelley & Gill, 1993). Coakley (1992) conducted interviews with 15 athletes'

finding that they experienced burnout when their identities were no longer separate from their athlete identities and their autonomy and independence were limited. Through this study, Coakley (1992) recommended that to prevent burnout in athletes', three things should occur: (1) the organization and structure of the programs need to be adjusted, (2) high-performance athletes' need opportunities to build social relationships away from the competitive environment, and (3) outside of sport, opportunities should be provided to athletes' allowing them to develop other life experiences. One way to do this is to change the vocabulary used from entrapment to that of empowerment of the athletes'. Two recommendations from this study were: (1) Organizations should adjust their structures to help prevent burnout, and (2) Social relationships should be built away from the competitive environment.

As part of a more extensive study on 62 junior tennis players, Gould et al. (1996a) showed that a mix of personal and situational predictors and a feeling of perfectionism play a role in an individual's experience of burnout. Gould et al. (1996a) explained that there are two types of burnout experiences athletes' go through. The first is a withdrawal from the sport altogether—these athletes' quit sport completely. The second, however, is the most common form of burnout, and that is what they termed active burnout. Active burnout occurs when athletes' are experiencing symptoms of burnout, but they continue to participate at a decreased level from where they should be. Also, as part of the same study, Gould et al. (1996b) identified four characteristics that cause athlete burnout: (1) decreased motivation, (2) increased frustration, (3) increased irritability, and (4) lack of physical energy to carry out the tasks required. These characteristics show that it is not only personal factors that contribute to burnout, but also situational factors. Gould et al.

(1996a) recommended that future studies should include possible interventions that could help athletes' learn to cope with perfectionism and its resulting stress.

Raedeke (1997) explored the idea that not everyone who experiences stress ends up burning out by having 236 youth swimmers respond to a questionnaire exploring commitment and burnout. Drawing from the Commitment Model, Raedeke showed that each athlete was committed to a different degree to their training and competition levels. These varying levels of commitment, combined with stress and other factors, led to burnout. Raedeke's study was the first empirical study on burnout, not based on a pure stress perspective; it showed that other factors such as commitment could cause an individual to experience burnout. Stress is simply one component of burnout and not the cause. Based on this study, future studies should include a longitudinal approach.

Raedeke and Smith (2004) reported on different coping resources athletes' used to deal with high levels of stress and burnout. After providing questionnaires that explored burnout, perceived stress, coping behaviors, and social support to 244 teenage swimmers, the authors discovered that athletes' with high levels of stress and burnout benefitted from internal and external coping resources. These resources include a solid social support system, increased fitness levels, good nutrition, and strong time management skills. This study showed that learning coping skills (such as the ones stated above) is more beneficial to the athletes' than trying to moderate their stress. The authors suggested that future researchers look at why some athletes' burn out, and not others.

Looking at these studies we can see that individual personalities, commitment, and ability to cope with stress can all contribute to burnout. Organizational support, as well as looking at coping and prevention strategies are important resources to consider

when exploring how to prevent/decrease burnout. The next section shows how these similar models have been used in coach burnout research as well.

### ***Coach Burnout***

Coach burnout is understudied in comparison to athlete burnout, however there are similarities in the models that are used, mainly in the Cognitive Affective and Stress Models.

Vealey et al. (1992) used the Cognitive Affective Model to examine 848 high school and collegiate coaches through a demographic questionnaire, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), and Trait Anxiety Inventory. The authors found that interpersonal factors - particularly trait anxiety (the tendency to see negatives across many situations) - often predicted coach burnout. This study recommended that future researchers consider interventions that allow coaches to manage their stress better. In addition to stress management education, Vealey et al. found there were three main reasons to continue researching coach burnout: (1) coaches are experiencing burnout, but it is unknown why or how often, (2) testing of burnout models is limited, and even more limited when it comes to coaching specifically, and (3) among the coach burnout research, the results are all different. By conducting more coach burnout research, a clearer picture of burnout should emerge.

Based on Smith's (1986) study of athletes', Kelley and Gill (1993) expanded the Cognitive Affective Model to the coaching world, by examining the relationship of personal/situational variables with stress appraisals and stress appraisals on burnout within teacher-coaches. They provided questionnaires to 214 college coaches measuring

perceived stress, burnout, social support, and teacher-coach role conflict. They found that the two main areas that influenced higher levels of perceived stress were less social support and fewer years of experience. Female teacher-coaches tended to have higher perceived stress than their male counterparts. Further examinations showed that high stress influenced burnout scores. Some recommendations from Kelley and Gill's study included the idea that social support (in their personal and professional lives) is key during a coach's career, so this should be made a priority. They also believed that resources to help the coaches learn to cope with stress should be made available. These resources could come from administrative support or a mentor guiding them through their careers.

Kelley (1994) investigated the perceived stress of 249 collegiate coaches at different points in their competitive seasons using a demographic questionnaire, the MBI, Perceived Stress Scale, Coaching Issues Survey, Hardiness Test, and Social Support Questionnaire. This study showed that the more stress perceived by the coach, the higher their scores were on all dimensions of burnout. They also found that as a coach burns out, their performance and the athletes' experiences are negatively affected. Kelley discovered that there were changes in the burnout scores throughout a season, indicative of the cyclical nature of burnout. This study strongly supported stress as a predictor for burnout in all coaches, with role conflict significantly impacting them.

Kelley et al. (1999) examined the severity of burnout in 265 college tennis coaches from a stress-mediation approach. This study investigated the stress-mediation method by looking at three factors: personal/situational variables, personality/motivation variables, and gender/competition level. To examine these areas, Kelley et al. sent out the

following questionnaires to each coach: MBI, Perceived Stress Scale, Coaching Issues Survey, Hardiness Scale, Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire, and the Sport Competitive Anxiety Test-Coach Survey. The authors found that though differences in burnout scores existed between female and male coaches most categories, only one category (personal/situational variables of coaching issues) showed a statistically significant difference. Kelley et al. posited possible reasons for the gender differences found in their research by suggesting that there were other stressors female coaches experience that their male counterparts do not (e.g., unequal pay and social inequalities).

Raedeke et al. (2000) applied the commitment perspective to coaches. In their study, Raedeke et al. surveyed 295 swim coaches using questionnaires to measure the demographics, benefits, costs, investments, alternative attractiveness, satisfaction, social constraints, commitments, and burnout (emotional exhaustion subscale only) of the coaches. They found that coaches fit into three groups of commitment profiles with different burnout experiences: attraction, entrapment, and low commitment. Coaches in the attraction group had a high commitment and low exhaustion score. Coaches in the entrapment group had higher exhaustion and commitment scores. Coaches in the low commitment group had lower commitment and average exhaustion scores. In a follow-up study, Raedeke (2004) had 141 swim coaches complete a survey at two different points one year apart, evaluating commitment determinants and emotional exhaustion. This study found that coaches who showed entrapment tendencies had higher emotional exhaustion score changes over the year, while those whose commitment levels were the lowest had lower burnout levels. This study emphasized the importance of balancing investment in coaching with coaching costs.



Bentzen et al. (2016) were the first to take a longitudinal approach to examine the 4-step SDT Process model of burnout by assessing 343 high-performance coaches before and after their competitive seasons, measuring their perceived levels of goal attainment, autonomy support, and workload. They found that throughout a season, coaches' well-being decreased. They also found that as well-being decreased, instances of burnout increased. Specifically, they found that as the coaches' needs satisfaction and autonomous motivation decreased and perceived workload demands increased, incidents of burnout increased.

Overall, in the coach burnout research the main findings show that coach's ability to manage or cope with stress can be a key factor in their burnout experiences. Having a good social support system and access to education about prevention and management techniques were suggestions by the researchers to help the coaches with their burnout. Some studies compared female to male coaches and found small differences in their burnout scores (Kelly et al., 1999), suggesting future research be done to find out what the reason for these differences is.

### **Female Coach Burnout**

While studies have been conducted around stress and barriers to female coaches within the profession of coaching, the literature specific to female coach burnout is limited. Most female coach burnout studies compared females to male coaches, with female participants underrepresented compared to males. To my knowledge, only one study exclusively examined female coach burnout (Drake & Hebert, 2002). This section will review some of these studies.

The first to explore female coach burnout was Caccese and Mayerberg (1984), who examined sex differences for MBI scores. Caccese and Mayerberg studied 231 Division 1 college coaches (138 male and 93 female). The authors found that female coaches had higher scores on emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment than male coaches, but there were no sex differences for depersonalization. Specifically, the female coaches felt they dealt with emotional problems less calmly than males and got frustrated with their jobs more frequently than the male coaches. The authors posited several explanations for these sex differences (e.g., not as much recognition for female coaches, lack of mentors/role models for female coaches, and those female coaches might be more willing to admit they are burning out). However, the authors recommended future research in the area to investigate these explanations and discover methods to deal with stressors and decrease burnout.

In their study of 858 high school and college coaches (640 male, 201 female, 7 not reported), Vealey et al. (1992) also found sex differences that predicted burnout. Using the MBI and the Trait Anxiety Inventory, they found that trait anxiety was the strongest predictor of burnout. They also found that cognitive constructs predicted burnout; however, the constructs differed for female and male coaches. Specifically, female coaches felt overload and a lack of control leading to higher levels of burnout. In contrast, male coaches found they did not have the needed support and were overloaded with the many demands of the position. The authors also found that there were more females in the high and moderate ranges of emotional exhaustion and lower ranges of personal accomplishment and more males in the high to moderate area of depersonalization, consistent with the previous studies. The authors suggested that educating coaches about

burnout and using workplace interventions could help decrease burnout in coaches. When looking at future research, Vealey et al. recommended that researchers investigate the unique demands each level of coaching (i.e., high school and college) presents. The authors also suggested that future researchers should use qualitative approaches to help provide a better understanding of burnout.

Across two studies, Pastore and Judd (1992, 1993) explored sex differences in 227 male and 151 female coaches, finding that female coaches reported higher levels of burnout than male coaches. Pastore and Judd (1992) suggested two areas of burnout that coaches should learn to acknowledge: behavioral and physical. Behavioral signs include being easily irritated and frustrated, feeling helpless, and caring less for the athletes'. A few physical signs include feelings of exhaustion, sleeplessness, and headaches. If a coach can identify when they are starting to feel behavioral or physical symptoms, they can take action to reduce the burnout feelings. Critical interventions include stress management techniques (meditation, yoga, and relaxation) and finding a support group or mentorship program. Pastore and Judd (1993) suggested that future studies should focus on the different factors that cause the increases in burnout and eventual departure from coaching.

Kelley (1994) looked at sex differences between 131 male and 118 female college coaches by giving them the MBI, Perceived Stress Scale, Coaching Issues Survey, and Social Support Questionnaire. Similar to past research, results showed a difference between male and female coaches on the perceived stress and emotional exhaustion subscales, with females scoring higher. Kelley (1994) suggested that when it comes to coaches being brought into a coaching role, it is often different for each sex. Different

expectations are placed on female coaches as opposed to male coaches (e.g., female coaches were expected to be more nurturing). One suggestion was that the administrators can help decrease coach burnout by providing programs that teach coaches to manage their stress. Part of these programs would include time management, places to find support, and introducing skills to help reconcile role difficulties for the coaches.

Pearson et al. (2021) studied 223 NCAA level swimming coaches (179 male and 49 female participants), looking at their stress and burnout experiences using the Coach Issues Survey. They found that female coaches experienced higher level of stress than their male counterparts: however, they did not find a difference across the various divisions that the coaches were coaching in. The findings indicated that for female coaches, their levels of stress were higher over all three subscales. Pearson et al. posited that this could be due to several factors including but not limited to the idea that female coaches within a male dominated profession feel additional stress around promotions and find it harder to find a work-life balance. They also indicated that future research should look at how this would apply to other sports. They recommended that organizations should provide resources and education around coping with stress to the departments and coaches; if they are aware of what could happen and given tools to help deal with it then the end results will not be as dire.

To my knowledge, the only study to exclusively explore female coach burnout was Drake and Hebert (2002). They conducted multiple interviews with two female teacher-coaches throughout one season. The two participants took similar approaches to preventing burnout, such as having something to act as an emotional release (e.g., going hiking or working out), good mentors, and strong organizational skills. At the start of

their careers, neither participant possessed these skills, leading to challenges in the profession and thoughts about quitting. It was also evident that burnout was cyclical (both in a season and over their career). Since no other studies have focused solely on female coach burnout, future researchers must explore this untapped field.

While not explicitly targeting burnout, several studies have been completed around female coach well-being and how different stressors and barriers can be found in the coaching profession for female coaches. Dixon and Bruening (2007) conducted a study on 41 female coaches looking at work-life balance and its implications on coaching, using nine online focus groups over 18 weeks. The results showed many factors that contributed to conflict within a coach's work-family life, such as the structure of a coaching job (e.g., travel or office hour expectations) and the sociocultural factors (e.g., the nature of being in a male-dominated position or the different home responsibilities of female vs. male coaches); however, the authors did not provide specific coping mechanisms for handling the conflict. The stress and strain experiences highlighted by Dixon and Bruening are like those witnessed in burnout. Similar findings were also found by Kubayi et al. (2017) who explored the work-related constraints on female coaches by giving 100 female coaches a questionnaire that used the Perceived Hindrance Scale. They found that inadequate support for female coaches (including salary, job insecurity, lack of support group systems) contributed to fewer female coaches advancing to the higher levels. They also found the coaches felt they often had to perform multiple roles, and this combined with family commitments led to them not being able to progress up the coaching ladder. There were also sociocultural factors that were found to be barriers including but not limited to marginalization and gender stereotypes found in coaching.

Didymus et al. (2021) explored the various job stressors female coaches experience and how it affects their well-being through the completion of a revised version of the An Organizational Stress Screening Tool by 217 female coaches. They found that having good relationships helped to decrease the negative effects of stressors. Another finding that can be related to burnout research is that organizations should focus on creating optimal workloads for their coaches as well as providing education to the coaches about what the negative effects of stress and overload are. They believed that many female coaches did not progress to higher levels because they could not find a coaching-life balance.

The above studies show strong evidence that burnout is an understudied issue for female coaches at the high school and collegiate levels. However, none of these studies explored high performance or recreational coaches. All these studies suggest equipping the coaches with tools/skills/knowledge to be able to prevent, and if it is too late manage/decrease their burnout experiences. Lastly a common suggestion was to understand the nature of burnout in female coaches, researchers must focus their attention on female coaches' experiences specifically, aiming to generate a depth of understanding.

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**Chapter 3: Manuscript**

Examining Female Coach Burnout Experiences and Coping Mechanisms

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## Abstract

Many people view coaching as a hobby or extracurricular activity; however, when it comes to the elite levels, coaching is a paid profession in which an individual spends numerous hours focused on pursuing success for their program. Many job demands are placed on these individuals, and their jobs are tied to their successes. There are also demands placed on individuals from other areas of their lives, such as friends and families. When all these demands converge, burnout can often occur. The purpose of this study was to provide recommendations to organizations and coaches on how to manage burnout. Using a pragmatic approach, 14 elite female basketball coaches were interviewed through Zoom to better understand their experiences with and management of burnout. 4 main themes resulted: *Experiences, Management, Education, and Recommendations*. Based on the findings of this study, we offer recommendations to current and future coaches and organizations on how to support individuals who might experience burnout.

*Keywords: Management, Qualitative, Sport, Job Demands, Stress*

## **Examining Female Coach Burnout Experiences and Coping Mechanism**

Coaching is often a misunderstood profession; many believe that all coaches are volunteers who do it because they love the sport (Hickey, 2005); however, for some (such as those in U Sports and CCAA), coaching is their full-time job. In Canada, within U Sports and CCAA, only 26% of head coaching positions are held by women (Canadian Women in Sport, 2022). There have been several studies that have posited the question of why there are fewer female coaches in these roles. Some of the common reasons being a lack of opportunity, sexism, poor work-life balance, and increased stress (Didymus et al., 2021; Lavoie & Dutove, 2012; LaVoi et al., 2019).

Lavoie and Dutove (2012) conducted a literature review of the barriers and supports for females in coaching, they found that more barriers than supports exist within the literature in all levels of the study (sociocultural, organizational, interpersonal, and individual), suggesting that despite the vast research that has been given to the topic these barriers are not being addressed or changed over time. Some of these barriers include things like lack of self-efficacy, the “old boys club”, travel, low pay, and masculine hegemony (to name a few). They suggested that education should be a collaborative effort on all levels (from organization, to community, to individuals) and cover a variety of things including but not limited to helping develop reflective practices, creating a narrative to help develop mentorship programs for female coaches, and provide information to help create both structural and social change in the sporting environment.

Lack of opportunities and supports were shown to be major barriers for the 100 female coaches who participated in the study by Kubayi et al. (2017) looking at work-related constraints in coaching. They also found the coaches felt they often had to

perform multiple roles, combined with family commitments this led to them not being able to progress up the coaching ladder. There were also sociocultural factors that were found to be barriers including but not limited to marginalization and gender stereotypes found in coaching. Supporting these findings, Didymus et al. (2021) looked closer at wellbeing among 217 female coaches. They found that having good relationships helped to decrease the negative effects of stressors. One suggestion from the study was that organizations should focus on creating optimal workloads for their coaches as well as providing education to the coaches about what the negative effects of stress and overload are. They believed that many female coaches did not progress to higher levels because they could not find a coaching-life balance.

Many studies have been conducted on female coaches as gender differences clearly exist within the profession (Didymus et al., 2021). One of the main barriers experienced by female coaches is increased workplace stress (Didymus et al., 2021, Lavoie & Dutove, 2012). It has been shown that stress that is not dealt with or overtakes one's life can lead to burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001). Nearly half a century ago, Freudenberger (1975) studied healthcare professionals, examining a phenomenon he termed 'burnout'. This is considered the first known study on burnout, which led to its exploration in many other professions and domains.

Despite burnout in sport being researched over the past three decades, there is no agreement among researchers on the definition of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2021). The most commonly used definition of burnout comes from Maslach and Jackson (1981), who explained that those who do "people work" (p. 99) go through increases in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization/cynicism, with accompanying decreases in feelings of

personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion occurs when an individual's mental capacity to deal with everyday tasks is drained. Depersonalization or cynicism is evident when individuals are no longer invested in their work, leading them to pull away or become cynical. Decreased personal accomplishment occurs when individuals believe that their actions have little meaning or worth (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Given the prevalence and pervasiveness of burnout across various careers and activities, the World Health Organization (2019) recently included burnout in their 11th edition of *International Classification of Diseases*, describing it as a condition that occurs when chronic stress from the workplace has not been managed. The lack of stress management is shown through exhaustion or energy decreases, distancing oneself mentally from the job, demonstrating cynical or negative feelings towards that job, and decreased efficacy in the workplace. One model of burnout that has been presented is the Job Demands-Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001). While this model currently does not make direct connections to sport, the premise that the demands and resources related to one's job can affect the level of burnout an individual experiences is an interesting concept to consider when examining coach burnout.

A leading sport burnout research model that helps to understand how burnout occurs is the Cognitive Affective Model (Smith, 1986), which explores how the reaction and perception of stress manifest through four factors: situational demands, cognitive appraisal, physiological responses, and behavioral responses. Additionally, the Sociological Model (Coakley, 1992) posits that the root source of burnout is from the structure of the social organization, not the individual level. While these models started in athlete burnout research, they have also been applied to coach burnout studies. The

majority of coach burnout studies are focused on male participants, and even in the studies that include female participants the numbers are skewed towards male coaches. Only one study has focused on female coach burnout exclusively.

The studies comparing burnout across sexes show that female coaches reported higher emotional exhaustion, more conflict, and less job satisfaction within their roles than their male counterparts (Felder & Wishnietsky, 1990; Kelley, 1994). It has been suggested that much of the additional stress female coaches experience can be decreased with the help of their administrators (Kelley, 1994; Pastore & Judd, 1992). Many studies also found that stress management strategies could benefit coaches by decreasing their stress levels (Dale & Weinberg, 1989; Drake & Hebert, 2002; Pastore & Judd, 1992 & 1993). However, further investigation is warranted given the dearth of studies about female coach burnout.

Drake and Hebert (2002) explored female coach burnout by interviewing two female coaches over four months. The participants identified the various demands on their lives, the cyclical nature of their jobs, and different organizational influences that increased their stress. They further explained how they managed this stress and attempted to find a work-life balance through three main strategies: being organized, having mentors, and having personal releases.

Considering the extant literature, two recommendations for future studies exist. First, to better understand female coaches' experiences with burnout, it is important to focus research attention on this participant group (rather than comparing males and females). Second, it is imperative to understand female coach burnout so that methods can be explored to reduce and prevent burnout. Thus, this study aimed to examine elite



female coaches' burnout experiences and coping mechanisms. It is essential to investigate the first hand experiences of elite female coaches and what burnout is to them and how they manage it, as there is a lack of females in these high-level coaching positions. By examining these coaches' experiences and how they have dealt with the stresses related to elite coaching, we can provide recommendations for future female coaches that reduce burnout and intentions to quit. Ultimately, this study provides insights into methods to keep female coaches in the coaching profession.

### **Method**

The research ethics board at the first author's institution approved all procedures described below.

### **Paradigm**

Given that the goal was to understand elite female coaches' experiences with burnout, the pragmatist paradigm was chosen as the foundation for this study. Pragmatism was chosen for its innate ability to finding in-depth, tangible solutions to problems, as opposed to becoming entangled with debates of the truths and realities that other paradigms focus on (Dewey, 1931; Giacobbi et al., 2005). In adopting the pragmatist approach, this study examined female coaches' recent burnout experiences to provide practical solutions for coaches and sport organizations. These unique experiences of the coaches are in themselves their own truths (Giacobbi et al., 2005) that should be shared with other female coaches who might share similar experience. The pragmatist approach influenced all the decisions throughout this study, including participant selection, interview questions, and data analysis.

## **Positionality**

As a pragmatic researcher, the first author's experiences played a role in the results of this study. In line with the concept of outsider and insider status from Merriam et al. (2001), I was both an outsider and insider during the research process. I was an outsider in the study, as I could not relate directly to some of the participants' sociocultural backgrounds and family statuses. However, I am more of an insider with the other coaches, given that my experiences in coaching basketball (Canadian female coach at the provincial and preparatory school level for 20 years) drove me to this line of research. My relationships throughout my career helped guide my participant selection and the development of the interview guide. I also am an insider, given that throughout my coaching career, I have experienced many instances of burnout. My experiences led me to question if other female coaches also felt burnout symptoms. My strong background and investment in the process and relationship with the participants helped create a more insightful analysis as I better understood what they were portraying in their interview responses.

## **Participants**

Using utilization-focused sampling (a type of purposeful sampling; Patton, 2015), elite female basketball coaches who met the following criteria were targeted: (1) have athletes' on their teams who participate at the provincial level or higher, (2) currently coach a preparatory high school, college, or university team, (3) be head coaches of their programs, (4) participate as a head or assistant coach in provincial or national team training during the offseason, and (5) be currently coaching in Canada. Based on these

criteria, emails were sent out to 19 coaches with the target of 10 participants. Of those 19 coaches 14 replied by the deadline date requested. The 14 participants ranged from 25 to 49 years old, with an average of 10 years' of coaching experience. There was no participant drop out for this study, however four coaches replied after the deadline and expressed interest in being on a wait list should someone withdrawal from the study and more interviews be needed. The participants were geographically diverse, representing six Canadian provinces.

### **Procedure**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom video conferencing, lasting an average of 45:56 minutes (range ~ 27-61 minutes). The interviews were structured in three main sections based on the interview guide method from Patton (2015). The first section was preliminary questions designed to build rapport, learn participants' motivations to coach, and understand participants' knowledge of burnout (e.g., "When you hear the term burnout, what do you think of?"). The second section included specific open-ended questions about the coaches' experiences of what they believed was burnout in the last five years, what they have done to successfully (or unsuccessfully) manage these experiences, and if they felt being female impacted these experiences (e.g., "Do you feel that any of your experiences are unique to being a female coach?"). The last section included summary questions, which were used to generate recommendations and conclude the interview (e.g., "Do you have any specific advice for other elite female coaches on how to avoid and reduce burnout symptoms?") (See Appendix A Document 3). All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

## **Data Analysis**

In line with the pragmatic approach, this study implemented a six-step thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2017) to examine the responses, allowing for a deeper understanding of each participant's experience by representing each singular thought with a code. The first step was for the first author to familiarize themselves with the data by reading and re-reading each transcript while listening to the recording and making notes in a reflexive journal about the main concepts discussed by the participants. The second step was generating initial codes from the data to represent the singular thoughts of the participants. These codes were then organized into meaningful and related groups. The third step involved taking the initial code groupings and finding emerging themes to represent the big picture ideas of the participants. In the fourth step, the first author reviewed the themes, found some main patterns that arose, and checked to ensure the participant quotes were under the correct themes. This step was revisited throughout the analysis. The fifth step was naming the themes and sub-themes and providing operational definitions for each. The sixth step included writing the results by reporting the main themes and why they are essential to the study.

## **Rigor**

Three main approaches to the research enhanced the study's rigor. First, by implementing pragmatism and allowing it to guide all decisions in the study, we ensured methodological coherence (Mayan, 2009). This included identifying a real-world research question grounded in the literature review, using appropriate data collection (i.e., interviews to elicit participants' experiences) and analysis methods that led to tangible

recommendations and writing the results and discussion section together to highlight how participants and female coaches could use the information to reduce burnout. Second, through researcher responsiveness (Mayan, 2009), the lead researcher maintained an open mindset by looking analytically at the data and thinking critically about it by reviewing the codes and themes multiple times and revising them accordingly. Keeping with the pragmatic paradigm, the researcher’s responsiveness allowed for the participants’ recommendations to be echoed in the solutions provided at the end of the study. Lastly, guided by the work of Appleton (2011), a critical friend was employed to act as a sounding board throughout the coding and theme development process. The critical friend (a graduate student familiar with qualitative methods) reviewed the themes, sub-themes, and definitions to ensure they accurately represented the data.

## **Results & Discussion**

Four main themes emerged from participants’ interviews: (1) *Experiences*, (2) *Management*, (3) *Education*, and (4) *Recommendations*. In this section, we will define each theme and sub-theme, as well as show individual quotes to support these findings.

Table 1 shows the themes and sub-themes used in the study.

*Table 1: Themes and Sub-Themes*

Theme	Sub-Theme
Experiences	1. Burnout 2. COVID and Burnout 3. Burnout as a Female Coach
Management	1. Coping with Burnout
Education	1. Formal Education Experiences 2. Preferred Methods of Delivery
Recommendations	3. Advice for Coaches 4. Advice for Organizations

## **Theme #1: Experiences**

*Experiences* were defined as the participants' knowledge of their perceived burnout experience based on their individual experiences or through second-hand knowledge. This theme included three sub-themes: *Burnout*, *COVID and Burnout*, and *Burnout as a Female Coach*.

### ***Burnout***

This sub-theme includes participants' reflections on their individual experiences of perceived burnout before the COVID-19 pandemic. All participants felt they had experienced burnout (either cognitive or somatic effects) in the past five years, and they believed burnout was inevitable within their profession and cyclical. P8 described it best: "I would have cycles of burnout... There's levels of burnout that you can handle, and there's levels of burnout that are beyond... it depends when in the season it happens." P10 and P11 explained how they had "very little sleep" and "Would feel tired all the time... And it got very strenuous, I think, on my mental health." P5 said, "Really feeling like, yeah, daily, things are hard" while P6 said, "Physically, you're just like you're tapped out."

Many coaches did not realize they were experiencing burnout (or its effects) in the moment. It was not until they had time to step away from the situation and reflect on it that they realized they were burnt out. This was evident in the responses from P13: "You know, honestly, I don't think I've experienced a ton except for probably, you know when I when I reflect on it, and think back to maybe some behaviors or how you felt during a certain time." The participants also indicated that job pressures required of them outside

of the on-court coaching were additional stressors, including fundraising and performance reviews. P3 said, “My biggest stress at jobs with coaching is usually fundraising.” P8 mentioned, “When I was struggling the most with my job. I won’t even say performance, but just with my job security.”

### ***COVID and Burnout***

This sub-theme arose due to participants’ experiences through the COVID pandemic. Interviews occurred one year into the COVID pandemic. All participants acknowledged that being home, having less travel, and less time on the court created opportunities to secure a greater work-life balance. Despite this, participants still experienced feelings of burnout, but from different sources. P9 expressed this best: “I’m not sure that COVID necessarily slowed everything down. Because all it did was make everyone significantly more accessible.” COVID, especially at its start, created a scenario where people no longer had to travel to meetings or participate in workshops or conferences, leading to participants overbooking themselves because it was easy to join from home.

Another common experience was a decrease in motivation from virtual events and not being stimulated, challenged, or rewarded in a way they were used to or craved as high-performance coaches. P7 explained it well: “People like us who thrive in that chaotic lifestyle... for it to be taken away from us this year is really hard... when we’re forced to stop... now I have almost no motivation to get going again.”

### ***Burnout as a Female Coach***

This sub-theme outlines the experiences that some participants felt were unique to being a female coach, including various forms of pressure from multiple sources such as family, relationships, society, and the job. P7 noted societal pressures placed on females as a factor of her burnout experiences: “Those pressures of, ‘You only have so many years left, are you gonna have a baby’? As much as you want to say that they don’t affect you, I think they naturally do as a female”. They felt a combination of assumptions, biases, and inequalities placed different expectations on female coaches. Respondents also indicated that they believed female coaches tended to internalize things and be more emotionally involved in things they do, which added to the pressures they felt from the job. P2 explained: “It’s been a contentious issue with my partner, it’s sort of trying not to have it be a thing. So, it’s more I’m actually trying to not have it seeping in, which then takes more emotional energy.” Away from coaching, trying to find family balances and keep relationships healthy was also a source of pressure on the female coaches, which they felt was different than their male counterparts. Two participants, however, did not think being a female directly affected their burnout.

### ***Summary for Theme #1***

All participants felt that burnout was something every coach faces on a cyclical basis throughout the year. While the specific details of their experiences were different, the generic processes were similar. All participants experienced both cognitive and somatic effects when they felt they were burnt out. The leading cause of perceived burnout for all the coaches came from perceived pressures that they felt were placed on



them from internal and external sources. Another commonality was many participants did not always know when they were burning out or on a path to burnout until they had time to reflect, or it got so bad they had to stop because of physical symptoms they were feeling.

The experiences of these participants were like those of the participants in Drake and Hebert's (2002) study, who found burnout was cyclical and increased with the pressures from multiple sources. These findings also support Kelley (1994), who found that role conflicts played a large part in increasing female coaches' stress at various points in the season, indicating that burnout was cyclical. This is also in line with the findings of Demerouti et al. (2001), who found when demands are high and resources are limited, individuals' will experience exhaustion and disengagement. It is important to note that the results are based on the individuals perceived burnout experience based on what they know burnout to be. Clinically, there could be other explanations for what they are feeling; however, given the results were similar to previous research, these results can be seen as supporting the findings. Given that these results were consistent with past research, a recommendation for current/future coaches and organizations based on the results is to recognize burnout is cyclical in nature, be aware that burnout will happen at some point, and be prepared for it.

### **Theme #2: Management**

Management was defined as how participants believed burnout could be reduced, prevented, or treated and represented by the sub-theme: *Coping with Burnout*.

### *Coping with Burnout*

When looking at all the methods participants identified that they used to cope with burnout, it all boiled down to self-care starting with work-life balance or flow. A response from P5 captured this sentiment, “Because of the nature of our jobs, there’s going to be times where there’s no balance at all.” While coaches recognized balance is not realistic, P1 had it described to her as a flow. “And [name of coach] has always been like a great model, but also a great advocate for work-life flow.... There’s always going to be busy parts, but it’s like how do you mitigate the tougher parts.” P12 talked about being present in the moment to help mitigate the challenging parts especially with balancing work and time at home: “You may not have as much time at home. But when you are home, you really have to be mindful about that time and be present and make the most of that time.” During the COVID pandemic, participants found that having more time at home (especially during the early parts of the pandemic) showed them a different form of balance than they were used to and made them re-evaluate their daily habits and rethink how they spent their time. P5 expressed, “[COVID has] given us the opportunity to say, ‘Hey, these are things that I actually really enjoy outside of my job that I know that I can now come back to when I need that time away.’”

The participants also identified that within a calendar year and their seasons burnout appeared to be cyclical. Being aware of the part of your season you are in and what was coming ahead was important for participants to help prepare themselves for those busier parts of the season. P8 stated, “I think self-awareness is a big part of it.” P2 took self-awareness one step further by saying, “Awareness is one thing, but can you do it without self-judgment?” P1 explained: “One is being aware of that emotion when it

presents and then two, is being able to, like, sit with it... the reflection of it is noticing where you are after you've sat with it for some time." Once coaches determine how they are feeling in that moment without judging themselves, they can then move forward with dealing with it. One strategy to do this was to compartmentalize.

P4 explained how important it was to compartmentalize, "If you can learn to compartmentalize, I truly think it is, like, one of the greatest skills." P4 continued to explain, "I always found coaching as a bit of an escape... however, I need time away, I need non-basketball time." This time away was often discussed as self-care time and included many management tools, including physical activity, journaling, and talking. Physical activity was a crucial part of all participants' management/prevention routines: "Exercise obviously is a huge thing... the other thing is just balancing it with fun... go skating instead of going for a run. Or why don't you go tobogganing." (P1) Journaling was another technique used by a variety of participants: "Journaling has been very helpful because when you're not letting things go, they're just continuing to weigh you down." (P8) Having someone to talk to was also identified as necessary for the participants. P4 explained, "As a female, I've noticed that I just need to talk about it ... I just need to, like, the words need to exit my mouth. And it's almost like the stress has exited my body." The key to all these tools was allowing outlets for stress to exit the body.

### ***Summary for Theme #2***

Every participant in the study had individual strategies to manage their burnout experiences. There were similarities across the board that kept coming back to taking time for self-care. Utilizing common activities such as physical activity, taking some time

away from the sport, and using stress-relieving techniques. However, each individual also had different tools within these management techniques (e.g., for physical activity, some preferred weightlifting while others preferred bicycling, or for stress-relieving techniques, some preferred journaling vs. meditation). A few participants felt that despite the hardships the COVID pandemic brought, there were some positives to it. It gave them a chance to reset their lives and experience a world away from coaching, allowing them to find the things that made them happy and find new ways to try to balance their worlds.

The management techniques participants put forward were similar to suggestions from past research, including that of Drake and Hebert (2002). They found that having an activity to release some stress and having mentors was essential to helping female coaches manage burnout. The results also support the findings of Pastore and Judd (1992), who noted that adding individual stress management techniques to a coach's toolbox can help them manage their burnout. The results herein show that finding what practices best manage coaches' demands is critical to navigating the burnout experience.

Looking closer at the use of physical activity as a management tool, the results of this study support Fodor et al. (2020), who examined the role of physical activity within the Job Demands-Resources model of burnout. They found that individuals who regularly participated in moderate physical activity (e.g., cycling) experienced fewer burnout symptoms. It was also found that physical activity could be used as a recovery method from burnout which is in line with what our participants indicated.

### **Theme #3: Education**

Education was kept as a separate theme as one of the main questions presented in the interview was focused on the information coaches had previously received about burnout, along with how they would like to receive further information about burnout going forward. This theme was broken into two sub-themes: *Formal Education Experiences* and *Preferred Methods of Delivery*.

#### ***Formal Education Experiences***

This sub-theme focused on any education presented to the participants about burnout throughout their careers. All participants indicated that they had been provided information about athlete burnout to support their athletes' through the process; however, nothing formal had ever been presented to them around coach burnout. P5 was straightforward about the education she had been provided "No, not at all." P2 explained, "There's more and more emphasis put on athletes' mental performance and mental health." P4 indicated that supports were being put in place at her institution for coaches to take some time away; however, no education had been provided, "Sabbaticals or leaves for full-time head coaches. So I thought that was really a really big step on their part to acknowledge it...but certainly no, like, educational material or things like that around it."

#### ***Preferred Methods of Delivery***

Given this lack of formal education, participants were asked how they would prefer to receive burnout education, which led to this sub-theme. Participants felt it was essential to provide information about what exactly burnout is and what causes it before getting into the details of how to manage it. P1 suggested providing "actual knowledge of

...what burnout is, that these are the symptoms, and this is what leads to it.” P8 suggested going into “The deeper levels of where the burnout comes from.”

Three preferred methods of delivery identified by the participants were: (1) practical and accessible tools that can be used, (2) opportunities to talk and share stories, and (3) visual resources. These methods should be easily accessible, clear and concise, and informative. Some of the practical tools identified included the suggestion of a survey or app/program that can be used to look at job demands and performance levels that could be used to monitor the requirements placed on the coach concerning their performance. P5 talked about a more formal process, “A survey of ‘These are trends we’re seeing within this coach...and these are demands that we’ve put on them’. And then ‘These are demands that we aren’t aware of, in the sense of the job.’” The organization or the individual coach could use this to monitor where they are at with their workload/demands and how they are feeling. Something to serve as a talking point to initiate a conversation around possible time off was: “If you had a metric of, you’re in the range of burnout coming up in the next year or two, how do you feel about, you know, taking even the offseason.” (P5).

Creating opportunities for conversation and shared stories was another mode of disseminating information participants indicated could be helpful. By having virtual meetings or open round tables, individuals would be able to hear more of these stories and experiences of current and former coaches and interact and learn from them. P13 stated, “Anytime you can hear from other people’s experiences and share those, I think those to me seem to be the most valuable, real-life experiences that are shared.” It is crucial to

remember that not everyone is comfortable in live person-to-person situations, especially if it is a group of people with whom they are unfamiliar.

Participants also felt using presentations and information sessions that included video testimonials would be beneficial to getting information about coach burnout to more coaches. P6 indicated, “A video that, you know, also had the testimonials of coaches who’ve gone through it, because I think that then there’s a better connection right for another coach to hear from a coach who’s been in their position.” P6 continues this quote by saying that in addition to a presentation, having a one- or two-page pamphlet or information resource becomes more meaningful to someone after they have seen the video testimonials: “And once that connection [has been made], and they can relate to that, then the pamphlet, I think, becomes useful to them. Because they, like because they’ve made the connection to that other coach.”

### ***Summary for Theme #3***

The findings in this section build on the recommendations of Kelly (1994), who recommended that organizations can better support their coaches by providing programs to help teach coaches how to manage their stress and giving them suggestions on how coaches would like to receive this information. Everyone learns differently; some people prefer to read data, others prefer to be in a room with a group of people and hear the data live, while others prefer to see and hear shared experiences of people who have gone through the same things. Finding a way to track or monitor burnout levels could be important to help coaches manage their burnout. In line with Vealey et al. (1992), a key to coaching burnout education is having organizations make it readily accessible to them.

#### **Theme #4: Recommendations**

It was essential to ask the participants for advice they had to help reduce, prevent, or treat burnout for other coaches. These responses were grouped into one theme called Recommendations, broken down into two sub-themes: *Advice for Coaches* and *Advice for Organizations*.

##### ***Advice for Coaches***

This sub-theme focuses on the participants' advice to help other coaches manage their seasons and decrease burnout. The first step was being self-aware of the burnout experience and accepting it. P2 recommended: "Learn to be aware of it and welcome it because then you don't have to worry about beating it down. It's like, okay, you're there. I'm an observer of it; it's not dictating where I am or what I'm doing." After recognizing burnout is happening, coaches suggested using various management tools to help navigate it.

The participants also found that coaches who have a solid support system and a staff they trust, and ability to delegate tasks are able to take some weight off their shoulders. P10 indicated, "If you can really get the delegation and the managing piece, like managing your staff piece that goes into delegation, down, it makes the job easier." Participants also said it is vital for coaches to have someone to hold them accountable. P12 adds, "I think if you can have some kind of accountability system in place for what you're trying to do and what you're trying to accomplish, then I think that can alleviate burnout down the road."



P12 advised that building a network of likeminded people will help coaches get through some of those more challenging times knowing they are not going through things alone: “This is a profession [that] can be very, it can be very lonely in the sense that you’re competing against the people you work with...I think it’s important to...reach out to other coaches and try to develop a network.” The participants felt that having someone who understands the nature of their profession is essential when having someone to be able to talk to. P9 stated, “Having the people in your inner circle understand you. I know that if I didn’t have the right people around me, like, I wouldn’t still be in this job.”

While balance might not be achievable, participants indicated that by setting boundaries and having some non-negotiables, it was easier to step away from coaching to do the other things they enjoyed in their lives. P10 suggested: “Be able to step away and do things that you enjoy outside of coaching. Whether that’s just spending time with family, hanging out with friends, or watching a movie that has nothing to do with basketball.” COVID provided a good time for coaches to explore what makes them happy and remind themselves not to focus solely on basketball. Throughout their coaching journey, the participants indicated that early in their careers, they felt they had to say yes to everything. As they gained more experience and saw how other coaches do things, they realized that it was okay to say no to things. P4 explained: “...The way I got into this, where I am now, is by saying yes to everything. But I don’t think people should feel they have to do that...they should feel okay about prioritizing something else in their life.”

### *Advice for Organizations*

This sub-theme focused on how organizations can better help coaches manage burnout experiences. Participants felt there was constant pressure from organizations to have coaches give more and more of themselves. The participants indicated that when a young female coach steps up and shows interest in high-level coaching, organizations tend to throw so much at them it can become overwhelming. Often, coaches feel they cannot stay no. P8 expressed this by saying: “I think another part of it is just that you’re gifted in this; this is a window of opportunity...like you can’t let this pass you by; this is a career builder for you.” Organizations need to be better at being open to helping those coaches find a flow (especially early in their careers) and allowing them to grow and develop at a pace that is supportive of positive mental health. The participants identified that organizations treating individuals as people, not commodities, was essential. Further, when opportunities arise, organizations should reiterate to coaches that they are optional (and that missing them will not hurt their careers), which could alleviate coaches’ feelings of burnout. P2 explained this well: “I think the more PSOs and NSOs can keep it as an option, not as a mandatory thing, there’s a difference between empowering someone and like, not treating them as a commodity.”

Another key recommendation for organizations was recognizing that elite coaches are involved in multiple organizations with high demands. Participants explained how they were often involved with their main job (university or prep school), provincial and national teams, and possibly even other organizations. They further acknowledged that having all these schedules aligned is not realistic. They believed that if the organizations could provide support/education to help manage their burnout, they would not have to

adjust as much. P1 expressed: “I’m not saying [club team name] and [provincial team name] need to plan their schedule better, so their coaches don’t burnout... it’s easier to teach us how to manage as opposed to having organizations plan around their coaches.”

P3 suggested having a central contact person for coaches to engage with could aid with managing burnout: “I think having someone who’s appointed, like job wise, that you can go to when you’re experiencing things that are related to burnout, or discrimination of sorts; I think that’s really what I find the biggest resource.” This tied into P14’s advice to the organizations: “I would put the pressure and challenge back on the administration and the sport organizations to better manage their new and current coaches.”

#### ***Summary for Theme #4***

Advice for coaches from the participants came down to acknowledging, normalizing the conversation, and finding ways that work for individual coaches to manage burnout. Participants felt that it was essential for coaches to remember it is okay not to say yes to every opportunity that came their way. They suggested having some boundaries and non-negotiables in place. The coaches in this study believed that it was crucial for coaches to recognize they are not in it alone and that all coaches will have experienced burnout on some level. According to the participants, finding a support system or group of individuals to talk to about burnout was vital. The participants indicated that the organizations they were involved in should provide more support to them. All the participants felt that the more organizations could empower and support their coaches, the better off they would be. Providing education and resources to the

coaches can empower them to be more knowledgeable and better equipped to deal with the various stressors that will arise through their seasons.

These recommendations are in line with three of the four coping mechanisms recommended by Dale and Weinberg (1989): (1) finding things away from sport that provide meaningful interactions (finding time away from coaching), (2) having stress management strategies, and (3) prioritizing physical health and rest. The results also support Vealey et al. (1992), who recommended that organizations provide further education and workplace interventions to help coaches manage their burnout.

### **Conclusions**

This study has provided a framework for understanding what elite female basketball coaches' experiences with burnout have been, what management tools they have used, any education they have experienced, and any advice they have for other coaches and organizations. In line with the past coach burnout research, we have confirmed that burnout, to these participants, is cyclical in nature (for these participants that meant through the course of a year, which consisted of both national/provincial team seasons as well as U Sport seasons, which often overlapped) and is a regular occurrence. The participants felt that everyone had experienced burnout at some point and that destigmatizing the conversation around burnout and offering more support and education would help mitigate the future burnout experiences of other coaches. Within these themes, some common trends found in this study included acknowledging that burnout happens and the participants believe it is unavoidable, so by using physical activity and time away from coaching one can help create a balance or flow in their seasons, as well as creating a support system (within their coaching staff and close friends) allowing them to

delegate tasks and have someone to talk through situations. It was also indicated by the participants that it is important coaches are able to recognize what burnout is; to do this it is important that education is provided explaining what burnout is as well as some strategies to use to help prevent or reduce it. The evident lack of education supplied to coaches about burnout highlights the need for more coaching resources.

Participants felt that organizations needed to step up and take the lead in providing coaches with more resources and education tools, allowing them to better recognize and deal with burnout. The participants also recommended that the organizations look at their coaches differently; instead of treating them as commodities, they should acknowledge that they are people and have individual needs and experiences. Some coaches have families and might need support with childcare, while others might need mental health support. This is in line with the recommendations from Kelley (1994) and Pastore and Judd (1992) that the more support organizations provide, the less stress female coaches will feel. Just as organizations invest in the mental health of their athletes', organizations need to begin investing in the mental health of their coaches.

### **Limitations**

This study focuses on a particular set of participants (elite female basketball coaches), thereby decreasing the generalizability of its findings. Future studies should be expanded to examine other sport coaches and different levels of coaches, such as recreational coaches. Additionally, this study focused on a snapshot in time, which might have been influenced by participants' experiences navigating the COVID-19 pandemic; thus, future studies could find different burnout experiences for female coaches. A

longitudinal approach that included implementing some of these techniques with current elite coaches would also be interesting.

## **Recommendations**

Grounded in participants' data, we offer five recommendations:

1. *Organizations*: Educate coaches about the cyclical nature of burnout (within their season and the calendar year) and tools they can use to help manage or decrease their burnout symptoms.
2. *Organizations*: Have a support system for coaches, including a mentoring program and access to time away from coaching to allow them to manage their burnout. It is important to create opportunities for time off away from the sport, such as a sabbatical or parental leave.
3. *Coaches*: Try different techniques and methods for stress management. Similarly, experiment with season planning and staff/team management—particularly knowing when/what to delegate to others.
4. *Coaches*: Find a strong support system both at work and at home. The more people who understand what coaches are going through and can support them, the better off they will be.
5. *Researchers*: Longitudinal studies are needed to pinpoint the sources of stress and the periods of increased stress. If we can find specific times or specific things, we can provide more specific advice/recommendations.

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## **Chapter 4: Additional Results and Discussion**

Given this thesis is based on a manuscript format, with the focus being a manuscript to be submitted for publication in Chapter 3, not everything could be included within those page limits. The manuscript in Chapter 3 delivers a broad overview of the research findings and focuses on providing guidance to organizations and other coaches on managing burnout. In this section I will provide a summary of my findings, and explore a few sub-themes that I felt were important to the participants and findings but did not have as much support to be included in Chapter 3. I will also explain two additional factors that I feel affected this research, the first is my connection as the principal researcher to the study and the second is the COVID pandemic that rocked the world in 2019 and is ongoing today

Female coach burnout is an understudied area of burnout research. This thesis attempted to add to the research field by providing accounts of individual participants' experiences at the elite level with burnout and the ways they have managed or coped with burnout. By exploring their experiences, recommendations can be made to future elite level coaches and organizations on ways to help prevent burnout, thereby improving retention rates for female coaches. As the interviews progressed, it became apparent that everyone experienced and managed burnout differently. While all the participants had similar methods for coping with burnout, no two participants were the same regarding the specific tools within those methods they used. It all came down to two main things: (1) being treated as human beings, not commodities and (2) being given the education/tools to create awareness to allow them to recognize and acknowledge their burnout. If

organizations did those two things, most participants felt they would be better equipped to manage their burnout successfully.

### **Research Summary**

Given the manuscript style of this thesis, it was impossible to include all of the themes and sub-themes in chapter 3; below is a discussion of the results that were not included in Chapter 3.

#### **Theme 1: Experiences**

The goal of this thesis was to explore the experiences of the participants. The interview questions were focused mainly on the participants' experiences with burnout during the coaching season in a broad sense. There was also an indication that burnout affected the coaches while coaching in terms of their day-to-day execution of their job. Another finding that is important to note is that two participants felt that not only being a female affected their burnout, but the fact that they were a young female at the elite coaching level added its own stressors.

#### ***Sub-Theme: Burnout and Coaching***

Burnout showed up in the participants' day-to-day coaching worlds through decreased motivation, feelings of having a limited capacity, and their relationships with the athletes' and other coaches. P10 explained it well: "I do think it influences the relationships...I think, sometimes, when I am burnt out...my patience is very slim. So I've seen that affect my coaching, for sure." They also found they would revert to old habits and internalize many things, increasing their burnout levels. That being said, two coaches felt their burnout experiences did not affect their coaching at all, which was

interesting that they could compartmentalize so well. P7 indicated, “When I’m actually in a game setting, and I’m on the floor, and we’re in the game, I don’t think it affects my coaching in the game.” These are the coaches we should focus longitudinal studies on.

***Sub-Theme: Challenges Unique to Being a Young Female Coach***

Four participants indicated that being a female coach and a young female coach brought unique challenges and pressures. They felt that there was a combination of job pressures placed on them, and the coaching dynamics were different for young female coaches. P3 stated, “Intersections of being young, being the youngest head coach here, coming in being the first female coach that is also an outsider of sorts, because I’m not a graduate...has come with unique challenges.” While P4 explained, “You’re working with as an assistant coach, male head coaches, or athletic directors, or male coaches on other teams. So the power dynamic is a lot different.”

**Theme 2: Management**

Another goal of the study was to find out how participants managed their burnout. Since they were all still coaching, they likely had strategies that helped them get through these experiences. One participant addressed a management technique they found helpful within their coaching duties.

***Sub-Theme: Management Within Coaching***

Being open and honest with their team and staff was a key management tool P1 identified was critical to their management of burnout while coaching. P1 explained, “Being vulnerable and just explaining, ‘Hey, this is where I’m at,’ but let them know, I’m

aware of it, but I'm trying to change it. And I think sometimes even that shared experience helps you persevere.”

### **Theme 3: Educating Coaches**

All participants indicated they had received no formal coach burnout education from their organizations. While some coaches had a few informal or self-created opportunities (through their research or interest areas), nothing was ever given to them about coach burnout from the organizations they had been involved in. They had gotten information about athlete burnout and tools and support for caring for their athletes' mental health. The critical findings from this section came in the sub-theme of *Methods of Delivery* (see Chapter 3). This study aimed to provide recommendations for organizations to support their coaches better. This sub-theme highlighted how the coaches would like the information/supports to be presented.

### **Theme 4: Recommendations**

While no theme is more important than another, this section compiled all the advice the participants gave to other coaches and organizations. It is easy enough to leave it with no sub-themes. However, I felt breaking down that advice into specific categories was essential to help guide the target audiences as the participants felt they would say different things to different levels of coaches (such as experienced or not).

#### ***Sub-Theme: Advice for Experienced Coaches***

Participants indicated that experienced coaches still needed to hear that it is okay to need a break, that they are still good enough, and that what they are doing matters. Usually, these experienced coaches give advice; however, one is continually growing and

learning in the coaching profession. It is nice to hear from other professional coaches what has or has not been working and that they are not in it alone. P14 said, “Being open about it. So if you’re a head coach, creating a space for you and your assistants or staff to talk about it and bring it up.”

***Sub-Theme: Advice for New Coaches and Young Coaches***

Advice from the participants for new young coaches focused on how new coaches can start getting their feet off the ground, including being themselves and finding a support system. P8 talks about: “...Take personality tests...[to identify]...what stressors are [that] they will encounter [and what] type of personalities that will challenge them, so that they can know when those battles are coming up. Because those tend to be the things that exhaust us...” If new/young coaches are self-aware, know their personalities, and learn to deal with other personalities they will encounter, it will help them navigate some of those uncharted territories.

The second thing that came up specifically for young coaches was a push to find opportunities to take the lead and be head coaches, even at grassroots levels. Being a head coach is different from being an assistant coach, so by finding opportunities to lead, you will gain more experience when you are thrown into higher-level situations. P6 indicated, “You need to find a head coaching role in any other kind of...teams so that you’re gaining experience making decisions...I just think it’s super important to really get that head coaching experience.”

## **Theme 5: Miscellaneous**

This theme was essential because finding out what the participants knew about burnout, why they were coaches, and their favorite memories of coaching shed light on who they are and things that influence their management techniques. The coaches who better-understood burnout seemed to have put more thought into their management practices and often had been coaching for longer. Two key sub-themes emerged here including broader considerations and potential future research ideas.

### ***Sub-Theme: Broader Burnout Considerations***

Participants felt conversations around burnout needed to be normalized; however, how to do this was unclear to them. They also felt that more support is necessary for coaches in terms of specific resources and mental health research. P7 said, “I think it’s super important. And now there’s, there’s so much talk about like mental health and all that kind of stuff. And at the end of the day, like the burnout is a big chunk of mental health.”

### ***Sub-Theme: Potential Burnout Research Areas***

Within the interviews, participants suggested areas they believed should be explored further within the realm of female coach research. These included the transition from athlete to coach; P2 felt, “We need more and more resources to athletes’, high-performance athletes’ that are transitioning out.” Looking at the levels of burnout in grassroots coaches, since this appears to be where the decrease of female coaches is occurring, P5 indicated, “We rely a lot on grassroots coaching... and oftentimes...I’ve coached way less [hours in a season] than half of these high school coaches...We’re



seeing a ton of burnout and...drop out of [female] coaches at this level, why?." Gender differences in burnout is another area P5 suggested be further explored, "The burnout piece would be really intriguing to see what the uptake was, with male coaches versus female coaches."

### **Effect of COVID**

In 2019, the world shut down due to a global pandemic called COVID. This caused businesses, schools, and all activities to be shut down, forcing people to stay home away from their loved ones. The less interaction you had face-to-face with people, the better. In terms of my research, it did not change the methods much, as I had already planned on interviewing the participants through Zoom because they were located across the country, and face-to-face interviews would not have been possible. However, it did change the participants' availability and willingness to participate in the study. I had expected to have some individuals I reached out to say no, yet everyone I asked said yes. I initially planned 10 interviews and reached out to 18 coaches; I ended up booking 14 interviews as four of the people I reached out to were unavailable within the window I wanted to complete the interview.

Based on the participants' responses on how COVID helped them find more balance, I have to say the experience was the opposite for me. COVID increased my workload and added more stress to my life. It also changed me as a person. I could not find the new balance the participants in my study identified as I took on even more tasks. I also ended up experiencing some personal mental health problems that I had never experienced before. I had my first panic attack and my first anxiety attack when I was in

public. I found my home life was more strained as we did not have the usual time apart, and we were both home all the time. I observed many of my friends find a new balance and decrease their stress, making me jealous and bitter toward them. This experience allowed me to have a deeper understanding of the participants' responses and gave me the opportunity to interpret those results on a deeper level.

### **Principal Researcher's Experiences & Lessons Learned**

As the study progressed, I was actively coaching high-level provincial teams; between my job, this Master's program, and my coaching, I went through a period of burnout. It started slowly; I felt tired all the time and noticed I was missing and forgetting small things I usually never would have missed. I then began to feel some physical effects of joint pains and heart palpitations. I also experienced cognitive side effects, a very low motivation level, and thoughts of quitting coaching and school altogether. Burnout was affecting every aspect of my life. I was shorter with my husband at home. I was dropping the ball at work. I got behind on deadlines for writing at school, and as a coach, I did not have the usual energy levels I typically bring to practices.

The peak of my burnout was during the coding process for this thesis. It forced me to look closely at what the participants were saying in their responses and led me to adjust a few of the initial codes, highlighting the study's central themes. The study results gave me some ideas on how to manage my burnout. I found that talking through things with someone I trusted and who knew what I was going through helped. Other tools I found to be effective were journaling and yoga. These tools helped me back into a mood where I felt I could be productive in one or all areas of my life. It felt like a checklist and made

me more confident that my findings would be helpful and contribute to the coaching world, as I could turn around and say, yes, that is what I felt too, and yes, those things did help me.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the participants' interviews, this study found that all participants agreed that perceived burnout (to varying degrees of severity from active to complete withdrawal) was something every coach faces on a cyclical basis throughout the year (what one coach felt was burnout varied participant to participant). All participants at some point in the last five years had experienced both cognitive and somatic effects during their period of burnout. There was also agreement that the perceived pressures participants felt were placed on them from both internal and external sources. Another commonality was many participants did not always know when they were burning out or on a path to burnout until they had time to reflect, or it got so bad they had to stop because of physical symptoms they were feeling.

In regards to managing burnout every participant had small unique management strategies, however there were similarities that kept coming back to taking time for self-care. Utilizing common activities such as physical activity, taking some time away from the sport, and using stress-relieving techniques. However, individuals also had different tools within these management techniques (e.g., for physical activity, some preferred weightlifting while others preferred bicycling, or for stress-relieving techniques, some preferred journaling vs. meditation). A few participants felt that despite the hardships the COVID pandemic brought, there were some positives to it. It gave them a chance to reset

their lives and experience a world away from coaching, allowing them to find the things that made them happy and find new ways to try to balance their worlds.

When it came to education, none of the coaches had received anything formal about coach burnout specifically. It was evident from the participant interviews that everyone learns differently; some people prefer to read data, others prefer to be in a room with a group of people and hear the data live, while others prefer to see and hear shared experiences of people who have gone through the same things. Finding a way to track or monitor burnout levels could be an important tool to help coaches manage their burnout. It was very clear that more needs to be done to educate coaches about burnout as it is currently an inherent part of the coaching profession and can be a make-or-break point for coaches attempting to climb to elite levels.

The final theme from the research was advice from the participants. Advice for coaches from the participants was focused on acknowledging, normalizing the conversation, and finding ways that work for individual coaches to manage burnout. Participants felt that it was essential for coaches to remember it is okay not to say yes to every opportunity that came their way. They suggested having some boundaries and non-negotiables in place. The coaches in this study believed that it was crucial for coaches to recognize they are not in it alone and that all coaches will have experienced burnout on some level. According to the participants, finding a support system or group of individuals to talk to about burnout was vital. The participants indicated that the organizations they were involved in should provide more support to them. All the participants felt that the more organizations could empower and support their coaches, the better off they would be. Providing education and resources to the coaches can empower

them to be more knowledgeable and better equipped to deal with the various stressors that will arise through their seasons.

This thesis provided the following recommendations to organizations, coaches, and researchers based on the literature and findings from the interviews. First, for organizations: (1) Educate coaches about the cyclical nature of burnout (within their season and the calendar year) and tools they can use to help manage or decrease their burnout symptoms. (2) Provide a support system for coaches, including a mentoring program and access to time away from coaching to allow them to manage their burnout. It is important to create opportunities for time off away from the sport, such as a sabbatical or parental leave.

Second, the following recommendations would benefit coaches: (1) Try different techniques and methods for stress management. Similarly, experiment with season planning and staff/team management—particularly knowing when/what to delegate to others. (2) Find a strong support system both at work and at home. The more people who understand what coaches are going through and can support them, the better off they will be.

Lastly, the following recommendations were made for researchers: (1) Longitudinal studies are needed to pinpoint the sources of stress and the periods of increased stress. If we can find specific times or specific things, we can provide more specific advice/recommendations about information they should share with their coaches. (2) Future research should be conducted on individual management techniques and their effectiveness in various settings (including different levels of coaching from grass roots to the elite levels). (3) Since participants indicated burnout was cyclical, it would also be a

good source of future study to look at the cycle itself by measuring it at various points in a year and attempting to identify when it is highest. Once this is quantified, different intervention could be implemented and studied to see if the cycle can be decreased.

Overall this thesis contributes to the field of female coach burnout in that it provides a unique perspective from the eyes of an elite female coach in Canada. While the findings supported past research, they also showed further gaps that should be addressed with future research.

## Chapter 5: Appendices

### Appendix A: Ethics Documents

#### Document 1: Ethics Approval Letter



ICEHR Number:	20211114-HK
Approval Period:	January 19, 2021 – January 31, 2022 REMOTE METHODS ONLY
Funding Source:	
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. David Hancock School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Title of Project:	Examining Female Coach Burnout and Coping Mechanisms

Interdisciplinary  
Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

January 19, 2021  
Mrs. Amanda Miles  
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Mrs. Miles:

Thank you for your correspondence addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) concerning the above-named research project. ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarification and revisions submitted and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. However, please be advised that level 2 of the MUN COVID Framework stipulates that only the remote methods in your approved protocol can be used at this time, and any future in-person and/or field research requires that you first request and obtain permission through the framework, as detailed at <https://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr>.

In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* to January 31, 2022. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you submit an Annual Update to ICEHR before January 31, 2022. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer involves contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you are required to provide an annual update with a brief final summary and your file will be closed. If you need to make changes during the project which may raise ethical concerns, you must submit an Amendment Request with a description of these changes for the Committee's consideration prior to implementation. If funding is obtained subsequent to approval, you must submit a Funding and/or Partner Change Request to ICEHR before this clearance can be linked to your award.

All post-approval event forms noted above can be submitted from your Researcher Portal account by clicking the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Portal homepage. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Kelly Blidook, Ph.D.  
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Blidook", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Supervisor – Dr. David Hancock, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation

## **Document 2: Informed Consent Letter**



School of Human Kinetics and Recreation

School of Human Kinetics

Physical Education Building, #2023A, St. John's, NL, Canada, A1C 5S7

Tel: 709 864 8129 Fax: 709 864 3979 [www.mun.ca](http://www.mun.ca)

### **Informed Consent Form**

**Title:** Examining Female Coach Burnout and Coping Mechanisms

**Researcher:** Amanda Miles, School of Human Kinetics & Recreation, Memorial University, [ammiles@mun.ca](mailto:ammiles@mun.ca)

**Supervisor:** Dr. David Hancock, School of Human Kinetics & Recreation, Memorial University, [dhancock@mun.ca](mailto:dhancock@mun.ca)

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled “Examining Female Coach Burnout and Coping Mechanisms.” To participate, you must be **18 years or older** and a current, female head coach.

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. To decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Amanda Miles, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent. It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

#### **Introduction:**

My name is Amanda Miles, I am a second-year master's student at Memorial University. As part of my thesis I am conducting a research project under the supervision of Dr. David Hancock.

#### **Purpose of Study:**

The purpose of this study is to examine elite female coaches' experiences with burnout, along with their coping strategies. There are three main goals of this study:

- (1) Understand female coach burnout experiences
- (2) Explore coping mechanisms female coaches use to deal with burnout
- (3) Provide recommendations for managing female coaches' burnout

#### **What You Will Do in this Study:**

You will participate in a recorded Zoom interview with Amanda Miles. You will be asked a series of questions related to your coaching experiences and the ways in which you cope with burnout symptoms. If you are not available for a Zoom interview, a recorded phone call is also an option.

You can find a copy of the Zoom privacy policy [here](#).

#### **Length of Time:**

The interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

#### **Withdrawal from the Study:**

You may choose to withdrawal from this study up to two weeks after the completion of the interview, simply by telling Amanda you no longer wish to participate. If you indicate your request to withdrawal up to two weeks after your interview, your data will be destroyed. After this date it might not be



possible to remove the data due to its anonymous nature. You may also choose not to answer any given question throughout the interview process, at which time the interview will proceed to the next question.

**Possible Benefits:**

The benefits of participating in this study include an opportunity to help future coaches deal with the symptoms of burnout as they experience them to help prevent a full burnout experience where they would end up quitting coaching completely. After reading the final results, you might also learn new strategies, which could help you in future burnout experiences.

**Possible Risks:**

There is a low risk that participating in this study will lead to psychological distress when discussing emotional experiences. In speaking of burnout and the events/feelings that might have been experienced with it, participants may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. Should you experience such responses, feel free to avail of the Mental Health Crisis Line (1-888-737-4668), which is a 24-hour toll free number. Alternatively, you can contact Dr. Hancock ([dhancock@mun.ca](mailto:dhancock@mun.ca)) and he can direct you to other available services in your area. There is also a low risk that an informed reader could identify you based on direct quotes used in the results. This could have a negative influence on you (e.g., social/financial implications). Again, the risk for this is low and all steps will be taken to limit the likelihood your responses become identifiable.

**Confidentiality:**

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Your privacy and confidentiality are of prime importance to us. The consent forms and video recordings will have identifying information. These consent forms will be printed and stored in Dr. Hancock's locked filing cabinet in his locked office. The electronic copies of those consent forms will then be removed from my computer. Video recordings will be stored on Amanda's password protected laptop until anonymized transcripts are created, with all identifying factors removed or replaced with participant numbers. These transcripts will be password-protected and kept on Amanda's laptop. Upon completion of the study, all recordings will then be transferred to an external hard-drive and deleted from Amanda's laptop. The external hard drive will be stored in Dr. Hancock's locked filing cabinet in his locked office. No data will be shared with anyone other than the research team members, unless required to do so by law. Should you choose to, the video recording of the session can be turned off at any point during the process. If you prefer to do the interview by audio only that is an option.

**Anonymity:**

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics, such as name or description of physical appearance. An anonymized version of the transcript will be created, removing all your identifying information. Any shared results will not include participants' identifying information. Despite this, it is possible that an informed reader could identify you as a participant, especially in the instance of a direct quote or specific example being used. All steps will be taken to limit the likelihood your responses become identifiable.

**Use, Access, Ownership, and Storage of Data:**

- Recorded data as well as any written material will be kept on a secured drive that is password protected.
- All information will only be accessed by Amanda Miles and Dr. David Hancock.
- Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research in a locked cabinet in Dr. Hancock's office.

**Reporting of Results:**

The results from this study will be published in my thesis document and in a scientific journal. The final thesis will also be published in a publicly available thesis database with Memorial University (<https://research.library.mun.ca/>)

**Sharing of Results with Participants:**

If you wish to receive the results of the study once it has been completed, you may do so by contacting Amanda and requesting the results (also by checking the box at the end of this form). A one-page lay summary will be shared with links to the thesis and any published reports that come from the study.

**Questions:**

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Amanda Miles, [ammiles@mun.ca](mailto:ammiles@mun.ca).

**ICHER Approval Statement**

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at [icehr@mun.ca](mailto:icehr@mun.ca) or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

**Consent:**

- I agree to be audio-recorded  Yes  No
- I agree to be video-recorded  Yes  No
- I agree to the use of direct quotations  Yes  No

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study up to two weeks after completion of your interview without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you have requested to withdraw participation within two weeks of your interview your data will be deleted from the study.

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

**Your Signature Confirms:**

- I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
- I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.
- A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant Date

- I wish to receive a copy of the results from the study  Yes  No

**Researcher’s Signature:**

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator Date

## Document 3: Interview Guide

**Introduction:** Thank you for sitting down with me today to talk about your experience with burnout. Before we begin, I wanted to ask you when you hear the term burnout what do you think of?

Based on my research leading up to these interviews I have found many descriptions of burnout which I have taken pieces of to influence this study. I had found that burnout results in feelings of reduced personal accomplishment (such as feeling your work is never good enough), emotional exhaustion (feeling mentally drained by everyday tasks), and depersonalization (feeling detached from your tasks, blaming others for issues, making negative comments towards others). There are also physical symptoms such as pain, trouble sleeping, and cardiovascular disease. Please keep these descriptions in mind today as we discuss your experiences with burnout.

### Background

1. Why did you start coaching?
2. What is your favorite memory of your coaching career?

### Experience/Feeling

3. In the past five years, what experiences have you had with burnout?
  - a. What events lead to or contributed to those feelings?
4. What external influences have impacted your burnout experiences?
  - a. Other people?
  - b. Other demands?
  - c. Job performance?
  - d. Resources?
5. How were your day-to-day coaching duties affected by burnout symptoms?
  - a. Were other areas of your life affected as well?
    - If so, please explain?
6. What, if anything, do you do to try and manage your burnout symptoms when you are experiencing them?
  - a. Did you do any relaxation techniques?
  - b. Do you do any physical activity?
  - c. Do you talk to other people about it?
7. Do you feel that any of your experiences with burnout are unique to being a female coach?
  - a. Do you have an example of this?
8. How do you stay balanced between work and life?
  - a. If not balanced, what do you think could help/what resources would be useful?
  - b. If balanced, how do you do that?
9. What, if anything does your administration/PSO/NSO do to help with education around burnout?
  - a. Do you have any recommendations on things they should do?

### Summary

10. Do you have any specific advice for other elite female coaches on how to avoid and reduce burnout symptoms?
11. Do you have any specific advice for new female coaches on how to avoid and reduce burnout symptoms?
12. Do you have any questions about what we have talked about, or things you want to share before we wrap up?

## Appendix B: Quotation List: Theme: Experiences

*Table 2: Summary of the Sub-Themes and codes within the theme Experiences*

Sub-Theme	Code
Burnout and Coaching	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Internalizing Things</li> <li>2. Limited Capacity</li> <li>3. Motivation</li> <li>4. Multiple Hats</li> <li>5. No Changes</li> <li>6. Old Habits</li> <li>7. Other Tools in Practice</li> <li>8. Personal Interactions with the Athletes'</li> <li>9. Relationships</li> </ol>
Burnout as a Female Coach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assumptions &amp; Biases</li> <li>2. Cognitive Effects</li> <li>3. Family Balance</li> <li>4. Inequality</li> <li>5. Internalizing things</li> <li>6. Job Pressures</li> <li>7. Language</li> <li>8. No Direct Effects</li> <li>9. Overloaded</li> <li>10. Relationships</li> <li>11. Unique Experiences</li> </ol>
Burnout Experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active Burnout</li> <li>2. Awareness of Burnout</li> <li>3. Cognitive Effects</li> <li>4. Cyclical</li> <li>5. Decisions</li> <li>6. Insecurities</li> <li>7. Internalizing Things</li> <li>8. Job Pressures</li> <li>9. Less of a Balance More Like a Flow</li> <li>10. Life with Family</li> <li>11. Limited Capacity</li> <li>12. Motivation</li> <li>13. Multiple Hats</li> <li>14. Overloaded</li> <li>15. Reflection</li> <li>16. Relationships</li> <li>17. Say No</li> <li>18. Self-Care</li> <li>19. Sociocultural</li> <li>20. Somatic Effects</li> <li>21. Support</li> <li>22. Time Off</li> </ol>
Challenges Unique to Being a Young Female Coach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Female Coaching Dynamics</li> <li>2. Job Pressures</li> </ol>
COVID and Burnout Experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Better Opportunity for Balance</li> </ol>

2. Burnout is Different
3. Change to how Time is Spent
4. Cognitive Effects Experienced During COVID
5. Development & Leadership Opportunities
6. Job Pressures During COVID
7. Limited Capacity
8. Motivation
9. Online Opportunities
10. Overloaded
11. Policing
12. Self-Care
13. Somatic Effects
14. Support
15. Team Culture
16. Uncertainty

External Influences

1. Cognitive Challenges
2. Job Pressures
3. Multiple Hats
4. Relationships
5. Sociocultural
6. Support
7. Time Off
8. Work Family Balance

Internal Factors

1. Internalizing Things

**Sub Theme: Burnout and Coaching**

**Code: Internalizing Things**

**P5:** Yeah, like, emotionally, I'm a pretty calm person and I think I, if anything, it was more internalizing. So as opposed to growing relationships with athletes', maybe at the same rate, it was more of like a reserved situation where I wasn't jumping in the same way I normally would

**P6:** Yeah I? Well, again, I say that and like, No joke, I feel like for me, I always laugh with a couple of my best friends, where I'm like, I do have a love hate relationship with it. You know, and hate is like, too strong of a word. But I do think it's just like, the stress of the job itself of just being a U Sport coach is like nothing I could have imagined

**P8:** Yeah, because they don't get the best of me. I mean, I, I'm kind of the person that's, you know, my team, my job kind of gets the bulk of my energy

**P12:** then you're setting yourself up for failure, I think

**Code: Limited Capacity**

**P1:** And so I don't think I've ever been short with athletes'. I think, like I said before, it just limits like, what I can do with them

**P1:** I just, I think my capacity to reach more athletes' diminishes

**P2:** We can be pretty specific to basketball here; I find what it has led to at times is what I think is lazier coaching

**P4:** I definitely feel a kinship with you. When you say like, you get shorter. I don't know if that's always stress, or like burnout. It's more like, Hey, guys, we gotta get this or like, you're not taking a serious like, whatever, right? And so then I'll get, very sassy

**P6:** Yeah, I mean, I think that, you know, again, it's when you try to reflect in an unbiased way, about what you're like, in those moments. I think that absolutely. As much as possible, you know, I would say if there's the one time that you're trying to, okay, this is the, like, I'm gonna allow myself all my energy to be as great as I can be in the, in the coaching part of your day, let's say, I think it's. So I don't want to say that there are not if it was anything, it would be similar to what you said in terms of likely being maybe a bit more short

**P6:** But then because of that you're not fully engaged in everything like you normally would be. It's always in the back of my mind, though

**P7:** I definitely would think, though, that it affects practice, when you can actually stop and correct. So when I, you know, am heightened in that, almost that burnout state, you're heightened, and every little thing is so wrong

**P7:** and it takes you over the edge

**P8:** I'm an attention to detail person. And so you know, I find that I wouldn't say cutting corners, but my attention to detail is reduced

**P8:** And so you know if when I'm feeling you know, whether it's I've had a day off and I feel you know some recovery and I'm practice planning While it might take me an hour, an hour and a half to kind of plan out the practices and be intentional with the different pieces of it. As I get more tired and more burnt out, I spend less time on the details

**P8:** But the funny thing is that then that lack of detail is then what I get frustrated with, throughout the span of the week, right. And so it's just kind of this vicious cycle of, you know, you kind of you end up creating your own situations of frustration, because you're like, I'm too tired to kind of plan this all the way out. So let's just kind of go on the fly a little bit here. But then when you go on the fly, you know, other people are a little bit confused by your explanations, and then you get a little bit more frustrated with that. And then you're just like, what is going on here

**P8:** And so if you have, I mean, it depends like, there's some that are like, okay, they're going through this really challenging situation, and you know, that you have to pour into them. So you do deal with those. But then there's the other ones, where you're like, I just can't deal with your drama right now. And I mean, the drama is still a cry for help. But you're just like, I have no idea where this is going to go or how much energy this is going to require. So maybe I'm just either not going to deal with it, or I'm going to try to delegate that to somebody else, which is sometimes it's it's beneficial

**P8:** But other times it can be, you know, the athlete is like, why didn't you come and talk to me? Like, why did you send the assistant coach? or Why did you send the captain in my mind, I was like, I actually when I get really tired, I can't always predict what's going to come out of my mouth, like my filter definitely is

**P8:** You know, so I have to be very careful when I start feeling that burnout is that I tried to make sure that I don't respond to challenging emails very quickly, I give myself more time to answer them

**P8:** So I don't trust myself, as much as I normally do

**P8:** I don't trust my gut instinct, I don't trust my ability to kind of just push through things, because there's a reason why my program got to where it did. And that's because I can typically like I move quickly, and let's go and let's go, let's go. But there's times where that becomes a challenge to follow for others. So it's just yeah, so I would say there's a few different areas that's kind of impacted by that

**P9:** So it's unfair, because I know it's impacting them, they get 20 minutes of my time, and I can't give them all of my energy

**P9:** But at the same time, the fact that they know what I'm doing, they know that I'm going to be honest with them instead of you know, not telling them and then having them sit there being like, why is coach, distant or quiet or

**P9:** like not really engaged with what we're doing

**P10:** I do think it influences the relationships like in terms of like, with my coaches, more so than the athletes', because you're around the coaches a lot, especially, since you're planning your meeting, you're talking, like, all of that stuff kind of goes into it. And like, I think, sometimes when I am burnt out, I like I have a very short. I don't want to say temper but it's like my patience is very slim. So I've seen that affect my coaching, for sure. But the other coaches

**P12:** I think just like what you said at the beginning of this is like you just quick to like react

**P12:** And it's like, I didn't have a time, I didn't take a deep breath I did. I'm just running into the gym

**P13:** Yeah, I think so. Again, I think just a shorter fuse

**P13:** probably not as empathetic with the athletes' probably

**P13:** not as positive in my communication

**P13:** Yeah, I think just again, more of a negative demeanor

**P13:** probably more demanding

**P13:** more critical

**P13:** Not as many as much positive reinforcement for them. So yeah

***Code: Motivation***

**P4:** The one thing I would say that I noticed when I am feeling burnt out is like I don't want to answer emails. I don't want to deal with the little things that I don't like to do. Right, like I hate emails, please don't repeat this, but I hate recruiting videos. I'm like, I don't need to see your free-throws sweetie. So I would say those things more contribute to my mindset

**P4:** We always say like, don't let mom and dad see you fighting. Right. So we want to keep the athletes' in a place where it's like, Yeah, okay. All good. Like, because we accomplished some things last year that I to be frank, no one would have ever expected and just beat some teams that literally name of university had never been within 10 points of, and I think those were moments where I'm like, I think in a way, you have to fake it. That, yeah, we have a chance to beat this team, we can do this. And then the athletes' like okay, like they really truly believe that. And whether or not we truly do. I think it really helps

**P11:** Now, when I ask people externally, or just some discussing practice with parents, or athletes' or assistant coaches, it doesn't seem to be the case. Like, I think on the outside, it looks like everything's probably pretty normal. Whether they're just being nice or being honest, I'm not sure. But I definitely feel different. I think when I'm stressed out and disengaged, probably, and like high anxiety all the time

***Code: Multiple Hats***

**P9:** When it was you know, when I was coaching, the Canada games team, it was challenging. We were going through a turnover of an executive director. I was the TD at Canada games. While coaching a team and there were issues happening on the guys side. And so I actually had to pretty much beg to get my Operations Manager Permission to come out to Canada games. So I could be like for this week, I'm not the TD like I am. I'm coaching this team. And even at that there were issues happening at Nationals, which I think were in name of city, where we were sending an athlete home. And the ED was he was at his cottage. And so I'm in between games, calling people out in a province trying to move this athlete around, which completely neglected the athletes' that I had given, you know, the last two years too. And it was very unfortunate. I still to this day, I'm like, bitter about it

**P12:** You know, I think about how I would even go into practice, because I would be in my office trying to do feeling like I was doing 50 things and throwing together a practice plan, grabbing my practice plan running down into the gym

***Code: No Changes***

**P1:** long pause I'm trying to remember and reflect. I don't think I treat them differently

**P7:** I think that when I'm actually like, in a game setting, and I'm on the floor, and we're in the game, I don't think it affects my coaching in the game, because I keep you hear about like getting in the zone, and you just kind of dial it in and you do what you need to do at the time

**P10:** I haven't really noticed the negativity towards the athletes' yet. That will happen I'm sure

**P14:** I want to say no, I think in my reflection, I may have little impacts

***Code: Old Habits***

**P2:** I still micromanage a little bit, because there's a lot riding on it, but long pause those are the ways it (burnout) manifest in my coaching

**P11:** Or it's almost like I, when I'm super stressed, and especially in that time, I found, this is your probably going to laugh I feel like I blacked out during practice, sometimes. like, I'll go through practice, and everything happens, and it's over. And I think what just went on?

**P12:** And the time I dedicated, like you should be dedicating, in my opinion, a couple an hour, a couple hours to practice planning, like really sit down and you know, going through what you're going to do with your players. And I just felt like half the time I'm trying to last minute get some stuff down in my practice, plan and run in. And so, you know, if you're not prepared

***Code: Other Tools in Practice***

**P1:** And as an assistant, you're not really making big decisions. So you're kind of just hovering to see where there's a need. I was in charge of the individuals and so towards the end of my time, at name of U Sport school, we started making them optional

**P1:** For most of the athletes' unless they were missing practice or whatnot. So, in terms of treatment, I think it probably limited what I could do with them, because of where my energy levels were at. But a way I worked around that is I would start bringing in practice guys

**P1:** Or I'd pair people together to keep the intensity of the workout going. If I knew I couldn't provide it

**P2:** Reusing or tweaking something, using what I already know, as opposed to really digging into new stuff. More recycling

**Code: Personal Interactions with the Athletes'**

**P2:** But I'm so bad with follow up, I feel like I probably should be doing more individual meetings. Now, I don't know if that's realistic. But that's probably the other thing that doesn't get done well enough

**P4:** I'm emotional. People see me as emotional when I'm coaching. But I was an emotional young coach, and it really like I think it affected my players that affected just everything. And I'm like, so what if I was still myself, but like, thought about the things that I say and do and whatnot. And like, I've now just found that, like, my emotions are very measured. I know exactly what I'm doing.

**P7:** And now you're more angry than you really should be or would normally be. So I feel like in practices for sure

**P7:** And expectations are higher in games, you can't control it. So it definitely isn't as magnified. I would say probably after the game though, like in the postgame meeting, maybe it's a little elevated. Maybe I'm a little pickier than I should be. Yeah, so I think that's how it affects it in a game versus a practice setting. For Sure

**P9:** I would say yes. I'm pretty honest with them. So if I'm at, let's say, name of university, and I know things have looked quite a bit different this year. I tell them, like when I have my I work with the guards for about 20 minutes, every practice, and they see me come in and they're like, not a good day today. And I'm like honestly no, I just worked from seven until the time I walked in the gym, and I just I don't have it today

**P12:** And like, you bring in energy when you walk into the gym like that. And your players feel that energy. And so when you're when your players feel that you're a certain way, it sets the tone for what's going to happen in the next two hours, or whatever it may be. So for sure, it impacted how I was on the court

**Code: Relationships**

**P4:** My problem is that I always want people to be happy. And so I kind of let my assistant coach do the things that he likes to do. And I feel like I need to get to a point where I'm like this is your task and you have to do it, right. But to be fair our whole first year, we were just getting through the year, and then COVID happened. So we've never really gotten into that like groove of everything else

**P8:** I verify if what I'm thinking or seeing is actually what's happening with an assistant coach. I'm just like, Did she just give me attitude? No, it wasn't directed towards you. Okay, I just needed to check, you know

**P8:** And so that's typically, again, we're an assistant coach would be like, Oh, you didn't exactly explain that very well. And I'm like, yeah, that was me, wasn't it? So. So I would say that I tend to kind of the, the interpersonal connections become a little bit harder

**P8:** as well, you, you start avoiding the people that, you know, are exhausting to you

**P12:** I think my players did for sure. But I think they're gonna be the last ones to call a coach out on something like that

**Sub Theme: Burnout as a Female Coach**

**Code: Assumptions & Biases**

**P2:** assumptions

**P2:** unintended biases. like, this is the stuff this is this is my jam. Like I love talking about this, I love learning, unlearning all of this stuff

**P7:** So why can't you do it? You know, I mean, it's like, I understand this at your age. So how come you can't get it. So right, wrong or indifferent. That's just how I that's where my brain goes to a lot

**Code: Cognitive Effects**

**P2:** And I've got a great partner and it's still the, it's the emotional caregiving. It's emotional

**P7:** So holding them accountable and not being so soft on them, I think is super important. But I also think that male coaches can sometimes be like, oh, they're girls, it's okay. I'll just be a little bit nicer, softer on them, sometimes not all the time. But sometimes so. Yeah, I think the I think those are what the two the coins look like on each side there with males and females at a higher level

**P7:** Like when I was assistant coaching at name of university. Those girls It was a whole different challenge. Right? It was it was not so much of like what we did as a team. In terms of our offense and defensive concepts. It was okay, what are they doing as a team and now how can we as a team on the fly, switch it in a game if we need to. And adapt to what they're doing even though we had a full week of prep



going into playing name of university or whoever it was, they've also had a week of prep to prep for us. So now our team dynamics are team concepts are a little bit different. So we have to adjust again on the fly. So it's challenging their IQ to be okay, they're doing this now. So what are we gonna do so it's more of a mental game than a physical What can I do? game at that university level?

**P9:** And then I think on top of that, like you mentioned as, as women, I feel like it's common that you know, we are, we have that emotional side to us

***Code: Family Balance***

**P1:** I don't have any children or dependents, so I think male or female. I've had only had the chance to be coached by one female coach in my life time, and like even seeing colleagues of mine right now that are coaching and how they manage their family dynamics, I know as a woman its more challenging, but that's not to say it's not challenging for men. pause I think that would be the only thing that would differentiate between genders, if at all. But I would imagine that men go through the same things that we go through

**P1:** I would imagine. I think it's a little different. I think the only thing to factor in that would make it different is the presence of children

**P5:** Well, definitely having a kid

**P5:** Like, that's one thing. I was also I was the first coach at my school that had had a kid and navigating the mat leave and the resources or lack thereof around what that looks like

**P6:** And likely same thing, just I think women in general, especially if they want to be able to have a family. It's, you know, if I can't have work life balance as a single person, how am I having work life balance you know, with kids

**P8:** So for instance, I'm the only female head coach, in my department. I get really frustrated listening to male counterparts, talk about how they had, you know, a few hours with their kids this weekend, my mind, I was like, your spouses are basically single parents during the season. And you're kind of like the fun uncle every once in a while. You know, and it just, it bothers me from that perspective, because I've always felt that I would never be able to be a parent, in my current circumstance, as a coach simply because of the role that we feel that, you know, women have versus men

***Code: Inequality***

**P9:** Actually, I was just talking to my mom about that last night. And I said, so we're trying to run a league. And I said, the, you know, I'm talking to all the different franchise owners, if you will, and, and I'm trying to figure out who's coaching their teams, and a lot of them are picking like male coaches. And I said to mom, that's so frustrating to me, because women have a hard enough time coaching in U Sport or CCA, that if we're running a Women's League that's supposed to put women in leadership positions, and we just go with the regular guys to coach these teams. How do women ever get a chance and I said, it's infuriating

**P9:** because I know that my experience with eight years at name of university, as an assistant coach, is not the same as my counterpart on the on the men's bench assistant coach for eight years of the men's team, if we applied for the same job, his is gonna look better, because it was with a men's team versus mine

**P14:** Men are typically compensated as coaches and given experiences more than a female

***Code: Internalizing Things***

**P9:** And so, you know, you for me, I try to sleep, and I sit there thinking like, you know, who do I need to catch up with tomorrow. Because I just completely neglected them

**P9:** There's the disappointment

**P9:** So again, when I think about both sides, if I were to neglect a bit of basketball, or neglect a little bit of my inner circle, there is the feeling of guilt

**P11:** Um, yes, I wouldn't have thought about it before probably this way. But now that we're talking about all these things, I'm starting to think of stuff. I think that maybe part of that, though, is kind of in my own head

***Code: Job Pressures***

**P2:** Not just task orientation, but so much more falls onto a female

**P2:** And as a coach, you have to over perform

**P5:** I think just, this might be more of a individual. Individual, like way to look at it, but the way that you put weight on people's opinion of how you're doing your job, I think it might be just me, I don't think all females are like this, but overthinking it and, and your ego, not your ego, your confidence being like kind of like poked all the time

**P5:** I think, again, by reflection, was a lot more on me than it probably should have been. If I'm being extremely honest, if I'm fighting for equality, yeah, like, I don't think a lot of jobs have to do that, where they have to kind of tell their employer kind of you know how it goes

**P5:** Now. He was great. He was he was really open to, to this, but I still remember like, oh, what do we do in this scenario? So, I'm going through it round two, now, it's been a little bit easier. But again, because our jobs are so unique in our union, having to sit down and explain to them, and multiple people like what your job is, and how you come up with hours, and why you don't take sick days? It's like, do I really like I'd get off calls? And like, does anyone else have to do this? Like? I don't think so. So from that regard it was definitely unique to being a female in coaching

**P5:** And that's what I think that's the melting point of coaching not being seen as a profession, especially in the university world, as you know. And it's not it's not all universities, it's not all people, but I think overall, right? If you asked a regular academic, if they thought we were at the same level of, of engagement with students, they would argue, probably not. And then, yes, being unique to our university, and not having anyone had done it before. So that would be one

**P5:** Yeah, I think there's multiple people that think they can do your job better than you can. And I mean, I'm at the point now, where I'm like, come on down, like, you know, it's just that I don't take offense to it anymore

**P5:** And I think once people kind of see the ins and outs of it, and like, I've had both times I've been pregnant, I tried to open it up and get people interested in taking the year. I just can't get anyone to do it

**P6:** But really, now you're pushing them to a position that they're potentially not prepared for. And then and then if they aren't ready for it, then then it's just like, Okay, now we're done with you moving on to the next one

**P8:** And then I think the context of the groups that you're in, also challenge that

**P9:** So I have to do I feel extra on top of that. So that's why it was when I first started coaching, when I moved home with a high school, and then all of a sudden, name of coach at a university said, do you want to be an assistant coach, and I did both.

**P9:** There's the oh my gosh, these people are gonna hate me they're gonna think that I don't care about them

**P11:** So I personally really want to be a U Sport head coach. That's kind of my own goal. And I think that I have this like, added probably desire maybe to prove myself I don't know if it's to myself or to other people

**P11:** or more experienced than I am already. It's like, I feel like I'm always a step behind probably when I maybe am not actually

**P13:** Hmm. long pause It's a great question. I don't I don't know, I wouldn't say I felt that, you know, maybe early in my career, there would have been a sense of like, making sure that you are accomplishing something

**P13:** and doing a good job because you don't want your gender to be a reason for criticism, or any of that, you know, feeling like you kind of have to live up to a higher standard

**Code: Language**

**P2:** As I'm raising a young boy, I see how boys are limited. Now. They're in a position of privilege. So like, I'm pissed in some ways. And I'm jealous of this, like misplaced confidence. And like, why do you think like, why can't I be like that, but at the same time, you see how they're limited, they're more limited, it's harder to break out of that male ideal than it is for girls. Right. But until, you know, in the same way that like, probably white people are the one that actually needs to make the change in racism. We need men to start to understand it for anything to actually happen for females to change. So, I think females are mobilizing, I mean, you must be seeing that like, things are happening, there are concentrated efforts to recruit. But there is still such a difference such a change, language

**Code: No Direct Effect**

**P1:** But yah, I wouldn't say we are like treated any differently in ways that contributes to added stress in our profession. I'm not ignorant to you know patriarchal bias, I know it exists, but I don't feel like I am directly disadvantaged because of my gender

**P4:** I like to be frank; I don't think about being a young female a lot. I know a lot of other people bring it up in terms of me and talk to me about it. But it's never been a thing that, I define myself. I don't tend to think like, oh, I do this because I'm young or I do this because I'm female. I just do things

***Code: Overloaded***

**P6:** So again, my perception is yes. And the reason that I say it is because I've always said probably once I got in my 30s, that when I look back, and now as I like mentor other female coaches and kind of look at their paths. The challenge that I see for female coaches is that once they start to get involved, people, like let's just say name of provincial organization like PSOs and NSOs people get excited, right? And they're super excited that there's a young female who's keen and, and we think that she'll be great. But now we want to, like, throw her in the deep end and see what happens, right. And so now we're taking somebody from having played, and we're putting them in a national team camp, and we're putting them on a national team staff. And I'm not saying that they won't be able to. But I just think that we are throwing so many things at them before we are like nurturing them and giving them the tools to be there

**P6:** Right. And I think that I think that because there aren't as many opportunities in general for women in coaching, that as soon as we get somebody in, we think that the way to keep them in is to like fast track them to the top

**P6:** Right. And I guess I would say that then my feeling for me personally, is that, you know, yeah, of course, in my first when I was at the private school, you know, coaching senior girls and senior boys, yeah, I got six years of a lot of coaching in, which was awesome. But then in like, my fourth year that like, I was already doing, like, name of provincial training program, and going to like national team stuff, right. And then I was doing provincial like name of provincial team as the lead assistant coach. And, and, you know, and even like the one summer that I will say that I always regret is in the spring of 2012. So I had already finished my master's at U of A, I was the name of provincial team head coach. I was the name of provincial training program head coach. I was the apprentice coach, manager for the senior women's national team as they were preparing for the Olympics. And I then just got my first head coaching job at the name of university. So when I went to national team training camp, it's like I'm in the process of moving from name of 2 cities. I'm trying to recruit to start a team. I'm currently coaching a provincial team. I'm currently coaching like the name of provincial training program, and it was just like, I couldn't say no, right?

**P11:** that I think makes me often bite off more than I can chew

***Code: Relationships***

**P7:** I think females open up to females. And the same things that my girls say to me, if they had a male coach, they wouldn't say to him. Prime example is when they come and tell me that their cramps are so bad, and that they've had, you know, a 12 day period and their need to go see the doctor. I'm just like, Okay, I get it, get it? Like, what do you need kind of thing? Right? I think that I think that we as females can influence females better, because we know what's going on. In terms of, you know, we were at once a teenage girl too. So there's that I think, with relationships and stuff. The obviously we all know that relationships are key into coaching and getting through to athletes'. The uhh, I last my words, can you ask the question one more time

**P7:** Actually, I think as a male, it would be harder to coach females. The male coaches that I on the on the boys side, whenever I tell them, you know, this is happening today. They're like, Oh, man, I can coach girls, like, how do you do that? Right, when they're when the girls are being bitchy, and they're gossiping about each other? And they're, you know, just kind of being catty, because they're all kind of offer in their in their own little world. They're like, well, what are you going to do? And I'm like, I actually have no idea, but I'm going to figure it out. So I think it's, it would be even trickier for guys to coach females. I think it's easier in a sense, but also I expect more of them. Because I, I feel like, you know, I feel like, and I always go back into my brain with this. It's like, well, I for sure could have done that at your age

**P8:** And it's not in, like, I'm not unique in this. But then it's also being able to share a common Okay, actually, yeah, you're right, I do need to take that day off, or, yeah, these are the signs.

***Code: Unique Experiences***

**P1:** I would say at name of U Sport school I felt very supported even as an assistant. We were a small department so they were always trying to give us some form of professional development, we even had in my first couple years a female mentor for the assistant coaches. And then here at U Sport school from a programs perspective we have a lot of support for our female sports. We don't have many female coaches in our department, I think I am one of pause three head coaches, and there is one female assistant coach on our women's hockey team. So there's definitely room for growth in terms of support that way. I'm trying to get a fulltime position within my staff to hire a female

**P2:** And yes, the female experience still plays a gigantic role

**P2:** And I think that word perform. It's like code switching like you're you how I am and who I'm with changes who I am in a room, which is okay, you can have multiple selves, but it's a very real thing. And it depends who you are, if you're going to be the one that sort of decides before or if you like chameleon, and adapt to who's in the room

**P3:** Yes, certainly. And I think I, I don't know if it's something I would credit to just being a female, I would say definitely the intersections of being young, being the youngest head coach here, coming in being the first female coach that is also an outsider of sorts, because I'm not a graduate, like some of our other coaches, I am not even from the province. So it has come with unique challenges. And it makes it difficult to pinpoint why those challenges exist

**P4:** And I don't know what it's like to be older male. But I do know, I do have a lot of other female coach friends. And I know that some of them very much, identify with, I'm female, I do this because I'm female or whatever, but I just never have spent a lot of time thinking about it

**P7:** I for sure, think that there is. I think the societal pressures of oh, you're certain age and you don't have a boyfriend or a husband or fiancé or and, or, oh, you're this old and you don't have kids? Why are you this old and you don't own your house? Like, why? And it's not that I have anyone in my life asking me those questions, because thankfully, I don't

**P7:** But I can always you just so you can kind of feel that they're around. Right? And it's long pause doesn't in my in my mind have to be said it's just a it's just a thing that's just always there. So I think that those pressures of, Oh, well, like, you know, you only have you know, so many years left, are you gonna have a baby like, and it's like, well, no, like, I don't really want to have a baby like I have 13 teenage daughters right now. Like, I need something else. So I think those are as much as you want to say that they don't affect you. I think they naturally do as a female. Just by the shows you watch and the stuff you hear on the radio and stuff you see on social media and, and that kind of stuff. So yeah, those align things for sure. effect in a small way

**P8:** And so, you know, I find that when I'm in organizations that have, or the majority of the people that I'm dealing with are men, I tend to see it differently than when there's other women there, or there's other people of color there. Because then it's like, Okay, I'm actually not the only one that's feeling this way

**P9:** I just but like I mentioned, there's with zoom and the you know, all of the courses that are available online, and like you said, you don't want to miss because what if that's a chance for you to talk to someone to network with someone to build a stronger relationship with someone, you know, you don't want to miss that

**P10:** Yah that could also be because I'm pretty new to it. Like, I don't really know what the men side is experiencing and those kinds of things

**P11:** And I, I don't want to say it wouldn't be the same. But I find it hard to believe that I would maybe feel the same if I were male

**P14:** Yeah. And then it's harder for females as well, to have that

**P14:** So even getting your foot in the door as a reputable experienced credible coach is a lot more difficult for females than males

**P14:** And then, you know, I did, I don't know if you can use this if I give away some confidentiality with it, but you'll look at coaching clinics, and they'll have all these male speakers, they're talking about ball screen, like pick and roll whatever you want. And then they'll say, Oh, we need some woman speakers

### **Sub Theme: Burnout Experiences**

#### ***Code: Active Burnout***

**P2:** long pause I have felt all the things that you used in your definition. So, I would say there was three main bulleted items I have experienced. And currently I am experiencing all three of those regularly

**P9:** I feel like I'm in like an active burnout all the time

**P14:** Yes. I think going back to your definition, it would be more of the active burnout. I don't think I've ever gotten to a point where it's complete, complete withdrawal or complete burnout

#### ***Code: Awareness of Burnout***

**P1:** And they need that energy so that was probably when the burnout was the worst and I don't say this to complain. I'm aware of what burnout is

**P1:** My first year coaching I was basically a practice player. But then when I got to U Sport and at U Sport team name coaches name was like, no, you're your coach. I need you to coach. And if I'm showing you in a

drill, it's only because you want to, or because we need someone to guide not because I need you to be a player. So not participating in practice forced me to find other ways to be active. And when coaches get too preoccupied with their season we pour more effort into our athletes', and we do less for ourselves. What we don't realize is that when we're not taking care of ourselves, we're not showing up and showing the athletes' to be their best selves, either.

**P2:** And again, that comes back to self-awareness. Some people might not know or, and this is, again, we talked about the difference between a male female a lot of men might be like acting out and, and be so out of character, but they haven't even been able to connect to the fact that they're feeling a certain way. Like I think it's strength of mine, even though it takes a lot of energy is having some awareness of how I'm feeling for a lot of people, they probably don't even know how they're feeling, right. They've never been given permission to access it or think it or it's always like business first or like compartmentalizing emotions. And yeah, I just think there's room for both

**P2:** Yeah, I think some people don't know when they're into it

**P9:** Yeah, I mean, not that everyone loves zoom calls. But there's also that piece of you know, if you were to set that up, people actually have to tune in, versus you know, here's a two pager, and most people aren't going to set time aside especially if they don't understand the value behind it because I think a lot of people don't recognize that they're in a burnout

**P12:** I think you when you're in it, you know that you're stressed, or you know that these things are happening.

**P13:** And so when you completely stop it's Yeah, it's kind of a letdown. You have this kind of, again, looking back just it's feelings that you're you maybe didn't acknowledge at the time

#### ***Code: Cognitive Effects***

**P1:** I think there was one year where my burnout was, the worse it was. We had taken our team to name of a country in the summer. So we were training at a training camp in July, that led to attend a tournament. And we don't normally train during that time, it's usually actually my off month, because I was on a 11 month contract as a as an assistant. So working through that month, and then came back August, work camps for the month of August. And then at the end of August, our training camp and our season started. So that year, we hosted nationals. And I would say by this time, February, our team was experiencing mental burnout from just the prolong season, but also the stress of hosting and nationals and the expectation that comes with that.

**P6:** Right? I think that the way that I guess I always think about it is that especially I'll only speak I guess to me, but I think when I first got into coaching, and probably maybe not first, but like after a few years, I think that you're when you want to progress, you know, you're, you feel like you have to take every opportunity that's given to you or that's available. And then you're just like, coaching, six different teams, and you're coaching year round. And yeah, I think it just kind of leading to that burnout of because you take on potentially too much that, like you either then resent it because of what it's, you know, done to your life.

**P6:** Or, you know, potentially either mentally

**P6:** Because no matter what you do a) you're never reflecting really on things that have gone well or what is going well, all you're thinking of is but I didn't do this or I still need to do this and what about that right and then that can just drive you crazy

**P6:** right? Because I am, I'm exhausted, right?

**P6:** And so I think that it just puts so much strain on everything else. Right. So and even, like, if I was thinking about times that I would feel like that, say, when I'm with my U Sport team, right? I think that then it's, you just know that you're not doing your full job to the same level that you normally would be, because you're like, because you're exhausted

**P8:** And it's, it's usually I can tell that I'm not able to really focus in the moment

**P8:** And all of a sudden, I'm like, Okay, I have a day off in six days, you just got to push through until you get to that. And then also everything is exhausting. So even things that are life affirming, and life giving become exhausting

**P9:** Waiting for something not great to happen

**P9:** I know that there are times where I can lay in bed till like four o'clock in the morning, because I'm thinking of like, all these things that need to get done and have these deadlines. And I need to email these people

**P11:** And with the name of league season, I get very drained

**P11:** Exhausted

**P11:** And it got very strenuous, I think on my mental health

**P11:** And it was it were all things that I love doing, but it was just too much at the same time

**P12:** You try to do more and more and more to fix those things and try to make it better for the athletes' and I just feel like, you know, in that, that losing season, I really felt like it took a toll on me in terms of the stresses and then yeah, trying to just wrap my head around like, Okay, what can we do to fix this and you just can't leave it alone, right? Like you're just constantly thinking about it and you just feel like you're wearing a weight all the time

**P12:** Like I wasn't, I'm somebody who, like, I like to get into the gym and just do a little workout. And that I think, like, levels me and gets me to a place where I feel a bit more mentally sound, and I wasn't doing that

**P13:** I know, for me again, it was more feelings of, Oh, I'm kind of grumpy

**P13:** You know, that kind of having negative thoughts around things that in the past, I'd be very positive about

**P14:** Of some of that exhaustion are there

**P14:** There's a lot of challenges in the coaching realm that you have make it very emotionally exhausting

**Code:** *Cyclical*

**P1:** Absolutely

**P3:** Yeah, I think it's funny. I would say yes, but more so because of the habits that we've built over time, based on scheduling. So the good thing is leading into that break, is like the combination of like the students like academic assignments, their midterms, and then I actually left right before exams started. So we were keeping it very short and sweet

**P4:** I think that like December is always a time like beginning of December. After you get through the first semester is like, what then the hard part with us is that's recruiting time. Right. So it's a hard recruiting period. Last year in December, I flew out to Saskatchewan to finish my train to compete courses. And on like, on the first weekend back anyway, it's the one thing that I have seen is like if you don't like book, things that aren't basketball, it always sneak in. So yeah, and then the other time that is like, you know, a real like reset time is like whenever you're finished your second half of the season

**P4:** I think it's like when you're very focused, like I was very focused on like, get through these games or get through this period of time and then you get to that stop phase

**P6:** Yeah, yeah, I do think it is cyclical?

**P8:** I would probably say, I've experienced burnout in most of those years, maybe. I think, you know, I think that there's levels of burnout that you can handle. And there's levels of burnout, that that are kind of beyond, beyond. Because and it depends when in the season, it happens. If it's kind of towards the end of the season, then it's usually just, you know, push through, and then you'll have a break coming up in a few weeks

**P8:** And it typically happens around Christmas break, and then it would happen like postseason. And then it would happen typically once in the summer

**P8:** And so to me, like I said, I would have like cycles of burnout, where it's just a really busy fall, and then Christmas break, I'd come back from a national team camp, I'd go home to name of city to visit family

**P8:** And it just became like, I don't think I realized how bad it was, until he was let go. And I had to kind of sit down and realize, oh, my goodness, like, so I would say that burnout is not like an isolated event

**P8:** versus Well, a week or two earlier, when it started impacting you, personally, is probably when you should have taken that break to never get to that point. But unfortunately, that's, that's kind of been I would say the cycle of burnout for me

**P9:** So yeah, I think some sometimes are worse than others. Like I look at my schedule with name of employer, and I know when the busiest times are for me

**P9:** I: So do you find that it's pretty cyclical, like, every year around the same times you're feeling it with certain events? Yeah

**P11:** I find generally near the end of the season for me

**P11:** But I think that idea of constantly having ups and down

**P11:** and probably around those peak times

***Code: Decisions***

**P2:** I know, I could have watched more video but all of a sudden, for the first time, I'm like, I don't know that I want to make the choice. It's all what's important to you is what you make time for

**P6:** right? And so you're just you're trying to almost just like, head down and get through until you can have that kind of next breather

**P11:** Yeah, that's a good way to put it. I think it's important to, to just be present minded in those times all the time

**P12:** Oh, well in it, I don't think I did much I just powered through

**P13:** So it's one of those things that I think I've had to sacrifice for sure.

**P13:** And, but with the thought that, hey, these opportunities don't come around twice, right? Like you have them, you should be really grateful for them. So for me, it's like it was a choice

**P13:** I guess it's the situation that's good for me on a personal level. But yeah, I think it's definitely a goal to strive for, I think, you know, when I am down to one job, I think it'll be much more attainable. But at the same time, I really view my job as I feel like I have the best job in the world. So it doesn't feel like a job, right. It's just, again, probably sounds cliché, but to me, it's a bit of a lifestyle, like, coaching really never ends, like you can be doing it all the time

***Code: Insecurities***

**P2:** I am working really hard on it. And I've come a long way. part of it as well. It's interesting because I struggle with confidence but I know I care about them

**P2:** Yeah, so that external part. But yeah, feeling the guilt

**P8:** And you know, because I'm often leading everything that I'm a part of me stepping aside is shutting something down

**P8:** So then you feel guilty about taking time off because then it impacts so many different people

**P9:** And the fear is that it could happen again

***Code: Internalizing Things***

**P2:** And I don't know if I knew anything about basketball, going undefeated at Nationals for four years, we had really good athletes', but I think I could put my time into what I was good at, but basically help them culminate at the right time. That was amazing. When I started to get into the national team at a level where it now it's me on the top, I was like, oh, man, I haven't had enough time. Like I didn't feel prepared enough

**P2:** I'm sure I could have made time for it. But all of a sudden, I went in and already you know, I have some confidence issues. And I'm just like, oh, man, I'm imposter complex

**P2:** Big time, I didn't lean into my why I actually went the wrong way. I've grown through the experience, but it was a very difficult one. Umm long pause just the time that goes into it, I think being a teacher trying to run like a prep program, essentially, is you're trying to run a university program at the high school level, trying to keep the budget down, playing all those hats, trying to be a full time coach, full time teacher, and having these young kids its just I never felt like I could do any of them well enough

**P2:** Like the whole parent piece, even though I think part of it's in my head I don't think they're ever as bad and I've been so lucky not to have any terrible occurrences. But the idea of pleasing parents, just they're so involved and the kids have all these ideas, I just never feel like I'm doing enough for them. And again, it's not that it's necessarily outwardly

**P2:** And then coaching wise, I still don't feel always that I'm good enough. I know I am. In some ways I know I'm awesome in some ways, but still when it comes down to it. I'm not studying film, late at night, now maybe I'll go back to like, maybe I'll pull a name of coach, right? Where you look or name of another coach where their kids get older, and all of a sudden, or a name of another coach there's so many great examples of like, stepped out a little bit and stepped in hardcore, maybe that's gonna happen, I don't know.

**P2:** All the time. There's just more that you feel like you're not doing enough

**P2:** Feeling like I'm not performing well enough

**P2:** But I would say for me, it's a big mixture and I'm working on letting myself off the hook for choosing family and not meaning that I'm failing myself, or feminism

**P2:** Umm pause maybe both, I'm still a pleaser at heart which is a problem

**P4:** It's super funny, because I wouldn't say that I really talked to many people outside of my coaching staff I had stuff go on last year with our program. And my partner had no idea at the end of the year that it was an issue. And I'm like, Yeah, he's totally like, you don't need to keep it all in, all it's going to do is stress you out and piss you off

**P9:** And don't talk to people which is so terrible

**Code: Job Pressures**

**P2:** But it was really hard. And it was really hard because I also wanted to be a good teacher, a good mom, like, you mentioned the idea of personal achievement when it was just me and concentrating on the kids, all those provincial team years were like, it was easy to be singularly focused

**P2:** So, starting to build out, you know, persons name moved on, persons name moved on. But it was an amazing, you know, story to watch how both of the people have gone and grown. Now I've got some other really good people involved. And I'm like, this is how I need to start. Not an exit, but like sharing the responsibility. So I've got some young coaches in there now and we're building the program. Every time I keep saying I'm going to dial it back, it ends up getting bigger, more involved, but like, I mean, yeah, that's where I'm in burnout. But I'm not ready to move on

**P2:** There's so much paperwork, it's so hard to get anything done, you're having to communicate with parents, the expectations are higher as we professionalize this and have prep

**P2:** Yes, and probably like I can't get fired I'm a teacher who doesn't pay myself like I'm all people already think I'm an idiot. Like why are you not paying yourself you crazy?

**P2:** It's it's a little bit about me and my ego, but it's just like I always feel like I'm letting down the team or the parents right that they're always I assume people are talking behind my back

**P3:** Not necessarily, because a lot of what I do is volunteer base, I would say, honestly, my biggest stress at jobs with coaching is usually fundraising, just having that looming over my head

**P4:** Yeah. It's like recruiting, right? I'm in a relationship with every single one of those kids that I recruit when they let me when they say bye. It's like a breakup, right? I said to my partner, like, I don't know how to deal with a breakup anymore

**P5:** Yeah, I'm like I'm completely converted, obviously, like, growing up in name of province, I think you have the barometer of the center of the universe thinking and then outward, right. Um, but, um, yeah, that are that I think the dauntingness of not having a staff. I think that's a big one for us

**P8:** There's, there's these different layers of always having to prove yourself to certain people

**P8:** And, and I think that, you know, because I don't have a family here. You know, my extended families all in name of province, I there's very few people that actually know how busy I am

**P8:** And so I was realizing that part of my burnout is the fact that I'm always seeing things from a leaders perspective

**P9:** Oh, yeah. How do you say that to your boss, right? I can't make it because, like, this is what I do every night and it's my time with my people

**P9:** I'm one of the things that always bothers me, like I said, the people that have never experienced burnout or don't know the extent at which this job takes away from you, both in this job and then, you know, coaching at name of university, which is, you know, I realize it's me volunteering my time, but it's also something that is a form of professional development for me as well

**P10:** Um, I don't know. But I don't know about the female part. I think more so maybe the young coach, new coach kind of thing. Maybe that's where I feel more of the pressure as opposed to the gender? Yeah

**P11:** Um, so I would say with that one experience in particular, that I always think of when I think of burnout, it was just a lot at the same time. So, there wasn't, I did, I was in exams, but for my master's program, they were kind of take home things. But those were all sort of due at the same time

**P11:** But it was a lot, for my first time doing something I thought of my own. Just organization, and all the little things you don't think about. And then we were also getting back in the gym after a break name of university. So that was pretty much every day on court with the girls either doing individuals or full team practices, and then the weight room as well. So I wouldn't say that there were like, big, unusual events

**P12:** And I just felt like, you know, we weren't winning a lot of games

**P12:** So you feel a lot of external pressures

**P13:** I think just sometimes in North American culture, and even in the coaching world, it's almost seen as a badge of honor. You know, when you, you're working X number of hours a day or week or, you know, I think that's almost revered

**P13:** So I think for people to admit that maybe that's having a detrimental effect on them, it's probably, you know, not, I don't wanna say shame

**P13:** But maybe a little bit of embarrassment or feeling like they're not living up to what a successful coach would do



**Code: *Less of a Balance More Like a Flow***

**P6:** I don't. I don't know if it's funny but it is funny because it's just, it's it's so hard to

**P6:** Like, I'm basically at name of university, you know, all day. And then practices are after school in the evening, right? So, if I've practice, well, like, you know, I'm not home to cook dinner, I'm not home to like, you know, go out on a date or whatever. Like, it's like, you don't have the evenings. And then the weekends come, and you're either on the road for games, or you're at home for games. And so you're not done work. Again, the earliest is like maybe 930 at night, on a Friday or Saturday, and then Sunday comes around and Sundays like your one day, like Sunday, and then arguably, and that's why I say especially around here, well, on Sunday, well, there's name of minor age tournaments going on in at least three different locations. There, there isn't name of provincial league. And that's the challenge with free sport coaches is that name of provincial league happens all when we're playing right? Like games are happening either during the week or on like a Friday, Saturday, exactly when we play. And their season is like the same as ours. So Sunday is your one day, technically that you might be able to have off. But then if you want to stay competitive with recruiting, you probably actually have to go and work. So then again, while you're working seven days a week, yeah. And, you know, there's no way around it that like that's not healthy. Like it's like, there's no separation, and there's no real break. Now, at the end of the day, do I technically control my schedule? Sure. Like, I don't have to go to name of university, for 12 hours a day. I don't have to be at all of my teams, like lifts, and I could just go to practices, but I'm like in terms of the culture, and the team chemistry that that I obviously prioritize that it's a big deal. And it's important for me to do that. And so then when we plan like on Mondays when lift is at noon, but practice isn't until eight o'clock at night, Well you know, I'm gonna have to be there, you know, and there's, it's not like there aren't lots of things to be done. There. There are things and I think, you know, it's Yes, you can't do it all. But at the same time, it's really I personally, again, just I find it harder to find that time and, and at the end of the day, your free time. If you did make your own schedule and your free time. It's like Well, I'm free Monday mornings, a free Tuesday mornings.

**P7:** Flow, Yeah, that's an excellent way to describe it. It's never in balance.

**P7:** Right So yeah, that flow. That's a really great way to describe it

**P11:** but I think that a lot of it has to do with maybe it's because I know that the end is coming. But also, I think that that's when external things pick up for me. So that's when like, work starts to get busier. and stuff like that, like during regular season, at least with U Sport or within club basketball. I find it pretty steady the entire time

**P12:** Yeah, that's right. I don't think that balance is something that exists all the time

**P12:** And nor should it like, well, I guess it's it. It's how you define balance, I guess, like, you could be super busy during this time, but then know that you have some time coming up where you're not as busy. Yeah, I guess I just don't think it's unrealistic to think that your life is going to be in this like, perfect balance

**P13:** Knowing that you, you know, you're gonna sacrifice some of that balance for sure

**P14:** I'm in school still. So that's a balance is keeping up with schoolwork, as well as, again, like a full time coaching thing

**Code: *Life with Family***

**P2:** Within the last three to five years is when it did start to happen more significantly. It does coincide with the birth of my children

**P2:** Like I know for a fact if I had kids right now there's no way I would be able to do what I do. So I think I think I've learnt that this year

**P3:** Home has been, I wouldn't say I would say stressful, but it just usually some like logistical kind of stuff. Like we were homeless at a point and fortunately, were able to get a new home. So I'm living and working here but I own a home back in name of province, that I own the title to and so like the money that I make here, a significant portion of that goes back home. So I'm always kind of thinking about that

**P5:** My extended family is super into the sports world. So they, they kind of get it. My husband's family is not at all so they don't even understand what my job is still and we've been married for five years. Like, and that's good it at the beginning, it was kind of like, like, do you have a job? Do you guys need money? Like, no, no, we're good like this. So now I know, I just described as like, a university teacher, but right. Yes, it's pretty funny

**P5:** I think the biggest reflection point was, I didn't take a leave after having my first kid. And I didn't, you know, I just the timing of it worked out that I had I delivered it offseason, and I thought I could take you know, a month or two medically and kind of get back into it. And then that season, I just I went through it like I normally did. But I didn't realize how tired I was until the next season

**Code: Limited Capacity**

**P6:** I'm drained. And so it's just so I'm then just shorter with everything else

**P7:** There's no game prep, but where my if we think about the symptoms of or the signs of burnout, the shortness the furnace in terms of patience

**P7:** Being a little snippy, that kind of stuff, I definitely am experiencing it right now with my players

**P8:** And then like you said earlier, I mean, then there's the whole man, like you were sharp today, you know, and I've had to really enable my assistant coaches to feel very safe in calling me out when my tone is getting sharper

**P8:** And I think that's the hardest part for burnout is that I actually don't put even my own needs ahead of like, I've never put my own needs ahead of anything. And so I only really deal with it when it negatively impacts other people, whether that's my athletes', or whether that's my assistant coaches, or whether that's other people, and it's at that point that I'm like, Okay, now I need to take a break

**P9:** But then there's the piece of me where I think, you know, going back to that burnout phase where, you know, when the weekend hits, and I've worked every day from, you know, seven until nine, when Saturday gets here. Sometimes I don't want to go anywhere, like I don't, I don't want to go shopping, or I don't want to go get groceries, I don't want to even really engage with a lot of people because I'm always engaged with conversations with people

**P11:** But I think it was just I got to a point stress wise that for example, then every time name of supervisor, it's funny, because you're related to him. Every time I would get an email with a simple task for him, I was like, I can't do this, like I I don't have time I don't have the energy

**P13:** like, people are starting to annoy me

**P13:** So I think when you're in the same position for a number of years, and you're working with the same people, you know, things start to get on your nerves. I think for me, it was more that kind of reflecting and looking back and going, like, that's not really the person I want to be or that I think I am, but I'm having these weird, like, just feeling very negative around it. And I wouldn't say I was feeling negative about the job, it's usually negative around peripheral things that normally wouldn't bother me. So yeah, I think I think that was primarily it just on a reflecting basis

**Code: Motivation**

**P1:** So I think for myself I was in a burnout mode as well, because I'm trying to keep myself motivated and athletes' motivated to perform while being under the scrutiny of, you're hosting nationals, and it's in your home gym, and you need to perform

**P5:** We're seeing a ton of that at the young female, like my age, my alumni era, just because it's there's no incentive anymore, like, in the sense of parents are so attached to the kids. And the admin is so attached to the process. And there's so many competing factors of what's the most competitive stream, that they're all like, screw this, I don't need this.

**P8:** So, I mean, this is obviously before COVID. But hey, a group of us are getting together, you know, we're just going out to eat and I'm like, I'm tired. You know? And then all of a sudden, you're like, Why? Why would that be exhausting? Like just go in and have dinner with your friends. And sometimes it's really, like getting out of the house, when you're that tired is just really hard. But then once you're there, you're like, why was I convinced that this was going to be exhausted

**Code: Multiple Hats**

**P2:** But the coaching stuff that is harder and teaching, they are so interwoven, obviously

**P2:** And the coaching teaching element, there's just so much more that's required all the time

**P3:** I've never considered the prospect of burnout before this last Christmas. Even coming into this fall. My AD was like, hey, coaches, I know, you guys are still kind of doing stuff. Make sure you give yourself some time before September because we are going to be one of the few schools in person. What's that going to look like? We don't know. So I was kind of cautious about that. Certainly by October, November, I was like, Okay, yeah, this is a lot. Now, I would also say, I also didn't consider it burnout, because it wasn't tied to my coaching per se. I do a lot of volunteer work and not for profit work

**P3:** So, on weekends, I'm heading up to the Canada Game Center to do provincial team programming, then I've got a name of non profit, which you know, we do a lot of stuff in the Canadian women's basketball, then I kind of all sudden this name of coaches organization So it certainly had an impact on me and what I could espouse and teaching and also coaching here at name U Sport school

**P5:** Yeah, so we have we have a teaching load, it's, it's pretty small, we do one course. But the teaching pieces actually, I really enjoy it now because I've done it enough. I kind of know the lay of the land and I teach the same course. So the materials are the same. So I really, really enjoy it now in terms of the change of mentality that it gives me. But at the beginning, it was extremely overwhelming

**P8:** So. But I would say that it's typically not, it's never been one thing that causes burnout. For me, it's typically when I'm committed to multiple things at the same time, that all demand the same level of attention

**P9:** So I've been tasked with taking on the load of an ed. And then as an operations manager, and the cumulative time of those would be like a year

**P9:** So I can't make the meeting for whatever reason, right? And you're like, oh, boy. It just adds on. Yeah. So you're, you're it's like a catch 22. Right. You're like, I should be over here on the court. And then the people that are in your circle are like, okay, like, again, you're not making it. Yeah. And late, or you need to leave

**P10:** It was a lot. So I think that was the biggest burnout in all of my coaching career. The other piece is, um, one year, I was coaching both with the name of pro team and with name of u sport team. So I was doing both jobs simultaneously. So I was literally on the court all day for like, eight months, that was brutal

**P11:** This is insane. And you know, if I got an email like that now, it would take me 10 minutes, probably to do some of those things. But yeah, it was at that point

**P11:** So potentially, that was a big factor leading up to it. But by that point, she was healthy. I can't really think of anything outside of basketball and work that would have been contributing to it much

**P12:** Yeah, I would say, a few years ago, I felt like I was in a pretty high stress situation in terms of managing a lot of different things with my job

**P13:** Yeah, I would say, because technically, I'm doing two full time jobs, or I have been for the past eight years

**P14:** I don't think you can really take off a coach hat and put on a student hat or vice versa

**Code: Overloaded**

**P1:** I was so stressed I had 10 athletes' and 17 people total that I'm responsible for in a foreign country and then fast forward to Nationals where, you know, I'm sleep deprived, I'm under a lot of stress I'm trying to finish scouts, all while enjoying myself

**P4:** Because before that, the two years before that, I had been assistant coaching with name of coach at a university, and head coaching high school team. And so that was the year when it was like, okay, maybe I should just coach High School and, do that for a year and just do a little bit less. And I think the funny thing about that is, I found that now that people saw that I would be willing to do so much that it was like there were little things creeping in and like, name of PSO is like, hey do you want to do this? Do you want to run this? But I think that it's weird to think about that. And that experience with burnout and all the things that have happened since. I think the reality of coaching University and I guess like a bigger picture look on that is like you don't really get out of the season. Right? Every team I've ever coached, you get out of the season, and then you have some time and then you get into a new season. But it doesn't feel like that. And I found that to be a bit more arduous, I suppose. Right? where it's like, there doesn't seem to be this like hard reset. Where, okay, now we're done that year. Now I have my little break, and now we start again

**P4:** I've definitely been burnt out. I think the reality for me when I first got into coaching was that I said yes to everything

**P6:** Laughs, I mean, I would say, kind of like being maxed out

**P6:** It's like I am, I am maxed out

**P6:** Right. But I think that, yeah, again, it's just, it's just taking on too much

**P7:** So, yeah, I guess, I guess like last year that the burnout and stuff would be coming from all of like, the travel and just like the con like I have to be on for 24 hours when we're traveling. I can't take 12 teenage girls to name of city and not turn my brain off. Right. Like we did that last year, and taking teenage girls to name of city was utterly exhausting. It really put a whole new spin on what name of city looks like. So it

uh, it's, yeah, I mean, the emotional burnout for sure. With all things COVID. And their needs, and their unknown is really high right now.

**P8:** And so you know, between 2016 and 2018, I was doing my Masters, I was full time head coaching, I was helping with high performance athletes'. And I then stepped into a national team role, as well, also teaching, you know, at name of school for productivity class, and then constantly being asked to do certain things, just randomly throughout my community. And so I would say that it's just, it's usually a result of taking on too much all at the same time. And then kind of feeling like just suffocating myself with commitments, essentially

**P8:** Like there's all these things that you tell yourself to justify why you're so busy. And so then all of a sudden, one day you're looking at like your calendar, and I'm like, when was the last time that I had a day off? So you just kind of find yourself all of a sudden you're in quicksand, you know

**P9:** Which I know sounds terrible. I frequently have people in my life saying like, basically, you're going to get sick, you need to tell people No, you need to stop working every morning, every evening all day weekends. Because I'm a yes person. I'm just you know, I want to say yes to anyone who says pop by our gym and see what we're doing. So, you know, it's frustrating because I'm aware of it

**P9:** And as someone who's an introvert, that takes everything out of me. It is like, you know, to be on when I'm someone who doesn't want to be that way. That is a huge challenge. And then again, it impacts the people around me because the weekend hits and everyone wants to do something and I'm like, No, I don't want to like I can't be in a mall where all these people are like running around because to me that is like overwhelming, in a sense. So yeah, but it's a lot of just when it's time to not do something I've pretty much shut down

**P10:** But it was good at the end, because I learned so much. But I didn't have a break, I was just nonstop going

**P11:** So I'm trying to think of specific times that this has occurred, but I honestly just think that when workload is getting very heavy in terms of the amount of time spent on things I find when burnout is worst for me

**P11:** Is so obviously I have research was just completely separate from my coaching even though they're kind of on similar topics all the time. And then research gets really heavy, and coaching is really heavy timewise at the same time, I just feel like there aren't enough hours in the day sometimes I'm trying to think of like specific examples generally around playoff time

**P11:** So, I would have had two of them and a final presentation and seminar. I would have been working for name of supervisor actually at the time, too. So that is always a heavy workload

**P11:** So, and I believe we were getting ready for some conference presentations at that time as well. So, writing abstracts and getting slides together and stuff like that. And then I would have been assistant coaching with the provincial program at the time, which was just kind of starting up. And it was very new for me at the time, and very exciting. But I wanted to make sure I was doing it well. And I can add to that, that for myself, at the time I was in name of city, so I wasn't really in a central location. So something that would just be a two hour thing for an old person became an entire weekend for me, because I would have to travel name of other cities, wherever it was to stay in that place for name of provincial training program. I loved it

#### ***Code: Reflection***

**P4:** Well, I like I actually haven't thought about what I did in the last 5 years. I guess like to be frank, like, five years ago, I was still teaching high school. That was the year that I left name of university and just coached High School. And I think that's when, in a way, I really realized that maybe I was burnt out. And maybe I was doing too much

**P5:** And I just, it was everything was so much easier. It was just so I don't have to spend, you know, three hours on a scout that should only take me about half an hour for you know, an hour. So like I didn't experience it at the time that I was having those feelings. But it was more of a reflection probably afterwards for me

**P5:** Yeah, like I said before, I don't think I realized I was burnt out at the time

**P6:** Yeah, I, for me, it's just like, I think that you don't realize how intense your own season is, um, and that you need the break. And, you know, you also don't want to like, as I said, kind of before, you don't want to pass up an opportunity that you're being given to coach a national team, because of how much, you know, you get from that, and how, what a great experience, you know, it's going to be, etc,

**P11:** But I can definitely remember, sometimes I can remember one in particular, actually, around this time two years ago, that I was extremely burnt out. And I didn't realize it at the time

**P12:** And you can feel it, but I don't think for me, it wasn't until I stepped away and had some time to just like, sit and reflect and think about it that I realized probably how bad it was at the time

**P12:** So, you know, I'm not feeling healthy. And then, yeah, I think it's, I think it gets to it, it gets to a point where a season ends and you reflect on your season, you get feedback on what has happened that you remove yourself. So, I always say, perspective requires distance, right? And I don't I don't you don't realize it or how bad it was until you can remove yourself from that situation a little bit

**P13:** Um, you know, honestly, I don't think I've experienced ton a ton, except for probably, you know, when I when I reflect on it, and think back to maybe some behaviors or how you felt during a certain time

**Code: Relationships**

**P8:** Not always having healthy relationships, because people are like, we never see you

**P8:** And I'm like, Oh, I don't know where to fit you in. You know, and I moved away for work

**P8:** And I think one of the positives for me from that context was that, like, my family is not there all the time. So I kind of only get to see them when I have to make intentional time for them. But if I'd been living in the same city, I would never see them

**P13:** Um yeah, I think yeah, I think just your overall demeanor becomes a little bit different for sure

**Code: Say No**

**P6:** And then really not prioritizing

**P8:** And you balance you balance them out, but there's always something going on. So it's not necessarily that I was doing all of those things at the same time, but they were just all coming at me one at a time when the time. So that even though my athletes' are like, Oh, how was your summer break? And I'm like, there was no summer break. I was coaching a provincial team and then you know, oh, how is your you know, fall, you know, preseason, it was last time, like I was doing high performance stuff with, you know, name of PSO. So it's just an inability to say no, you know, that's a big part of it

**P8:** I think another part of it is just that you're gifted in this, this is a window of opportunity. This is a you know, like you can't let this pass you by this is a Career Builder for you

**Code: Self Care**

**P11:** And that was sort of at the end of year, one of my master's degree. And when I was head coaching name of development program, starting to coach with the provincial program, and still doing stuff at name of university, all at the same time. And that was to a point where like, daily things like I wasn't really exercising

**P12:** or try to take care of myself a bit better

**P12:** I'm hopping on a plane and flying here, there and everywhere to do this. So yeah, there was good, but it also took away from just me taking care of myself, I think

**Code: Sociocultural**

**P3:** I think it's just a socioeconomic thing for a lot of for a lot of first generations or newcomer groups. So that that is something that I kind of carry with me I probably think about it every day. But it's not something that I would say takes like a huge mental toll on me

**P3:** But I have said, as a woman of color 100%, there is an over policing of bodies like us, and it needs to be addressed. So that's kind of probably my biggest challenge.

**P8:** Um, I think there's, there's a lot of I don't think it's a simple thing, I think there's a lot of different layers to it

**P8:** I think that being a female coach

**P8:** I think being a woman of color, visible minority

**P9:** And all of a sudden, you know, you get up and you go to work. And right now at name of organization, I think I'm the only one other black person and we actually have a lot of black communities here. So yeah, so it's this weird of space of like, oh, here comes name of person like long pause with a sigh what do we say to her? And it's so I find that that's really strange

**P9:** And I've had I've been in so many situations where it was who wants to talk about diversity inclusion, and I sit there like, not me, anyone else because like, diversity, inclusion doesn't just mean black people. It's like, you know, race, religion, age demographic, like all those things. But yeah, so that's, that's been a huge change for me. So, you know, being on different panels and doing different workshops was something that I never did. And now it's like, all the time, it seems

**P9:** I think I can you know, manage that. And then, like I said, with, you know, ever since the murder situation of George Floyd, there's been a huge emphasis on having those conversations. And so, although it's not directed at COVID, I think there was the piece of you know, no one's going anywhere. So you're watching the news, you're watching, you know, laws change, you're watching you know, your social media content, and you're seeing all this stuff like in your face all the time

**Code: Somatic Effects**

**P1:** It was probably maybe my second or third year at university name, where it was the end of the season. And I just knew kind of like the athletes' when it's like exam time, you just know you're going to get sick. Right? And it's, it's not that like last week of playoffs, it's usually like two weeks after the season ends, and then like, a cold hits you and I, I hardly, if at all get sick. It's just endless season sickness. long pause I'm sorry, can you repeat the question?

**P1:** Yeah. I think um, the lack of sleep for sure. Like when you're in the thick of a season and you're traveling, the lack of sleep definitely catches up to you. So feeling tired constantly

**P1:** While that tournament was going on, we were hosting the a lower level league finals as well. So we spent a week up in the hotel that was right next to the facility. And I don't think I spent more than the five to seven hours that I slept at night in that hotel room. Because I was between preparing for our games, scouting for different games, and then recruiting at the other tournament. I was back and forth between the different gyms and the facility. So that was super stressful. I remember going home at night and, I learned this when I was in a foreign country it was the first time, I took the team on my own. So I was head coaching while coaches name was away with national team. And I would have heart palpitations. My heart would be racing, I couldn't sleep at night

**P2:** Like it's just getting, it's more and more and more right it just sucks more of your soul

**P2:** The whole time and not really feeling like, yeah, daily, things are hard

**P2:** You talked about like pain and stuff, like I just always have a sore back, I'm always tense

**P2:** It's the way that I've heard it called is ambient stress, you can't put your finger directly on it. But it's always there, right

**P5:** Yeah, physical fatigue, for sure

**P6:** And/or physically, you're just like you're tapped out

**P6:** But I just think it's like, then you're just kind of bogged down

**P6:** I mean, I would say, for sure, for me, when I've coached national team, which in the last five years, would have been when I coached the name of national team programs. I think that the, the challenge, first of all, when I coach the name of national team program, I hadn't actually returned to work yet after having a concussion, because I was still having symptoms. And so I had that. So my first like, going back to work, was me going to training camp, and then going to name of foreign country. So it's like a 31 day, you know, national team commitment, where you're really working 12/14 hour days, in a pretty intense environment. And then you come back from that, and it's not like you can take a break, because you've just taken a month away from your actual paid job. So as soon as you come back, you know, you're trying to make up for lost time. And, I do think that my, my concussion played a factor in it.

**P6:** And all I would be thinking of is like, when can I have that kind of next breath

**P8:** I think the one thing that I guess that I kind of have warning bells like physical warning bells, like I deal with migraines, and you know, just a few other type of like physical ailments that my body typically tells me when it's when it's happening. So I typically have whether it's getting sick like it was actually like a I would say a sinus infection kind of over the span of a few years where that was kind of where, okay, I know that I'm burnt out now

**P8:** And then I would have two and a half days where I was just sick. And my mom would just like, everyone would just have to wait. And, you know, it's just these things where it's just like, this has been my routine probably, for the last 11 years. So it's not unusual to be in this cycle

**P8:** And it's hard to look back and regret the way that you've done things because you are where you are, because of how hard you push through everything. But obviously, the cost is your own personal health

**P9:** And I can feel myself like having heart palpitations

**P10:** That kind of piece. So the withdrawal and then coming back. Kind of makes me miss it. I think the physical. I've definitely worn myself out when I was so tired.

**P10:** I'd probably like eat breakfast in the morning, if that and then not even again until night because I'm just going going going all day. So that's another piece

**P11:** when you were talking about seasonal colds and stuff like that , I've never really thought about it. But I do, probably more than the average person get seasonal cold

**P11:** I definitely wasn't eating enough

**P12:** Physical strain for sure

**Code: Support**

**P4:** Honestly, no. I guess, again, like my assistant coach would be the closest. I had an assistant coach last year and the relationship and I let him go. It was honestly a nightmare. I would say last year was very clouded by a lot of things that I dealt with, that he created. And it's made me a lot more guarded. I have always been a very like, upfront honest, blunt person who's like, yeah, this is who I am. And I'm unapologetic about it. And this stuff that happened last year really put some walls up for me. I'm just fighting to figure out what I want to do about those walls. But yes, I don't really call a lot of people. And the hard part is like I would say name of a coach was someone before. But now I play against him. A little trickier, and then maybe name of another coach. He and I are very, very close. So if something was to happen, I might call him about it

**P5:** But again, it's shared amongst all teams. So there's still a lot on us as individuals. And I think that led to some of those isolating feelings, which contributed to the ground as well

**P5:** Like we're one of the few bigger schools that we don't have full time assistant positions. So yeah, just things like that. But yeah, it's an intriguing, it's an intriguing piece to look at, that's for sure. That being said this year we got a ton of funding for for assistant coaches. Like our AD, has gone out of his way to support that, and, and our province, which has been really, really nice. But at the same time, it's, we still don't have that culture. And unfortunately, it compared to the US a bit where we value the role that assistant coaches play the same way we value head coaches. Yeah. And until we get to that, we're never going to have a desirable lineup of people wanting to be assistant coaches, right

**P5:** Yeah, like, and we just, we just don't have, like a culture of these are skill sets that assistant coaches should have. And these are skill sets that head coaches should have. And then the compatibility of the two makes a really strong coaching staff. Right now, we're asking everyone to develop head coaching qualities. And you're like, well, you have everyone in that boat, and we're missing out on a large amount of time that the athletes' could be learning from a different perspective, right

**Code: Time Off**

**P1:** So all while this I am scheduling this and working with my staff to execute these training camps. I get invited to go to the name of NBA team summer league. And so obviously, that summer is the summer of "Yes", I didn't say no to a lot of things

**P1:** I think at one point, I packed my bags for a 15 day trip. I flew from a provincial team name training camp to name of city for a week of training with name of NBA team. I flew to name of new city for a tournament. From new city, we drove to another city for another tournament. And then from the other city, we drove home. We had two days off. And then I had another training camp. So by the end of July, I can vividly remember because my cousin and his wife were like, let's go paddle boarding and there's this place in home city a cute beach where you can rent paddle boards and I'm a pretty active person so I was like yeah, let's go. But we got out on the water and I just laid on the board because I just couldn't move like I was so I was so exhausted both mentally physically

**P4:** Right? So for us, I think that was mid February last year, it was like, I really tried to take a week where I was like, I'm not coming into gym like you guys don't come in the gym. I'm not going in the gym. We need a little reset, but I think that'd be the closest that I felt since University

**P6:** To have a little bit of a break

**P6:** And the challenge is that as a U Sport coach, that next break is potentially December, which is not always a long break, but it there is a bit of a break there. But if you want to continue to do national team, you can't take that break in December, because you have to go to training camp in December. And so that was, like, that's why I really decided to not do national team, again, in that next cycle

**P6:** Because I'm like, I just I can't, like I can't look forward to wanting to be at that camp in December, because all I want is like a time when I'm not going to have to be kind of coaching. Right and and i think that it's it's a weird one with national team because of course, it's such a great privilege and like you're so you know, when you're in it, it's like, this is amazing, and, you know, the all the goosebumps you get when you're representing your country, and when your national anthem is playing, and it's all and working with elite level athletes' and staff, like it's awesome. But then at the same time, it is such it is there is a cost

associated with it, when you then go back to full time coaching and you know, you are responsible for your program, right, like I think, you know, so I think again, for me personally, it was the same like even so after 2013 that's when I stepped away from coaching provincial team. And so I coached provincial team for I think like eight summers in a row at that point. And it was the same thing because at that point, I had been the head coach at name of university for probably two years I'm gonna say and when you once you're a U Sport head coach and you're doing provincial team again, it's not that it's not great. It's just like, yeah, your vacation time? Is you coaching another team? So it's just hard because there's no break or breather. And it's not that you don't love it or enjoy it. It's just yeah, I think it for sure, for me anyway definitely led to being burnt out

**P6:** I yeah, I think, for sure, in the moment, it's like, I think that you think about, hey, I need to take time off. But then automatically you switch to, but I have to do this, and I have to do this, and I have to do this. And you know, and, you know, I've just been away for a month. So I can't miss another practice, or I can't you know what I mean? Like, it's just you start to like, basically justify the fact that you can't take the time off

**P6:** Like, it's like, all we can think about is, when is the next time that I can just be like, either in bed sleeping, or just like not focusing on anything

**P6:** Because I, I do think like that the fall becomes long, especially when you've come off coaching in the summer, another team? Because I think that, like I said to you about the one example with name of national team, like, it's like, all I could think of was like, I can't wait until I get to this December break. Right? Like, I just need to get myself there, which is not really a great thing to be thinking, you know, when you're going through, especially league games in November, right? Like that's a, that's a critical month. And then for sure, the December break is always a great reset, even if it's only a weeklong, although, like we did, yeah, it kind of varies these days. Not many teams play a Christmas anymore. But even if it's only a week, you know, because you've really had December without games. So even though you might be training while the girls are in exams, there aren't games. So it's just it's different. And then you get a bit of that breather, and then you come back I think that I think that when you then go into playoffs, I don't really feel I just think that it's like playoffs and end of season is a super stressful time anyway, because, well, we always have senior night, in your last like the games and senior night is just, it's extra, because it's other work that you're doing. And it's emotional for you and for the athletes', and then you get into playoffs. And then again, if you're doing Canada basketball, well, it's like you get into playoffs, you go to Nationals. And then now you have another a week long training camp with Canada basketball. So I for sure feel for the people that have been specifically in that situation, because I just think that it's such bad timing for U Sport coaches, because the training camps always come at the exact time that that's kind of when you need a bit of a reset

**P8:** And I find that I have nowhere to take a break

**P8:** So and it's just a perfect storm of all of those things kind of continuously happening

**P8:** um, no, I can tell when it's coming in. And I think a lot of it has to do with I start counting down the hours or the days until like, I have a day off or something

**P8:** And, you know, a few summers ago, like I typically have been, I've been coaching all year round for, for pretty much like the last decade

**P9:** But I definitely, reached the burnout phase where it was, I don't want to talk about basketball

**P9:** I don't want to play it

**P9:** I don't want to coach it

**P9:** I've reached a point where I did burn out to the point that I hated basketball

**P9:** Like I don't want anything to do with this

**P10:** Yeah, definitely. For sure. I think the withdrawal one I think you were talking about where it's just like, I don't want to see basketball. I don't want to talk about basketball. I don't want it. I don't want nothing to do with it for like a week or two weeks or whatever amount of time

**P10:** I think it's just like, the nonstop

**P10:** And if I have a break from name of university, I was like full force on name of pro team kind of thing. And then once that name of pro team was over, I was like, full force name of university duty. So yeah, it was like, I didn't really have a break. So that was what kind of led to those two major burnout

**P10:** But then you get away from it. And then it's just like, I miss it. Oh my gosh, I need to get back into it



**P12:** I was doing national team stuff. It helped in the sense of it was really great professional development, and I felt like the support there was a lot greater than potentially this the support that I was getting at my institution. So I enjoyed that piece of it, but then you're just doing so much more work. Right, like, I enjoy it. But then I'm gone for the time that I have off and I could decompress

**Sub Theme: Challenges Unique to Being a Young Female Coach**

**Code: Female Coaching Dynamics**

**P9:** Um, yeah, absolutely

**P14:** Yes

**P14:** I don't know. I don't know pressure is the right word. For me, I just think, you know, you're working with as an assistant coach, male head coaches, or athletic directors, or male coaches on other teams. So the power dynamic is a lot different

**P14:** And like, sometimes that's harder to say what you need to say and do what you need to do

**P14:** But to comment more about the female piece, it's something that I've learned and heard from other females who work here at the university that is not exempt to athletics. There are professionals who have been here for some time, who also feel like from a gender equity standpoint, things aren't there

**Code: Job Pressures**

**P3:** So I yeah, I guess my answer is I think some of being unique to being a female, I would say my first year, I definitely felt that there was a lot of just questioning of things and why would do things and I think just looking at things in a different perspective or a different light wasn't always met with a lot of like, acceptance. And I think it's also exacerbated by the fact that we are one of the oldest institutions in the country. And usually, it's just this is the way it's always been done

**P9:** I coached in both areas for three years. And it was like four hours every single night, every week, and I was occupied with one of the two teams. And it was so I could get that head coaching experience if for some reason I ever wanted to be the head coach at the next level

**P9:** So yeah, I certainly think there's, as females we have to do extra to say like, I'm Yes, this guy has been an assistant coach for eight years, but I've been assistant coach for eight years, I've been the head coach for four years at this high school. I'm coaching with the provincial program and coaching in the academies. I'm the assistant coach to the Canada games team. I'm working on my certification, like I am doing all these things just to get like an interview

**P12:** Yep, There's just a sense of trying to trying to do everything to prove yourself

**P12:** I definitely felt like long pause trying to think here, my relationships with my colleagues and or administration, like I had to do that much more to get their trust or respect

**P12:** and so I think all of those things just add to the pressure and the stress that that you feel, but there's definitely a sense of you trying to prove yourself

**P12:** and you're trying to do all these things, right

**P12:** And, you know, you feel like if you get one thing wrong, then you just on a shorter leash, I guess, then maybe your male counterparts who have been around for a few years longer than you for sure

**Sub Theme: COVID and Burnout Experiences**

**Code: Better Opportunity for Balance**

**P7:** So, I think now through COVID there's been lots of times to breathe

**P7:** because we're not traveling on the weekend. So I'm not going to school, you know, seven to five, Monday to Friday, and then traveling on the weekends. And then being expected to do that for you know, eight weeks straight or however many weeks in a row. So yeah, this year has been easier to balance obviously. But normal years. A little tricky

**P8:** And so people kind of see me in and out and then just like, oh, weren't done just you here or whatever. And they got the weekend off, but I'm doing something over here. And you know, they get that night off. But I've got something else over here. I'm coming from a zoom call straight to a practice. Yeah, so it's, it's a challenging year, for sure

**P10:** Um, for work life balance. I think for my work life balance, it's gotten better. It's not great during COVID

**P12:** in terms of prioritizing what's important to me

**Code: Burnout is Different**

**P2:** Trying to figure out the name of child stuff. I still feel burnt out. I think everybody's feeling it for different reasons. But I don't think it has made me feel more or less burnt out.

**P3:** So if this fall was exactly the same, but we had games, my stress levels would definitely be through the roof because now we're talking game planning that an extra 15 to 20 hours on the road. You know, even an away game at name of U Sport school, we're leaving at 12pm and we're back at 1am. So just the prospect of carrying that laptop with me that is a million years old and just shuts off at any sight of movement trying to get work done. The email correspondences with some of those stuff not related to coaching here at name of U Sport school. there's no way a lot of stuff would have got done if we were playing in a season. And my challenge this year is knowing, as of Tuesday, we found that our team wouldn't be able to play up against any outside competition. But that allows me now to say, Okay, this is my timeline from now until the spring or next fall, that I can start to delegate and really get things done from an infrastructure standpoint. So like I can focus more on this

**P5:** umm humm. I would say different for sure

**P9:** Changed forms for sure

**P11:** But I haven't experienced that. But yeah, I would say it's just kind of different feeling of exhaustion

**P14:** Like, I think that was the part that stood out to me. Yeah. And then I don't know if you are looking at anything COVID specific. But I think just during the last year alone, that's been a big, like burnout.

Correlation, I guess

**P14:** I think it's hard to say I think I've reached a higher level of burnout than I would in a season more often

**Code: Change to how Time is Spent**

**P8:** So I think that, um, you know, COVID has been the great reset button in some ways

**P8:** And so I've, I've now kind of reduced some of my workload

**P8:** And I have I can't just have the athletes' like in the past. I could say you know what, girls, this is just going to be a shooting individual today. You know where the machine is? Just pull the shooting machine out and you're good. Well, now I have to be on court with them all the time. **P8:** So this is the first year were COVID is kind of allowed me to take a step back and say, You know what, I don't need to be on court that day. So you know, girls, this is your second individual. We're going to cancel this one. We're gonna cancel this one. You'll be fine. Don't worry, we'll just have One per week

**P9:** It doesn't mean that it's quality time, it just means quantity, I see them more and they know I exist

**P9:** Yeah, just being at home. So I work at home right now. So the benefit there is, I'm around people that I want to spend time with, other than the fact that I'm sitting in kind of an office space. But you know, I can finish this meeting with you. And I can walk down the stairs and interact with the people that if I were sitting in the office, I wouldn't, I wouldn't see. Usually it would be, you know, go to the office and then walk across the street and go to name of university, and then come back at, you know, eight o'clock at night. So that element is different.

**P12:** COVID it's been really good for me. It's really just allowed me to take a step back

**P12:** allowed me to do a lot of that it's almost been like a reset

**P13:** Yeah, definitely. Evenly no with COVID and stuff. When you're forced to come to a complete halt? And you again, you look back and go, Oh, like, yeah, you know, probably was feeling a bit burnt out at that stage

**Code: Cognitive Effects Experienced During Burnout**

**P4:** So I think almost in COVID, I'm, I'm missing my escape, where it's like, oh, I can't go to the gym and do practice for four hours. And then I like to spend more time like thinking about that stuff. Or, like my partner is stuck in another country right now because they haven't deemed him as an essential service. So we don't know if he can come home. And yeah, so there's, there are other things, I would say that those things don't, contribute to my burnout. They don't make it better. They don't make it worse. They kind of just are a separate entity

**P4:** Because I've always been in programs where the kids spent all their time together, they party together, they eat together. You know what I mean? Like, there's just all together, and this program has not been like that. So it's a huge shift

**P6:** And it's awesome. And then we got into some training in person in the summer and the fall. So it's like, okay, like this is, you know, and then kind of the winter basically hits and especially here, I mean, we've basically been in lockdown since the middle of November 3rd week in November. And, like, it's just it's winter, right. So seasonal depression, you know, on top of, you know, not doing anything of what you

normally do slash what your job is really about. Yeah, I think it's just, everyone's just doing what they have to do to kind of get through right

**P7:** I think if we were to classify and scale burnout as a one to five, I've probably sat at like a three the max. Over the course of for sure the last two years. I think, if we think of this year and the burnout, it's definitely scaled back in terms of we can't travel. There's no games

**P7:** it's, it raises your anxiety and stress levels naturally

**P8:** Because I think that in the early parts of March and April, when it should have been extremely busy for myself, everything shut down. And I realized that I had to reevaluate the burnout is not the issue. The issue is how do I get to becoming burnt out? And like, Why do I keep adding things? And, like COVID, I had to kind of evaluate the decisions that I was making, why do I keep saying yes to this?

**P8:** And why do I feel like sitting at home is just like, ridiculous, like, I just have to keep busy or whatever. So it kind of forced me to have to deal with some of those, I would say deeper issues of validation or requiring success to validate, you know, what I'm doing or the roles that I have. And it's not that I wasn't aware of those things. I think you keep busy so that you don't have to deal with them. So that's, that's been pretty easy to stay busy

**P10:** I think it's um, I don't know, actually. Because this job is so completely different than just being an assistant. Right? So you you're doing a lot more but I guess I could really compare it to my second year where I was coaching with the 905 coaching with UofT and coaching with the national team. I was so busy, like there was no break. But so the difference is I think this is more of an emotional burnout as opposed to a physical burnout the other that other year, I had a lot going on

**P11:** And this is we're actually having this discussion after practice today with the athletic therapist, and name of coach, I'm, like, I'm not doing anything all day, I just sit and I'm on zoom, or I'm typing or something. But I just feel exhausted at the end of the day. And before it was like, you wake up, you go to work, whatever school you go practice. And then I don't know, maybe I go for dinner and have a drink with a friend or something and then have another practice or God knows what, but I always felt energized. But I think that just sitting still all day exhausts me

**P14:** And like that kind of comparative piece as well. Yeah. So I think that within the last year specifically adds to that, like more opportunity to hit that exhaustion piece, and then you're more exhausted anyways, from related to coaching

**P14:** You might feel some of those symptoms from other mental health or well being

#### ***Code: Development & Leadership Opportunities***

**P3:** So the good thing is from a strictly coaching standpoint, it's been easier. Early on, there was a lot of red tape, girls couldn't use the locker rooms. But as we were able to prove that we could sustain some of these healthy practices and safe practices. It's been good. And even up Tuesday, when we were informed that we wouldn't be able to play it's like keeping things in perspective right? There teams right now in this province that have only eight players, they couldn't intersquad scrimmage if they wanted to

**P3:** But what was interesting is that we selected a Leadership Council, which, we've never done. And we started placing those players in a position where they can work on their leadership development

**P5:** And I think it's been undervalued, I would say, by our university, and I think most universities, because I think if they understood that true value, they would have probably let us train on court in a safe manner a little bit more. But again, like everything COVID related, its people sitting at a table that don't have their hand directly and whatever they're making a decision on. So, I get the I get the challenge with that, too

**P5:** You know like at the beginning, I jumped on every coaching clinic I watched them all I took notes, I did all that and then you know, we're getting more and more into it, and you're like, Man, this could be like another year and a half until I use this so you kind of said hey, like maybe I should focus on the other stuff. So maybe not just the technical tactical. So that was probably one up and down trend. I'd say the virtual piece

**P6:** So I think that that's made it it's made it harder. It's just like, and I think that, you know, in the spring in the summer, and even the fall, for that matter in the spring in the summer. First of all, there was so much time for PD, it was awesome, like sharing of information, you know, you kind of really had time to dig in and to learn and grow

**P8** And I think, you know, from my personality perspective, like I noticed this over COVID that, like I'm literally leading in every in everything that I'm involved in

**P8:** And even if I join a different group, as a non leader, it doesn't take very long for me to all of a sudden be leading something like it's kind of crazy how that happens. And so, you know, I started volunteering over COVID and it's actually kind of the most life affirming part of COVID for me now

**P12:** Think when I talk about like reading and listening and just personal professional development

**Code: Job Pressures During COVID**

**P4:** Honestly, like? Yeah, there's so many kids who are like, I don't have any video for the last year, or I don't have any games for the last year. And then the other thing that I'm now super wary of is that I just don't know that video is truly indicative like I want to see a kid in the flesh I want to shake their hand and like, spend 20 minutes with them and like, really figure out where they would fit in our program, and it's a big emotional investment for me right to bring someone into the program. And so all we've done is sign kids that I know. We signed one from name of city, who I knew, and then three from name of city, who we like I had trained with and all those things, because it was the safe landing zone. Right and like to be fair, like, they're all good kids. They're all gonna be U Sport caliber. So it's not like we were like, really pulling but yeah, it's I've gotten a lot of stuff. Like I even got a message from name of another coach. And he was like, hey, this kid was supposed to go here. And then it didn't work out. Like, would you look at her? And I'm like, I look at her video. And I'm like, I don't know, man. Just the perspective for me is so difficult. And maybe in, in a way, it's my lack of experience. And then on top of that, COVID

**P8:** And so that in itself is hard, especially during COVID, where you're like, I have to think about people's health

**P8:** And I have to think about, okay, well, this person says, she's not feeling good, I need to then deal with that, you know, like, we have all this extra paperwork

**P8:** I feel like there's this expectation that you should be able to make every COVID call

**P8:** You know, instead of having like an organic kind of group of people together, you can kind of let things flow, it's like every minute has to be planned, every breakout room has to be planned. And I find that, you know, prep for zoom calls, it is way more extensive than getting ready for an in person meeting. So just making sure that I give myself time to prep for that

**P9:** again, going back to that female side of things where you feel a little bit pressure to do a little bit more like I can probably do another hour of work

**P9:** The athletes' want to be on court, but I can't bring all the athletes' from around the province together can only be within regions. So how do I run like high performance program for Canada games core group when they can't even be in the same space together? run it for the kids in name of city. Like that's not fair. Do I travel around, but all of a sudden, I drive to name of city five hours from here and there'd be like two players, my driving all the way to name of city for two players like, so it's just Yeah, the creativity piece. That's the part where I'm like, I can't like I'm so used to knowing what is next like provincial team tryouts provincial championships, the name of tournament, nationals, like I know, and to not have that. It's like, you know, everyone's looking at me as a technical director to be like name of person. Now what? And that's one thing that that really bothered me. Because when you look at our organization, there's just myself and the ED. Well, the ED doesn't deliver programming. So it's, it's me, like, if there's nothing that I'm doing, then the organization is not doing anything

**P10:** Because you're on your computer all day. I wouldn't even I didn't even expect to be working too much. COVID we're not going into the office, and I find myself wanting to go to the office way more because I feel like I do more work at home

**P11:** But if it weren't for that, I would think that or at least I've heard a lot of people say that their work demands have increased, or that the stress of work has increased, and they're expected to be more productive even because everyone knows that no one's doing anything

**P14:** like there's clinics every hour of the day, if you wanted them. There's like lots of pressure to join those clinics or

**P14:** feeling as if someone is doing more work than you

**Code: Limited Capacity**

**P7:** So my girls right now they're super high needs

**P8:** And someone's like, Oh, you know, there's this whole time I said, You know what, like, I, I caught one of them. And it was great. But I just can't, you know, one term that they're talking a lot about is working memory for athletes' right now. And when you talk about your working memory, and once an athlete kind of hits their threshold, they can't retain anything more

**P8:** And I feel like as coaches, we kind of have this working memory of like, how much more can I give? Or how much time Can I spend thinking about the game or learning about the game? And, you know, having to kind of have a threshold, like once I hit this threshold, then I'm done

**P8:** You know. And I know even for high performance, like, I don't delegate very well. And I think COVID is kind of exasperated that a little bit where it's just been hard to, like, well, what can I give to other people right now because I have to be there for this

**Code: Motivation**

**P1:** Yeah, it's like reverse burnout. Well, I remember we used to talk with our athletes' about optimal performance. And it's kind of like a parabola. Right? So the peak of the parabola is like when your performance is the highest, so your stimulus and motivation is the highest, or you're sorry, it's your arousal level. If you're like under stimulated you're lower on the parabola if you're overstimulated, your performance drops as well, because your emotions are out of whack, and you can't control them. And so I think, in COVID terms, and how this relates to this parabola is we're on the lower end of the stimulus, because we're not playing games we're not training at all right now. And so I know I've gone through this personally, and I still struggle with it now. But you have bouts of the motivation what I do today?

**P3:** The next closest family friend would be my assistant coach in his family and, of course with the bubbles and all those rules. So that was probably in my in my coaching career the most challenging time. I think if I was able to get in the gym, once or twice a week, it would have helped me mentally and physically

**P4:** And I'll be honest, even with COVID I found that with the type of training we had, and how repetitive and simplistic it was, I was burnt out from that. To the point where I'm burnt out when I'm like, Yeah, I don't really want to go to practice today

**P4:** That in a period of like stress, like this, that at some point, you go from being like super resilient, you know, like, hey, I'm up at eight still, and I make breakfast and I'm working out and I'm killing my life. Like, you go from that to being like, Why? What's the point? Right, like, I've done it, I did it right. And I didn't get that like, trophy or that like pat on the back or you know what I really wanted which was to get back in the gym. I think that it's been a total roller coaster

**P4:** And I found by the end of the summer that it was like, an absolute chore for me to collect the videos from the kids and to get because it just like, it wasn't fun for them anymore

**P4:** So I was like planning, I'm not doing anything until we get some information. Right. And I would rather scramble plan, then have that like, let down

**P7:** You're always all in on one thing or all in another thing. And, and, like people like us who thrive in that chaotic lifestyle where you're always go, go, go, go go. For it to be like, taken away from us this year is really hard to. It's hard to it's hard to function, right? Like you just always want to be learning and doing something. And so it's like, when we're forced to stop, it's like, now I have almost no motivation to get going again sometimes, right? So and I'm not as efficient with my time

**P7:** I'm a huge procrastinator as it is so now that you give me all these hours to do something. I'm going to take all of those hours to do nothing. And then the last 30 minutes or crush it out

**P9:** Its the creative piece, too, right? Like, I think, when all this started, everyone had some creative juices flowing

**Code: Online Opportunities**

**P3:** So, if we have like a really good organizational leader, but she's not good at providing constructive criticism, each day, their role would change. We have a stat tracker. So whatever workout you're doing, it's supposed to be filled in once a week. So their job is to remind, we had a relationship builder. In the course each week, at some point, just have to do an informal check in with one of their players. So that was kind of cool. We did a 21 day Leadership Challenge. So we're engaging a lot on zoom and by phone. And then actually from based on the input from the athletes', I think July onwards, we kind of just shut it down so that there wasn't an overload, but I would say consistently about three times a week. Once a week, the whole team met, twice a week it would be the coaches and the players. So one was players only, one was coaches and players, and then we did a third with just that leadership group

**P5:** We did coffee with coach, they could jump online if they wanted to talk chat, nothing formal, we're not talking X's and O's not doing any training. And then we did some workout and some yoga stuff. But again, it was all optional

**P5:** I don't know about all provinces, but certainly in Western Canada, we're the only province that university sport has been grouped into the rec decisions. So we really haven't been in the gym we've been

in the gym two months of the last 10. So for us has been a bit disappointing that way and because we did a really good job in the summer putting together proposals of how to keep the athletes' safe. And minimum targets for time in the gym. Maximum targets, and then we had no cases when we started training September, October, and then our province wasn't doing very well. And we got we got hit with that again to code read where we're back to all online and they haven't been in the gym since November 1. So it's been tough. I did virtual and as we are we're back doing virtual now. But I totally got rid of it in December when they were doing exams and just trying to get through a really tough holiday, we did do really informal stuff

**P5:** So, if they were feeling burnt out by being on a screen, they didn't have to be there

**P8:** And so, like, I would say that a lot of people are like, Oh, man, I feel so refreshed after COVID, I'm like, I will likely be way more burnt out after COVID than a lot of other people simply because I have a full in person life because of how things are in name of province, and I'm on court multiple, like nine times a week with my team and on weekends with high performance kids. And then all of my peers who are name of other provinces, that are just sitting at home, I have a full zoom life of meetings and sessions and that kind of thing

**P8:** You know, and so, because I find that, like, I've led a lot of zoom calls as well. And leading zoom meetings, is exhausting

**P9:** And I'm not sure that COVID necessarily slowed everything down. Because all it did was just make everyone significantly more accessible

**P9:** And now, you know, when you're going into another year, and I'm sitting here, like, I don't know, like I brought in every guest speaker I could think of no one wants to do zoom calls anymore

**P10:** But the most thing I guess the biggest piece was when we were doing the our virtual camp like it was like a nonstop and I was doing things from like, eight in the morning until like, one o'clock in the morning like for like two weeks straight

***Code: Overloaded***

**P3:** And that actually worked out well, because again, I did feel like there was just a lot going on. I would certainly say with COVID, and not having games, that was a huge stress reliever as well.

**P9:** when it comes to you know, you can meet any time anybody and all of a sudden it's like, you know, fill your calendar

**P9:** So between that, obviously, COVID as a whole thing

**P10:** So, I could say the latest one for me, because COVID has been very challenging, especially because you have so much more work to do than you would imagine

**P13:** or you realize how much you were doing

**P14:** So I think I would have gotten to the same point anyways because I find that happens. But I think in the last year, I find myself maybe getting there more often. Just with the number of things going on

***Code: Policing***

**P3:** I would say COVID has definitely led to an over policing

**P3:** So I was genuinely concerned about that. It certainly took a toll on me as a person of color and as a coach. And coming into campus, we actually had an RCMP presence. And that was met with a lot of grievance

**P3:** And then, as a sport coach, even in our practices and our workouts, like, athletics has been under a microscope, because of these anxieties around contact tracing and exposure. And again, going back to the whole, fact that, we're actually full on in classes, so but there's rules around how many people you can have, you know, Coach doesn't need a mask on court, but as soon as are on the sidelines. So it's a general over policing. But what I believe and what I've experienced is through this, the people who are just treated are people like that look like me, the athletes' that are that are racialized

**P3:** And we certainly have seen that, like we've had caretakers, file a report and say that we're moving desks in a classroom, which was totally untrue, so there, there definitely been incidents and the difference between an anonymous report, because I saw someone on women's basketball wearing a mask like this, created a totally gotcha culture that I think all of athletics has felt it

**P8:** and restrictions

***Code: Self Care***

**P8:** Because I don't lead, I just go and they tell me what to do. And I interact with people, and I enjoy it. And then I leave. And sometimes I leave before it's finished. And I feel bad for doing that. But I have

something else to go to. And I'm like, and it's so I realized that I've had very few of those things in my life where I'm not in charge

**P12:** when we get back into you know what we're doing and when things are going to go crazy again and I think it's easy for me to say all these things right now the hard part is obviously once we get going and what that looks like but yeah, in terms of just my mindset, I felt like I've been able to reset a little bit and really utilize that time to do some stuff for myself

**P12:** how to make it's not big changes it's for me it's really small changes but important changes

**Code: Somatic Effects**

**P3:** But I wasn't even like I didn't even exercise for a stretch, I put on a bunch of weight. And it was all tied to the fact that I couldn't just jump from my office and go in the gym and rebound or shoot myself or stuff like that

**P10:** And like I was done after that as like, well, very little sleep, nonstop on your computer staring at it

**P11:** I find, like, I just feel tired all the time

**Code: Support**

**P2:** Yes, sometimes COVID has made that much more challenging, not seeing the coaching staff regularly, those are usually the people that you're jamming it out with

**P3:** From an actual coaching standpoint and the prospect of being on the floor. The most difficult time for me has been COVID because I'm 30 I'm single, I am a person of color in a predominantly white area, and I didn't go home during that COVID stretch. So from March to pretty much August I didn't see anyone I was just in my home

**P3:** And it's something that was foreshadowed it's been foreshadowed in some, some academic journals and media words, and we experienced it here at name of U Sport school. Our team in three years has gone from the whitest team to the most diverse team on campus, percentage wise. And one of my concerns coming in was not having appropriate supports to mental health and wellness or just general practitioners for people of color considering the last year, which COVID and with the racial and justices that were really popularized in the media and so forth

**P4:** and especially obviously, here in COVID it's like I said, I say to them, like every day, "Hey, guys, I just miss you. Like I just miss you

**P5:** And just the psychological safety of athletes' is extremely overwhelming because you kind of go, I go, I go back and forth between, it's I'm not the only person. But in reality, we might be the only person that they see every day. Or we see what they see once a week or whatever it may be. So that's been extremely daunting

**P5:** I feel that it mostly worked but at the same time I think it put athletes' who when they struggle, they tend to go internal it put them at an opportunity to do that even further

**Code: Team Culture**

**P3:** I think team building wise from a coaching perspective, has been kind of tough. But fortunately, again, with the numbers that allow for us to do stuff on the court, that's how I get more in. I mean, I have more issues in the summertime with not being able to practice, because you could only have six people

**P3:** We've got team building, we've got academic study hall, we've got classroom sessions, we've got individuals, we've got a strength conditioning coach that's involved. You've got study spaces on campus, you've got off court stuff you can do with your friends. So I think just in that light, you know, I told the girls, I said, Look, would you trade all of this that you're getting since September, what you're gonna get till April for maybe four or five games, and they were like, no. So in that case, it's like thank god COVID hasn't taken away those opportunities. I don't know where I would be right now, if I couldn't be with other people, just being so far removed from home, and investing a lot in my job here as an instructor in human kinetics and, and a basketball coach

**P3:** We did we actually use it to kind of hone in on some of our culture stuff. And we were really young. So that was a great opportunity

**P4:** I can tell there are a few individuals who are trying, one of our captains is, but the hard part is like two of my leadership kids are graduating. So they're a little on the checkout side. No judgement. For me It's just the reality of the fact that I'm a I'm a fourth year kid. This was supposed to be my fifth year and I am leaving now. Like, right and, when is next year? Yeah, really, we're in the zone right now to transition over. So it's, it's been tricky too, I ask them a lot to think about doing things. We have a kid have an ACL surgery on Monday and I mentioned to a few of them. I'm like, yeah, you guys should like put together like

a little gift basket. That'd be really sweet. Like, if I do it, it's like, oh, I just do it all for them, like the mom who does everything

**P4:** In the summer, we did a lot of just stuff. Because to be frank, we were just in such a place of like, is this really going to cancel our season? So we did a lot of like team bonding stuff and like activities, and we did some video

**P4:** The beginning, it was like, oh, yeah, we're gonna do this. It's so cool. So since then, we got shut down again in December. And I have not been a huge user of, zoom or Google Meets or anything, because I just don't, I don't see a point based on how the kids were responding, you know, I can tell they want to spend time together. But you know, like I even said, we had a meeting on Wednesday with our academic advisor, and, and the girls were like, hey, does anyone want to go skating? And I'm like, yeah, you guys can do that. I can't take part. That part where it's like, I've always been the organizer for them. I've always been the one who like creates all of the things and then we go and do it. And now they're, I think in a place where it's like, they'd like to spend time. We have a good leadership group. I just think they're not long pause They're not super, like, socially minded. It's, it's a real shift to our program

**P5:** So, we're back to doing a bit more structure and I don't know if it's any better I don't think anyone will know until you know five years down the road and research on it right?

**Code: Uncertainty**

**P2:** I don't have to plan practice. But I think just in general, the pandemic, there's so much uncertainty and knowing that these girls are being affected that part is exhausting

**P2:** That's where parents don't necessarily know but they don't know they don't know. And so there's going to be a lot of pressure when we do start to go back That's where again, being in school helps in some ways, because I can always say that's above my head. Like you've chosen school programs, we are, you know, governed as such. But we have recommendations, even name of league when they're talking about getting into some exhibition or whatnot, I in my head, I'm like, we need a month of just team stuff to be able to build up to even scrimmaging and that organizing bodies has released that to coaches, here's our recommendations for what it's going to look like, physically, mentally, and people are going to be in such different spots. So helping athletes' that are having a crisis of confidence, there's gonna be a lot that goes into it. And I just don't know what it's gonna look like. But again, that's where I think I'm confident enough and knowledgeable enough. And I think my strength is working through that. The part that becomes hard is what they're doing outside of school, right? There's certain things I can't control

**P2:** This is a slower pace. It scares the heck out of me to think about next year and going back to doing all of it at full speed. I just can't even fathom what it's going to look like because we've had so much time to now be a family that's going to be a big, big change

**P4:** Like I said, like we were in the gym this summer, but only able to do small group training. And that got old, right so at the beginning, it was so exciting. We were just like thank you we have gym time. And then it went from like, ok, can we do anything but played three on three, we just want to play more and then you know, in the fall to not be able to play any games, and there were all these conversations like, oh, we're gonna play it, we're gonna set up a game with name of university, we're going to do this, we're going to do that. And for that to never happen, became frustrating. So I think what I've learned, I guess through COVID, about burnout is just that, you know, it's that constant, like hoping for something and then never getting it

**P4:** I don't really know what is going to happen. It's like, are we ever gonna get to talk about basketball again. I kind of feel some days like that's not gonna happen, but I miss seeing your faces" and yeah, just getting to talk to them

**P4:** I feel like I haven't been doing it long enough. For me, like really have gotten like settled in anything, right? Like this is supposed to be my second year of U Sport. And I am like, I have no idea what next year, it's gonna be like my first year

**P4:** Yeah, I think that. I've talked to other coaches, and they're like, oh, like, I'm gonna throw out my plans now for February. I never planned because it's like an emotional thing for me, where if I plan it, and I have to throw it is very hard

**P5:** It's also the psychological effects it has and the age that our athletes' are at half of them are making these decisions of can I go out, can I have this person over? Can I you know, get together with my group for class on their own like they're, they're not with parents and then half of them are with parents and their parents have different jobs that have different philosophies, and it's just like, do whatever you need to do.



We're here, this is what we're gonna provide. But we are really taking a backseat on, like telling you how to live your life

**P6:** Because you because there's no games, nothing going on, like you almost automatically. I'm gonna say only not always right, but like, you just don't work the hours that you would normally be working. Right. I think that the other side is that, like, you're getting no contact with your athletes', like, in person, you have no answers for your athletes' in terms of like the unknown

**P6:** Again, I'm a pretty like, type a super organized plan ahead kind of person. And, and you can't with COVID, like I, you know, make maybe our lockdown will be finished on February 22. Maybe it won't? I don't know. And, you know, and then I don't know how long it'll take for us to progress through the colors. So I don't know, when my team, like, my team hasn't played basketball in a full calendar year. And I don't know when they're going to be able to play legit basketball, like five on five with defense

**P7:** Because they, I mean, you think of COVID and all this stuff, everyone's just on edge, right? So I don't know if your study is going to have anything to do with kind of COVID and all of its effects on people and athletes' and coaches. But, um, I think that since everyone's not, it's everyone's just trying to figure out the day to day and getting through and just the whole unknown

**P7:** They have a million questions a day. And they're questions that I can't answer. Coach, when we're gonna have a game. Coach, when is this gonna be over? Coach, what is next year look like? Coach, my dad and my mom need to know this for next year. They need to know like this, because if I'm not going to get that, then I'm not going to come back to edge because it's so expensive. Those kind of things. So I think the burnout right now is coming from all of those needs and the answers of the questions that I just don't have

**P7:** And it's like, well, I don't know. Because this is a weird year. I can't go out and recruit because there's no spring or club season. There's there's none of that there wasn't any last year either. So I actually don't know how we grew as much as we did. It was just it was just really good word of mouth. And we won a bunch of tournaments and people like winning programs. So I think that definitely helped. But yeah, the pressure would be how are you going to grow your program for next year? What's your plan? And it's like, okay, I don't know yet. But I'll hopefully figure that out by May

#### **Sub Theme: External Influences**

##### ***Code: Cognitive Challenges***

**P3:** Since I've been here name of U Sport school, there's two kind of periods that I went through my first year, I was involved in, in an investigation in which a young woman accused me of coercing her to work herself out too hard. And it took three months probably should have taken 48 hours. And the result of that was like it took a big mental and emotional toll on me because I wasn't believed even after we had done an investigation initially and after done a thorough one that was put on the back burner.

**P8:** Not during COVID. I was I was teaching an activities class. So they decided to cancel that for right now. You know, and I think that if everything's going well, you're not thinking about burning out. I think that in years where I was dealing with some very challenging athletes'

**P12:** Yeah, cuz I mean, you're, you're trying to you're at work, however many hours a day, when you go home from work, you bring your work home with you. And then you know, you have maybe one day off, if that. So, you're just you're not spending the time. And when you are physically present, you're mentally not there

##### ***Code: Job Pressures***

**P2:** I think where I grew is people know what they are getting who we are attracting now we are a more nofrills program, but people are coming to us kind of knowing what we are not having to recruit that much and in terms of job performance The truth is we're still competitive I don't know if we are ever going to beat the big the big money programs. I don't know because we can't pay to bring in talent necessarily, but we're still up there. National team. I mean, I think they would have fired me but it was also just time to step away anyway so I think there was peace there and I still feel like I can be connected if and when I want to. I'm still super on board with it and love connecting you know, the IPPs and the TAS piece with my athletes'. So, I don't feel job performance from the lake you're gonna get fired. Because they can't fire me, I guess

**P3:** Certainly funding is one of them. And we're a program that when I had stepped in, had really underperformed and it was in a bad financial state. And there have not been much support at all in terms of addressing that gap. But the criteria for, like, our fundraising objective is the same as our super successful hockey team, or super successful men's basketball coach that has a Booster Club that's 40 years old. And

you know, where we have none. We have very minimal if any funding for assistant coaches. So I've pretty much had to be a jack of all trades because of that. Every other team has had, if not in longevity and tradition, a lot more experienced in the space. Graduates, thereby alumni who support

**P4:** But between you and I like the pressure to win a name of university is much higher. There are very, very blunt expectations about, what this program needs to be, versus what it has been

**P5:** I don't think it was a direct, like, explicit, standard. And I think when you're in university sport environment, you're constantly comparing yourself to other teams on your campus or other teams in your league. So those would definitely be one, especially when you're, you're trying not to put a year on it.

**P5:** I say, in terms of the mentality that I started the job with, you kind of have a timeline of things you want to accomplish, and you kind of create benchmarks for yourself and or they're created for you with expectations at the job. And then when you're not accomplishing them, it kind of adds to that and you start spinning your wheels a bit in the sense of what should I change? What should I not

**P5:** But everyone talks about, you know, what's your five year plan? Or what's your, you know, what's your seasonal plan, and there's there we're expected to kind of have these the same, the same the expectations we put on our athletes', but the athletes' have five years and they're done. Whereas sometimes we could be stuck in that stuff, but it's like 25 years. So it's trying to refocus that a little bit every year. So that would be like a little more implicit, I guess. Yeah, I think that that's probably a big one too for me, I was in the environment and still am where I think 80% of our coaches have been here for 20 Five plus years, and they just seem to have it figured out right

**P6:** But I do think that job performance is probably the biggest one for me

**P6:** You know, and yes, is there a way more in my first couple years at name of university when I'm trying to turn that program around? You know, or even in my first couple years at name of university, trying to turn this program around

**P6:** Yeah, for sure. It's way more, but it's, it's like nothing else. Once you turn the program around? Well, now you want to be, you know, a consistent championship contender, right. And then once you do that, like, there's just always your, there's always something else that you're kind of putting that pressure on. And, you know, specifically, of course, in name of province, like recruiting in name of province is insane, right, like the number, again, outside of COVID of how much basketball is going on, on a daily basis every single weekend, you know, within, you know, especially in name of province. I mean, you could have four people working for you, and you wouldn't be covering all of the games

**P7:** So literally the only stress in my life is stuff that comes from coaching. The maybe a little bit of pressure in terms of from the school just being like, Okay, how are you going to build your program? How are you going to grow it? Last year, we had eight girls and the eight, nine girls in the program. This year, we grew the program to 13. So it's like, Hey, how are you going to build it again for the next year?

**P8:** And so, you know, there were, like, I think over the last, you know, 11 years that I've been at name of school, the worst burnout times, were also when I was struggling the most with my job. I won't even say performance, but just with my job security. And so then it just everything was exasperated, because I'm like, if I don't do this, I'm going to lose my job. And if I don't handle this, I'm going to lose my job

**P8:** And the unfortunate part with how he did things is that he would do anonymous parents and athletes' surveys. And then I would be called into his office where he would let me know the worst parts of those surveys. So he would say, yeah, you know, there's some positive things as well. But, you know, these are, you know, three comments, and I'm like, well, how many people answered it? Well, there was like, 26. But, you know, these are the three that were dealing with. So it was just like a constant. Like, just this high anxiety with performance reviews, and there was a span of, I think, something like three or four years where I went through between six and eight official performance reviews

**P8:** And so literally, like, almost every half year, it like, I could feel it, it was building up, because I'm like, Okay, I know what's coming. You know? And then if it was a good review, you know, there would be this moment of Okay, like, I'm, I've turned the corner, this is going well, and then you know, the reaction? Or the response would be well, you know, they don't know you well enough yet. So I'm, we're going to do another one in five months to see if the responses are different. And I'd be like, Oh, my goodness, like, what do I need to do here? So I would say that that was a really dark time

**P8:** For me. The burnout, part of it was just the fear of, Okay, well, I have another review coming up, and I have to be a different coach over the next like four to six months. And so every interaction became

stressful, because I'm like, if this athlete doesn't feel this, this, this or this, based on the last response, then I know what their parents gonna say, or I know what they're gonna say

**P8:** It's very much associated with all these other things that are kind of happening. And I would say job performance, but not even job performance. But I would say, you know, job review

**P8:** in challenging financial times

**P8:** and challenging, like when you're turning a program around, you know, that was one of the bigger factors of how I was treating people was that our program wasn't turning around fast enough for some people

**P9:** And so I think over the course of a year, it can, it can be really fine. Like after nationals, usually I'm good. And then all of a sudden, we start ramping back up into fall programming, and it's like, and in the last five years, we've had two staff members leave

**P9:** Certainly that piece, obviously, that that role requirement

**P9:** And obviously, working in a non for profit, it's not like someone says, here's an extra large chunk of change to do this for the next six months. It's been almost a year now, since our operations manager left, and then COVID happened. And it was like, here, here's everything that that he's doing, or that he did

**P9:** I'm really flattered that I would be asked, but then at the same time, there's this piece where I look at my calendar, and I see three things in a week where I'm the educator of something that I've already known about, I've already personally experienced, and now I have to go in and talk to people that would have never seen it, they don't even talk to me about basketball, they just go to that direction

**P9:** And I'm like, I'm actually the technical director, I'm a basketball person. I don't have the background, in it other than I live it (talking about the racial injustices)

**P9:** And so you know, there are certainly some other influences, financially trying to figure out student debt

**P10:** um, I think, this year, in terms of the virtual, I think, the external in terms of administration and like, performing and then my having to be perfect, like, if things aren't perfect, like, it gets irritating to me

**P10:** So I think those things also attributed to my burnout, especially because I'm a new coach, new head coach. So I want to prove myself

**P10:** I want to make sure I'm doing everything right. Nothing can go wrong. You know, like, those kinds of things are kind of going through my head even to this day, sometimes. So Yeah

**P12:** For sure, I think. Like, I think Canada super interesting, because some schools are really rich, and some schools aren't rich at all. And when you're in a situation where you don't have a lot of money, you have to do a lot of things, external things to try to generate revenue

**P12:** And so, you're running, you know, you're coaching your youth sport team and that takes up all this time, but then you're trying to run Junior programs you're trying to do as many different fundraising opportunities

**P12:** As well as just the program support. So, in a new, relatively new program, you don't have a lot of alumni associated with your program. So, I've been in prob, like, I'm in a program right now that has a ton of alumni support. So, I can see how that helps. And dating back to the time that I'm thinking about, there weren't a lot of alumni around because we were a completely new program

**P14:** I don't have any family that are dependents, so not that piece. Definitely in terms of like work and finances, as a coach, especially if you're an assistant, primarily, like a grad assistant or whatever, you don't get the finances for most positions, you're going to work full time or more than full time hours, and you can't live off of that salary

**P14:** So that's a huge challenge is balancing where you can get your income from to live and the work you're putting into coaching. Yeah, so it would, it would be great if those were the same thing, but they're not

#### ***Code: Multiple Hats***

**P8:** And so to go from three wins to five wins to seven wins over the span of like four or five years. And then being told you should be at a championship level already. Like so then I'm like, Well, I'm for sure not taking time off now. Because, you know, my jobs on the line, and I have to do like two years worth of work in the span of one season. And whether that's like, whether that was actually real or not, that's what I understood my situation as, and so I just started working harder and longer hours and doing more and getting more done. And obviously, there was a big cost to that. But I still have a job, I guess

**P9:** So, you know, I'm always appreciative and always take the time to acknowledge the people that could easily make my life worse by saying I'm not going to help you, and you're doing this to yourself, and that

could push me aside. I do so many things outside of basketball. So I help with the name of organization on some on some diversity and inclusion pieces there. I do some mentorship pieces as well

**P12:** like you might have your Sunday's your only day off, or you traveled that morning. And then it's like, Okay, I got to go to the gym and do this Junior program, and I need to facilitate this fundraising thing. And, yeah, I think that that plays a huge part of just additional things that you have to do

**Code: Relationships**

**P1:** I know, my partner gets annoyed just because I'm like, I have to text a recruit or, you know, something, something like that. So I know, he gets a little annoyed

**P1:** The good outweighs the bad, but those definitely contribute both positively and negatively to, to the burnout. I would say my partner has been really helpful in terms of like, even just like helping me forget about you know, the stressors of work and something as simple as I have a game and he just leaves me alone until after and messages me like, hey, how did it go? Or if he's in town I'll have dinner ready, whenever you get home, so having someone that's understanding of my lifestyle, definitely helped mitigate the burnout

**P2:** and challenging to a relationship

**P4:** Like after we lose a game? It's so dumb. I will get just in a really like, negative, frustrated place where I'm, especially if it was in within like five points, right? I'm just like, name of partner, for sure has been like, yeah, like, I don't really want to hang out with you. I don't know, I think I've always kind of been like that

**P5:** Yeah, my entire life, I find social situations are really hard. At that point, when I'm tired, and in the sense of when I get any free time the last thing I feel like I want to do is go and hang out with friends or go out and do something

**P5:** But again, my husband is a very social person and him making me do that it kind of it didn't mask it, but it did allow me to have a comparison of I now have a really better understanding of ok, this is actually time where I need it to myself versus I need to force myself to get into the social situation to get out of my own head and, and interact with people from different walks of life. Because this job it hits you, you can get into it and you can get lost in it and your value can be shifted to where it becomes associated with your job and it shouldn't, right?

**P6:** So then everything outside of that, for sure, say in personal relationships

**P6:** Yeah. So I think that for me, in general, for sure. Like, I'm single right now. But like, in general, anytime, you know, if you're in a relationship, I think that the pull, of course, from them is to spend more time with them. You know, and it's never a matter of not wanting to I'm gonna say not wanting to I think it's more just, you know, then prioritizing and finding that time for it

**P8:** that definitely contributed to it, because it was a constant stress of? Well, to be honest, it was a really challenging relationship with my supervisor

**P8:** And so I'm single, there's reasons for that im sure (laughing). It's not, I would say that the way that I coach is not necessarily conducive to, you know, to relationships from that, from that perspective. And that's something that I've, like, I've, I've come to terms with as well, it's like, if, if those are things that I want to value, then this it doesn't like something would have to give, right

**P8:** versus really making them a priority at times

**P8:** But I would say that, you know, I get the text from my mom, every once in a while, you know, we haven't heard from you and in a few weeks or something like that. So yeah, I would say that, you know, then you end up trying to fit your family and friends into the small little gaps

**P8:** You know, I tend to be involved in my community a little bit more. But it's just really hard to do that all together at the same time

**P8:** And then my friends and family get what's left over

**P9:** Yeah, the people closest to me that, that hurts me all the time. It's things like, I can't go and visit them just any time

**P9:** So that's the biggest thing and obviously my own health, but it's the people that that are closest to me that are impacted the most

**P10:** Um, I would say a little bit because you're, you're so focused on your job, you're not paying as much attention to your loved ones, or friends. So I think definitely is a big piece too, a big portion of getting affected during this time, for sure

**P11:** So, I definitely am somebody that when I get down this rabbit hole, we'll call it. I think that selfcare and relationships are kind of the first thing to go out the window to me.

**P11:** And it's really sad. But I feel like with burnout it just long pause every single day, at least in my experience, you're like, oh, well, just this one time, I'm gonna skip out on going to dinner with my friends, because I need to get my work done. And then it ends up being every day. Like, it's just Oh, just one more time, I'm gonna do this. And eventually, it's like, I'm not spending any time with friends or family or doing anything else. And it's probably just a vicious, toxic circle

**P11:** And I think it might be the opposite in terms of my other relationships. So, like romantic relationships, friendships, family, I think I am. I think I'm being engaged and inclusive and spending quality time with people when in fact, I always look back after or talk to people after and find is quite the opposite

**P12:** Oh, for sure. My relationships

**P12:** So, I know my relationship with my partner was strained

**P12:** Um, so my, I would say there was a huge strain on my, my relationship with my partner at home

**Code: Sociocultural**

**P9:** that's a whole other element that all of a sudden, I became the go to black person to help educate the entire province, which has pros and cons

**P9:** obviously, and all the racial justice issues going on

**Code: Support**

**P3:** So less to do with like the on-court coaching and more to do with the power dynamics. So that was by far from a coaching perspective, the most toiling taxing, and I was in a dark place because I've never been accused of anything as horrendous as that in all my years of coaching. So it's a little disappointing with racial undertones in it for sure. Our administration, I've never really gone through that before and had to address it. And then we got and then it was kind of like this victim blaming thing when it came down to putting out what actually happened. So that's still something that I struggle with now

**P5:** And then when you don't have this support system, like we in the sense of somebody else doing or having a job, within the program that's invested in the same way you are, it gets, it seems extremely isolating at times, right? So like no full time assistant coaches, we're just starting to get a full time support staff around us

**P12:** So, you just don't have those people who want to come in or have the time to come in and help out as much as they can. So, you're just taking on all of these things. And try to make them all work and it weighs you down after a while

**Code: Time Off**

**P4:** The universities I found that, at name of university, our AD had been a coach for a long time. And so when my season ended, he was basically like, don't come in the office. I don't care if I see you for four months. And I think that was a very, like, freeing feeling where it's like, oh, my God, I can really take the amount of time that I need, whatever that ends up being to reset. Before the next season. I did not feel like that at name of university. It felt like there was like, you know, a slight understanding for taking a week off at work. And then it was like, Yeah, like you got to fix this, you got to fix this thing that is broken. And you don't have a lot of time to do it. So you could take a week. But if you take more than a week, there's just no option for that

**P7:** Um, I think maybe the best and more like, well, I usually kind of shut up, shut them out. And it's not like it's just if they reach out to me cool. But like, I would not necessarily be like, hey, do you want to go do this today? If I'm in that state, I just kind of like thinking on the weekends, I'll just take me time. But it's not like I wouldn't respond to a text or a phone call. It's not like that. It's just, I'm not being the extrovert in that sense. So yeah, that's probably the main thing that that happens

**Code: Work Family Balance**

**P1:** I think family for sure, both sides of that

**P1:** But at the same time family can be a stressor. Not in general but more like birthdays or weddings if they in the middle of the season. I was like, coaches name, I'm so sorry. I'm in a bind, I don't know what to do. So there can be stressors like that, because of the same familial expectations and then not understanding I can't just take a sick day. I don't have a job that's like 95, long pause You're going to take a sick day during the playoff game like I: laugh; laugh understanding of that this is unheard of We laugh because it's absurd, right. But to them they don't get it. Most of my family's in the health care profession. So they're just like you have sick days, you take sick days.

**P1:** But I actually find my family recharging that way. Because they don't know the intricacies of a sports team necessarily. They are sports fans. I can actually recall last year, right before nationals going over to my cousin's house and playing with her kids and making snowmen and it was a situation where I didn't have the energy for it to be building them and then running around with a four year old and a two year old. But it was like reenergizing. I didn't have to think about basketball, I didn't have to talk about recruiting or scouting or anything like that. So in a lot of ways it's, it's helpful

**P2:** to be balancing both and it didn't always go well

**P2:** It dose, I think it's become so important to me, because of things that happened throughout work are challenging for the family

**P4:** And so I find that like, we've had some stuff happen, like we have a property in name of a city and a bit of a nightmare. I haven't found that to be something that's like, really affected me in my coaching world

**P7:** I don't have kids, I'm not in a relationship. So it's not like there's any type of that kind of outside stress

**P9:** And, something as simple as I move back in with my parents for a year and a half to pay off student debt. Well, I'm now living with my parents and whether we want to talk about it or not, like, that's a whole different ballgame. And they're awesome and I love them for it. But you know, you don't have that personal space as much as you'd be used to so yeah there's a lot

**P9:** My brother and his girlfriend live 40 minutes from here and if we do any sort of family event, sorry, I can't make it. I have friends that have kids that I would help drive around if ever they needed anything, or if they're playing a basketball game. It's like, sorry, I can't go and watch because I'm over here. And that stuff bothers me because those people are all in it when I need something

**P9:** And then when they're doing things, and I have to say I can't I have this tonight, like even tomorrow night, usually I do a cultural night here. And we hold it at our house and the name of a group hosts this virtual cultural night. And so my friends come over and they bring their kids and we do whatever it is, whether it's beading or whatnot, and all of a sudden, I have meetings, filling my calendar, and I'm like, I can't make it tonight. someone puts something in my calendar, and I'm supposed to play TV bingo with my grandmother and have dinner like I do every Wednesday. And then it's like, oh, sorry, I can't. And so that, to me is like, these are the people and the moments that I'm sacrificing for, for this right for preventing, and that hurts me

**P10:** Yes. I think if I was like married or something, it wouldn't be as easy. But yeah, . I: yeah. And I some of the coasts I'm talking to are married, some have kids. And I feel like that just adds a whole nother layer. Yeah

**P11:** I did. I don't tend to think there was too much external my so obviously this is all confidential my mother was quite sick with cancer, right before that time

**P12:** And I just wasn't seeing family or spending the time that I needed to with those people

#### **Sub Theme: Internal Factors**

##### **Code: Internalize things**

**P2:** And I want that because it's been a contentious issue with my partner, it's sort of trying not to have it be a thing, right. So, it's more I'm actually trying to like not have it seeping in, which then takes more emotional energy, because I probably would want to talk about it

**P6:** Like I absolutely, I would say struggle with perfectionism. You know, I mean, I want to be perfect at everything that I do. And even in terms of, like, how I view myself, I want to be perfect, which is really so unrealistic

**P6:** And but then so then I think then that leads to like that negative self talk, right? And that no matter what, nothing is ever enough, right? Which I am working on. And it is a process. But yeah, and I just think that that makes it hard because I think that if that's what the bar is like that's what you that's what you work yourself into his burnout

**P11:** Yeah, at the time I was, although I was working for name of supervisor, and I was still a student. So, I think that a lot of it was probably internal. And probably a lot of it was me wanting to do my best, and probably maybe a part of burnout thinking that I wasn't doing my best when I was

**P11:** Good question as well. I'm trying to think specifically. I think that this is gonna sound weird. I think probably in my head, I'm freaking out thinking I'm not doing a good job

**P11:** Um, definitely. And I would think that that's probably the flip side, I think, in maybe professional settings, or coaching settings, I think I'm doing poorly, but I'm actually gonna be doing well

**P13:** I think it's for me, it's like completely internal, like expectations on myself on my team. You know, things that I think I need to be doing or achieving, certainly not from an external pressure point of view. It's like completely internally generated

**P13:** But I wouldn't say it was anything overt or anything that I felt where it's like, oh, because I'm a woman, I need to blah blah, or I feel higher expectations. I think, for me, it's just, again, a little bit more of like a perfectionism. And more something I put on myself then feeling it from anywhere else

## Appendix C: Quotation List: Theme: Management

*Table 3: Summary of the Sub-Themes and codes within the theme Management*

Sub-Theme	Code
Within Coaching	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be Open</li> <li>2. Compartmentalization</li> </ol>
Self-Care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accountability</li> <li>2. Awareness</li> <li>3. Change in use of time</li> <li>4. Choose how to Spend Your Time</li> <li>5. Cognitive Management</li> <li>6. Compartmentalize</li> <li>7. Creative Problem Solving</li> <li>8. Delegation is Important</li> <li>9. Enjoyable Activities Away from Coaching</li> <li>10. Family</li> <li>11. Flow &amp; Balance</li> <li>12. Habits</li> <li>13. Journaling &amp; Note Taking</li> <li>14. Mentors</li> <li>15. Motivation</li> <li>16. Physical Activity</li> <li>17. Planning</li> <li>18. Positive Feelings</li> <li>19. Priorities &amp; Being Present</li> <li>20. Relationships</li> <li>21. Restoration &amp; Reflection</li> <li>22. Routines</li> <li>23. Self-Care</li> <li>24. Step Away</li> <li>25. Support</li> <li>26. Talking</li> <li>27. Time Off</li> </ol>

**Sub Theme: Within Coaching**

***Code: Be Open***

**P1:** And so yes, yes, she's a great, great author. Great speaker. But yeah, that scene became more apparent after we hosted nationals because we didn't realize a lot of people were like, kind of building these emotions and then we kind of imploded the week before nationals. So I think even sometimes telling the athletes' 'man I'm tired today but here I am'. I think sometimes being in that, you know, situation of being vulnerable and just explaining, hey, this is where I'm at, but let them know, I'm aware of it, but I'm trying to change it. And I think sometimes even that shared experience helps you persevere

***Code: Compartmentalization***

**P5:** But in terms of like, the technical tactical, that piece for me I don't really associate it with the difficult part of the job. I enjoy that piece. If I only had to coach every day for two hours I'd be I'd be loving life so that I find that after reflecting on it I was pretty good at and maybe it maybe it's not good. Just separating the basketball from the personal side. Like I think if you were to ask an athlete that graduated, you know, four years ago from my program, they probably didn't know me, as well as the athletes' that know me now. So yeah, it's probably that



**Sub Theme: Self-Care****Code: Accountability**

**P8:** And that was the code word, like after a practice, I'd be like, was my tone sharp today. And they'd be like, Ah, you know, you really didn't have to get after that little point there. Like it was just so then I was like, okay, like that, that was kind of, you know, having people around me to hold me accountable

**P8:** I have friends All the time, you need a day off. And I'm like, that's not helpful. Like, I know that. I just need you to hold me accountable when it's negatively impacting other people

**P8:** So I think that accountability often comes from people who understand your situation a little bit more in depth, like, I don't take, I don't take time off, well, I would say. You know, I've never taken time off, well, like, I would typically take four days off, you know, a year kind of thing, like in it, like you could look at my whole calendar. And there was never more than like four or five days off in a row. Because of all the things that I was doing. But that's also, like, that's what I felt that I needed. And so I would go visit a friend out of town for a few days, and then just be like, okay, like, I feel better, and then kind of get back into it

**P11:** Yes, this is going to sound really bad. But I, I guess I've got through it. Because as you said, I'm still coaching and I'm absolutely loving it, like now. But especially when I think back to that one instance, that it was very bad. I don't really know that I did. Use any strategy to get out of it. I think that everything ended at once. So, I think that the summer season kind of ended my master's work slowed down. So, it was all of the external things. Now had, I did also I had a couple of really good friends. I had a lab mate, I don't know how often you talk to name of supervisors but my lab mate name of person, and I know you're probably not going to write this in your thesis. He was really great for on the research side of things. Basically, like not locking me out of the lab, but being like go home

**P12:** And it almost gives you feedback on what you're doing or an accountability piece, because like, I find that reading, something's great, right?

**P12:** Yah, I know. We were I was in a day my mental health first aid the other week, and one of the coaches was like, hey, like we're supposed to be, you know, these kind of frontline people for our athletes' and, you know, be able to be prepared to help them or know what to do in certain situations. But like, Who's checking in on us? Like, if we're not good, you know? And I'm like, Yeah, that's great point. So it's, it's all about doing these things for the athletes', but what are we doing to make sure that We're okay. And we're checking in on ourselves

**Code: Awareness**

**P1:** The other thing I've been doing more recently is reading or reading in the morning and in the evening. I'm reading a book right now on emotional intelligence. And I'm trying to put those practices into fruition. So one of one of the strategies that mentions is being aware of the emotion. So, burnout, or stress can present in anxiety or fear. And so one is being aware of that emotion when it presents and then two, is being able to like sit with it. And so sitting with it can look like journaling, it can look like literally sitting there and breathing. But the reflection of it is noticing where you are, after you've sat with it for some time. So you remember when you're angry, and you're a kid, you and your parents tell you like count to 10? It's a real strategy, let the moment pass, and then see where you are. Are you still fuming mad? Or has that dropped a little bit? And so I think those strategies are a bit newer to me. So I can't say that they've helped me in real life yet, but reading about it and understanding that it is a strategy, I think intrigued me and it helps me feel more confident and competent to handle moments like that. Just with the knowledge alone

**P2:** Would you think at some point I would have moved on from and I have awareness around it and I'm working on it but doesn't mean it Not there

**P2:** And then like I said, the biggest changes that I've made that are helping manage it are going, like we talked to the athletes' about and mental performance. Awareness is one thing but can you do it without self judgment

**P8:** I don't know, there's probably a few things. I think that I mean, I'm an, I'm an extrovert, but yet I have, I'm not I'm a very like slight extrovert, I would say when it comes to sometimes I wonder that if did I have to make myself an extrovert to be the leader that I needed to be. But I think through learning my personality type better. You know, it was very helpful to do Myers Briggs actually, and kind of have my, like, I'm an ESTJ, and so knowing what things exhausts me

**P8:** helped me to not like if I can avoid certain situations, then I do. I can recognize certain situations faster than other things. But then I also know when I need to do other things

**P8:** I don't know. I don't know how well I respond to educational tools about burnout. You know, like, I think that I mean, self awareness. I think self awareness is a big part of it

**P12:** Yeah. I'm thinking like, this is so out there. But like, because your phone and apps are like such a, that's what everybody's on. It's like, Is there some kind of tracker?

**P12:** Or like, if whatever the research presents, it's like, okay, like, tracking your sleep, or like, you know, if if reading is important to you, or journaling is important to you, or whatever it may be some kind of like, Yeah, I did it, you know, this is what I did, or you can track it

**P12:** It's like, even what I just said about COVID. It's been awesome. Like, I feel like I've like, you know, had time to do all this. But then what really matters is what I actually do when you're in those busy times, right? And so it's like, Is there something that you could have to like, track or hold you accountable or give you immediate feedback as to what you are really doing? Right?

**P14:** So I think that helps kind of keep it in check when I may not like I may be struggling mentally or with my personal well being and how that comes on to the court. So that helps, I think keeping it in check as well  
*Code: Change in use of Time*

**P2:** So I think there's been some good things, but yes, it has. I've overcompensated I think when it comes to my family, the teaching part, I've treaded lightly, I've realized that I'm going to be able to keep doing this, it has to blend into my teaching, or else I'm not gonna be able to do it

**P2:** But it's also brought some good things like I have set boundaries. I'm not on my phone or my email late into the night, Im better at unplugging at times and not feeling bad about it. I'm not going to answer an email on a Sunday or something

**P2:** Because such a big piece of I think I'm a good teacher, but my legacy at name of school is going to be this program and the impact that it's made on these people. And so bridging that and making it actually a part of the curricular time has helped and I figured out some other ways to try and lighten my load. So there's been good and bad's from it in each three parts of my life coaching teaching family

**P5:** And I've also gotten a lot out of like being more effective at the administrative side of stuff

**P5:** But def different on a lesser level for me personally. Um, I mean, like, I'm pregnant right now. So being pregnant during COVID is awesome. Yeah, you're at home, you can kind of you know, I can lie down on the couch when I need to. So that's been really nice. That's been a huge silver lining

**P5:** And then there's going to be times where, especially this year, a little bit, we felt it more than ever, there's gonna be times really like, okay, I could probably be doing a little bit more here when we, you know, like, and you're constantly thinking about how you can fill your time a bit, but it's given us the opportunity to say hey these are things that I actually really enjoy outside of my job that I know that I can now come back to when I need when I need that time away. So that's been a shift, probably my mentality

**P6:** Yeah, I mean, I will say personally. I mean, it's been a great reset, in general because there's no way around it. Like, I've never had this many weekends off. I've never had this many evenings at home where I can cook my own dinner like, I've just I've never been home this much in my life, really. So on that side, in terms of like, let's just say work life balance. Yeah, I mean, it's been good in that area

**P13:** And then COVID actually, coincidentally enough, or ironically enough, has forced me or allowed me to have a little more balance in this last year. So that's been really, really good. I think. Without COVID, I think I probably would have hit a wall. But the timing was timing was good

*Code: Choose How to Spend Your Time*

**P1:** I do less things

**P2:** And I still kind of in that and more and more. I'm choosing my own kids rather than video now. COVID has exacerbate all this. So it's hard for me to tell

**P3:** And you always know, once a year, you're gonna have to have that talk with administration. And I've been fortunate enough, I guess, to have administration that really supports our output into the community helping to grow the game. But no, and everything has kind of been in alignment with what my job is anyway. So provincial organization it's in a roundabout way tied to my recruitment, or my professional development as a coach

**P4:** And I always found coaching as a bit of an escape, right?

**P4:** And the nice thing I think about my job is I still go and then I still have fun, because I get around the people. But I think that I am also not the kind of person who's like super, super, super obsessive. I'm not going to spend hours and hours and hours just doing my job, for fun. I need time away, I need non basketball time

**P5:** And I think when you have a family to either choose to shift some of your focus or you don't. And you're gonna feel the efforts of that. And it, I come back to choices where I choose to put time into family or my relationships

**P5:** But performance wise, because so many of the prep programs that are out there are businesses. Like this is what people do. Whereas I'm like, cut in three and not a paid employee with full time employees. You know how like, name of prep program has name of coach as figurehead they have their coaching staff, they have got their video staff, they have got their strength and conditioning staff. While we are not doing that and so there is this idea like our branding probably not as good as theirs. There are so many things where I'm picking and choosing now

**P8:** And so I feel like in the last four or five years, I have gotten better at making time for myself and for my family and for my friends and learning how to say no

**P9:** just to make sure that I'm, because I realized that with COVID, kind of, you know, the end of COVID coming up, people are gonna want to press like, okay, full speed now. Yeah. And I'm just like I am, I'm going to be tired going into that, if I'm not careful with how I spend the next few months. And so I am trying to say no, to some things

**P11:** And literally, if you take a night to yourself right now and watch a movie or something that works so gonna be here tomorrow

**P11:** or watch a movie

**P12:** So it took a summer to really kind of reset me and get me doing those things that I know I need to do to just be a better person to everybody around me

**P12:** right, just something where I'm away. Time to myself

**P12:** and I feel like I've Yeah, I've gotten some exercise in and it's almost like as much as it is exercise. It's just like getting away, doing something for myself and then coming back

**P13:** And that's usually my time just to clear my head. You know, maybe plan, practice, maybe reflect on stuff, but just not having anyone around

**P13:** I'm, I'm a pretty I rate pretty high as an introvert. So being around a lot of people I find very, you know, draining. And so just having that alone time is really important to me. Yeah, even in the evenings coming back from practice, or whatever, just kind of having that decompression time. Not having to talk very much for a little while

***Code: Cognitive Management***

**P1:** And the athletes' are, are under more stress, so we're under more stress and trying to keep them happy

**P2:** but also being able to be compassionate to ourselves here

**P2:** So, if I can be aware of how I'm feeling, so that's one thing that's an emotion, be aware of it and be like, okay, this is where I'm at. But I can still control where my focus is

**P4:** And then I have to get myself out of the negative nelly mindset. But that would be the most

**P4:** And, and I'm, I think I just have a super positive perspective on the world, I've always been that way. I'm like the eternal optimist. So I think maybe that colors everything

**P6:** And so I think that again, I will be honest, I don't think I deal with it great. I think that I am I have we always joke my brother and I that like I think in our family, it is just like it's you put your head down and you get it done and don't complain. You know, and that's kind Just the way to do it, not the healthy way, but I'm just saying that that is kind of what we do

**P12:** And I really dug into spending some time with my mentor to try to help me through some of the stresses and, and what that looks like, and how I can better manage it

**P12:** And I think that when I'm in season, I don't read because I film and this and that. But it's like, you need to take a little bit of time, even if it's like 10 or 15 minutes to do that. And I think that that helps me. Headspace app. I've played with that a little bit. But by no means am I consistent with using it

**P12:** Its not for me too. So that's why it's like I'm I'm open to trying things I just I don't know what that is. And that's probably a relaxation thing is something that I can probably be a bit more I could use a bit more I just don't think about those things really

**P14:** In terms of understanding some of the coping research, very poor, definitely some avoidance coping for sure. So I don't know if I, I don't think I do a good job at it

***Code: Compartmentalize***

**P2:** Now, I find the way that I compensate for it is not talking about it much. When I'm home I'm trying to compartmentalize it

**P3:** I think that's something I learned this year, because it's all very new. Fortunately, with our name of city based organization, we have a team. So it's very easy for me to separate that from what I do, certainly with starting a not for profit organization, a national one that that has really kept me more busier than usual

**P4:** I think that one thing that I got from playing was a really good grasp of like, compartmentalizing. So it's like, there's things that happen in basketball, and then there's the rest of my life

**P4:** but I try to compartmentalize

**P5:** So, like, that's helped. Yeah, and then it's interesting what like the one, the one piece that I had not expected was, when I went back to work. For the first time with my first in daycare. It was the first time I ever came home from work, and I didn't think about it (work), it was like, it doesn't matter. So that was that was a huge one. I was like, extremely thankful for it. Because I didn't realize how much mental capacity thinking about the job after you know, work hours, because we don't really have work hours was consuming, like my mental health a bit

**P6:** But I think that personally, I usually do a good job of compartmentalizing. When I'm actually coaching, it's, it's everything outside of that, right

**P7:** Yeah, it's tough. Like I do think some days I'm much better at compartmentalizing then than others, it will depend on how many probably negative conversations I've had in the day leading up for how many like things I've had to deal with going into practice

**P11:** But just anything I think to separate myself from tasks that involve basketball and research would be helpful. Yeah, those would be the two big ones blocking out time and leaning on people probably

**P12:** Especially in this profession, like from September to march. It I don't know, it's just, it's, it's busy. And you're going to spend more time at work. But I think if you can really work for me if I can really work on, okay, when I'm at work, I'm at work, and I'm utilizing the time that I have here. And when I leave work, I'm leaving work

***Code: Delegation is Important***

**P1:** I can't tell you because we haven't had it. But what I have learned, and I learned this during my time as an assistant, was just the power and the importance of delegation

**P1:** So there are a lot of things as I speak to travel because I think travel is probably the most stressful time as a coach because you're not just X's and O's, you're managing people timelines, logistics, like when you're going to eat, how you're going to get there when you like, who's picking you up costs and all those types of things right. So I think each year got easier because I got better at delegating things to managers. We made like different documents they could just follow or I had one manager in particular, she'd been with me for like, three years. So I had a lot of trust in her. So that I could do that. And then now as a head coach, I'm hyper aware of it, and I tell my staff all the time, I can't do this by myself. And I would be stupid to think that I'm going to doing this by myself, I need you guys. I need your help. So I let them know that and I try to delegate where I can, like I said, to offset some of my stresses, and then I don't have to carry that burden with me

**P2:** Staying with what I know. It is not my strength, but I delegate more, I just don't have time. It's like name of assistant coach I trust you. You're in charge of social media. And okay name of another assistant coach I need these clips for video session. So its given more opportunity to people

**P2:** I brought on somebody to kind of do our social media because I just don't have the skills

**P4:** But my hope is that I can do a better job of delegating, like I now have my assistant coach, and I don't know that I really use him as well as I should

**P5:** And to be really honest with you, I only really got assistant coaches that were invested in the program for the program sake two years ago, before it was coaches that wanted to help me but maybe they weren't invested in the program to the same depth, because they had other jobs and family, whatever it was. And, again, that's a reflection point now being like, oh, that actually makes a big difference. Like, if you have, you can kind of leave entities of your program with them, and they take care of them. It takes a takes a chunk off your plate right now

**P10:** Um, I've been okay. I think I've done a very good job in delegating

***Code: Enjoyable Activities Away from Coaching***

**P1:** Yeah I've always had a desire to travel and I've learned over the years pause in terms of like being committed to basketball, like, you have to find a way to like, marry the two. Not to say that it's impossible to go on vacation to somewhere warm on an off week where you're not doing basketball, but it's kind of how I've worked around that urge to travel

**P1:** And even encouraging other activities. Like a couple of my athletes like to draw and paint so they use that as like a creative outlet

**P6:** I definitely do read as well, I'm not sure that I would say that, like cuz I go back and forth with what I read. And so I think that especially in when I'm saying more in active burnout, I think that reading for me then needs to be more for pleasure, and not like leadership or coaching kind of books. Because I think that then that's just like another work type of thing. Although I do you know, read those books when I'm, I'm gonna say not stressed or not in that kind of place. I mean, like, besides that, I would say like, just like spending time with family or friends

**P7:** in terms of dogs. I don't have one. But I feel like they are my stress reliever. So I go find dogs when I need dog time

**P7:** And then once I get home, I think I'm really fortunate like to live on my own. And I can control everything so that I don't have to come home and then answer questions and deal with someone else at home too. So I just I turn my brain off by, I love cooking, so I'll cook some type of big meal. That helps

**P8:** I mean, I play piano

**P8:** listening to music, that kind of thing

**P8:** crosswords, Sudoku

**P9:** The cultural night piece again, it's a virtual piece, because we can't be in person with the large groups in terms of connecting with people across the province. So that's been something where it's also educational, and I'm trying something new

**P9:** And honestly, like, my brother, and I played video games growing up, so I went and bought a Nintendo Switch, which is hilarious. My brother's like, what are you doing is like, I just want to play Mario Kart, like, I don't want to talk to anyone, like, this is what I'm doing. So that's been fun

**P9:** Some photography

**P12:** Yeah I think reading is something that I'm trying to do more of

**Code: Creative Problem Solving**

**P2:** So like, it's also allowed me to be very creative and my problem solving

**Code: Family**

**P2:** I want my kids to know that they're my first priority

**P3:** I think I've been really lucky to have my volunteer assistant coach that moved up here at the same time as I did. And we see eye to eye on a lot of things, not everything, but a lot of things. And honestly, if it wasn't for me being able to physically go to their house and play with their kids. I treat them like they're my kids, like, I just love them

**P3:** But I see how busy it is his way of life also as a faculty member, but that has been a great just like a place where I can go and relieve some of my stress just from playing with the kids. Sometimes it's just like watching movies, would walk to game, getting a nice home cooked meal that has probably done so much for me like more than I can probably express

**P5:** Yeah, I had a really great conversation with name of a coach. I want to say, that would have been my second year university coaching. And she like she had two kids. And you know, she's coached for a long time now retired, but and she was very adamant about the comparison of, well, my husband doesn't bring the kids to the boardroom. So why would I bring them to the gym. And for me, it was a great perspective, because of how much she treated coaching like a profession. But it was also she had a husband that was in a different line of work, right? He so the balance was there, like the kids felt the balance that way, whereas, because my husband's kind of in the same world, like he's a phys ed teacher, high school, he coaches a lot. He wants to coach at a high level. We've kind of said it's more about not necessarily wanting them to be basketball players or wanting the kids to grow up around sport, but it's understanding that mom and dad aren't defined by you guys, you guys are you can do whatever you want. You can be a musician, and we'll be just as happy for you

**P9:** Very exciting. Um, what do I do? So like I said, on Wednesday nights, I've been playing bingo with my grandmother, and you know, one of my friends and my mom for the last year, like TV Bingo. So I, I really do try to make that a priority of like, this is this is, you know, maybe it's only an hour to two hours, but it is the time to connect with them

**Code: Flow & Balance**

**P1:** And name of coach has always been like a great model but also a great advocate for work life flow. She didn't call it balance but called it flow. So there's always going to be busy parts, but it's like how do you

mitigate the tougher parts. And you do that by, we'd be in the office, it'd be like six o'clock and she's like, well, I'm wrapping up and leaving. So you should leave to laughing, like, yeah, I am almost done here. And so like seeing her model that I think helped me. I) be okay with like knowing like, hey, it is okay to you know, turn the computer off and go home and work on it tomorrow

**P1:** And I think the way that translated in the following season, which would have been my last season at Name of U Sport team was, I started having shorter workdays. I'd come in maybe 10, or 11. And, and then stay until whenever practice was finished. And, you know, some days, I would tell her, like, hey, coaches name I'm not coming in, I have a doctor's appointment or, you know, something like, and it, it became easier to kind of take care of myself that way I: nodding. And sometimes it would just be like, I'm just working from home and, and she was understanding of that. And again, I think that made things easier for me and made this season a lot more effortless. Because we would make another nationals run, and I definitely felt more recharged and prepared

**P1:** I mean, I think the first couple years you don't know what to expect, you're just like, I'm gonna work really, really hard. And I was commuting at the time to Toronto, so I was like, I'm going to show up at seven in the morning and, stay till, you know, 10 o'clock at night. And then you realize, I can't do this, like, if I do this all through the month of January and February, I'm gonna die, I'm gonna kill myself trying to maintain this schedule. I think it can be cyclical, because like I talked about before, in terms of flow, we know, January and February are the toughest, because we play every weekend. We have less sunlight

**P4:** And that's something that I really work to find balance between. So yes burnout is a real thing in my life

**P5:** In the sense that, because of the nature of our jobs, there's going to be times where there's absolutely no balance at all

**P5:** I, first of all, I don't, I don't believe that there is one, I think that's really helped

**P7:** I find that balance. I don't know, I don't know how I find balance. I think if you asked me, I think I'm okay at balancing it

**P7:** And maybe if you asked other people in my life, I'm probably awful at balancing it. I like sorry, I love being totally submersed in coaching. I like being there

**P8:** or learning how to say yes, but only under this, like I'm at the point now in my career where I'm a lot more confident with who I am. And you know, if you want me involved in this, then here are my non negotiable. And I'm starting to get much better at that. But man it took it's taken me a long time to get here

**P10:** But I'm not like, I'm now more aware of giving myself time to just kind of like, make time for other things

**P11:** Also, I find that I've been very fortunate that name of supervisor has been really good at helping us all work life balance through this.

**P14:** That's a good question. Yeah, I don't know if you're working on these items full time, then. I guess statistically, it would be impossible to balance because you don't have 80 hours in a week to do both of those things, at least

**P14:** So I think it's kind of this an ongoing Look at priorities and trying to manage what's important to do at the time and might be more pressing, I guess

**P14:** I think so. But I think it goes back to just the priorities and importance

**P14:** I know like a lot of people in the literature do believe that. But I think as an individual. You're constantly wearing both of those. So I wouldn't say it's Yeah, I would say the focus' are the same. It's just back to what needs to be done or whatever

**P14:** I think it's, I think every coach, no matter what league or how many hours you're putting in, is facing with that same thing. And then every individual that is a coach, or that does coach will have the different, like tasks, priorities, whatever during the day

#### **Code: Habits**

**P1:** Like right now what I'm working on with my team and my staff are, are building habits. So this is actually something my staff and I started a couple months ago. We're just kind of homing in on what are our personal habits? We can relate them to basketball however you want, but what are what are our daily habits that we want to keep. And the silver lining with COVID is we've had time to learn how to self care and how to be aware of what our habits are good or bad

**P1:** But what I wanted to highlight is whenever you're in times of stress, you're always going to come to the level of your habits. And that's true personal habits. That's true with your basketball team as well with

what your practice and team habits are. So I wanted to really bring to light like what it is that we do on a daily basis. Because if you're saying 'oh yeah, I want to get fit and I want to workout three times a week' and you're not able to do that in a downtime. What's that gonna look like when we're traveling when we're backed up with work all my staff are working their full time jobs too. So the habits thing for me became a really big I tool and motivator

**Code: Journaling & Note Taking**

**P1:** I journal quite a bit

**P1:** Yeah, journaling is huge for me

**P3:** The other thing I've taught myself is tracking and specifically, taking obsessive amount of notes, what do I need to do and when. So every Monday, I try to jot out what the next few days if not the next week looks like. And, that's been huge, because it's helped me not feel overwhelmed

**P3:** And sometimes in the process of writing down all the stuff I need to get done that day and two days, it is overwhelming but it helps me because I'm like, okay, I can see now. Okay, and I've got that done. Okay, now, I haven't got that done. I'm gonna move that for tomorrow. So the notebook and tracking piece is big

**P8:** I think journaling, there's been times where journaling has been very helpful, because when you're not letting things go, they're just continuing to weigh you down. So I think that's been a big part of it

**P13:** And that was the other one journaling. I do journal actually. But again, it's not in an effort to tangible burnout. It's just again, something that I do

**P14:** I had started probably for the last three years, a journal that I do use to reflect on practices or games

**Code: Mentors**

**P3:** Oh, and actually, what I started last spring was like a mentorship program through CSIO. With one of my mentor coaches that's been great as well

**P5:** And I have a mentorship program that I'm in right now, I've really gotten a lot of value out of seeing that as like, it's a huge asset for me. And I think that also contributed to me not getting stuck in burnout when I was in burnout

**P10:** And I'm also very big on reaching out to mentors or coaches that I'm close to. So that's kind of what I do

**P12:** And so it was really afterwards when the season was finished, and we had the summer I had a mentor who I leaned on a lot

**P13:** Part of the other things to is like mentorship, like having someone that you can share stuff with that, you know, is on your side who's completely trustworthy. Maybe has lived through some similar experiences that you have, or scenarios. So, yeah, I'd say that's been highly effective to just someone to vent to that

**P14:** And I have mentors, like there's other coaches that I talked to you, I don't think we really talk about burnout, specifically, but we're connecting

**Code: Motivation**

**P1:** How do we stay motivated? Exactly. And then so I think that the issues are still the same because I know I'm struggling with it. I know the athletes' are struggling with it. And so taking the burden of the head coach it all comes back to me. I can't be demotivated because what kind of example does that set for the athletes'. Similar to what I said before in terms of being vulnerable, I let my athletes' know 'hey, I know you go through bouts of demotivation because I experience it, I know you might have freak out/panic attacks like when is this going to end , I haven't left my house in three days because I go through it'. And my message to them is its ok to experience all those things but its not ok to stay that way. Its not ok to stay demotivated, its not ok to continue to stay in your house when you know it not good for you

**P3:** I don't actually go back to those feelings. I find. Like when I feel myself frustrated, I find what gets me back up is being hands on with my athletes'. In the process, it's kind of it seems counterproductive. But as I am able to do an individual it allows me to calm down and help the athlete that I'm working with. And I find that to be more stress relieving

**P5:** And then if I want to get a little bit more competitive, and the besides that I still enjoy, it's some of the involvement with national team that I've had that it's just, it provided a really good jolt of enthusiasm and passion into coaching for me, which I don't think if I if I didn't have it, I don't know if I would still be coaching to be honest with you

**P5:** And kind of helped with some of the stuff, like the burnout and going back to my purpose and what I really want to value. So that has been that's been pretty cool

**Code: Physical Activity**

**P1:** So I would put my hand on my chest and then my other hand on my stomach so that I could kind of slow my heart rate down. But then also just take deeper breaths to calm and relax myself. So I learned that in a foreign country

**P1:** So I would sometimes fall asleep in my work clothes and/or have to like forcefully get myself up to move. After that nationals we had a couple of weeks off and we then start postseason

**P1:** The other thing is just, in my heart of hearts, I'm still an athlete. And so I want to stay active. I want to be able to be on the court and move with my athletes' and I'll say early on in my, in my coaching career, those things started to dip

**P1:** The huge thing now in locked down is going for walks. So I now go for a lot of walks. But that would be the only other thing that occupies my time, just like my own wellness

**P1:** And so we have talked about when we are doing it now with our weekly meetings, we have talked about ways to overcome those things weather its through habit forming, weather its through taking a personal wellness day. Exercise obviously is a huge thing that is still part of their daily lives because they still have home training programs. But the other thing is just balancing it with fun. So they are like 'coach I cant go run outside its too cold'. But its like well everywhere in the city of U Sport school there is outdoor skating rinks, they havent shut those down. Do you have skates? so why don't you go skating instead of going for a run. Or why don't you go tobogganing, because the hills are still open too, and that's great fun, and its hard walking up a hill in snow pants you know, so I just try to keep things fun that way

**P2:** Some other pieces, if I'm really feeling that I will, go for a run, I don't do that probably as much as I should because it just adds up to time. So I've been trying to get my physical activity, say with the kids in the day

**P3:** And it's the first time probably in the last five years that I can say I got in the gym a little bit. But for the most part outside of recruit calls. I didn't do anything coaching wise, no practice planning, nothing, nothing heavy

**P3:** Most of my physical activity since I've been a U Sport coach has been related to like the on court stuff I do with the athletes'. Now with COVID there's a lot less capacity in our fitness center so I don't want to take a spot from one of our athletes'. So I work it into my on court time

**P4:** I'm big into the gym. I love a good like lift. That's a big makes a weight lifting off the shoulders motion for me

**P5:** Yeah, it was interesting. Thinking about it. Because, you know, we're we have all this time right now with COVID. And we're trying to it put in place programs and transition opportunities for athletes' to transition out of their sport into real life. And I was like, hey, I was doing that at the same time as I was transitioning into being a coach. So like physical training and the mentality and the self-confidence around that, it's pretty funny to think that, like, I was still trying to train like, I was a professional athlete, when I was started coaching. And it was great. Yeah, I was in shape. But I wasn't developing the skills to say, hey, like any physical activity is good. And I've only really developed that over the last couple of years, where it's like, 20 minutes is better than nothing. And for me, it's a good reset. And so that's been a big one, and I have gotten better at anything is better than nothing. And forcing myself just to do a little bit every day is a lot better than going through those peaks and valleys of extreme physical activity

**P6:** Yeah, for sure. Working out is a big one for me. Yeah, I like I would say I'm someone who basically works out every day. I mean, I'd say for sure, six days a week. And that's super important for me. Yeah, I would say like, whether it's partially like release energy and try to also just like not let not get caught up in thoughts and kind of just be distracted, you know, have some music, music plane and get a good workout in

**P7:** Or also, if I've got to work out in if I can get a workout in the middle of the day. Like I usually feel like those practices are much happier person

**P7:** The workout thing is huge. I've got a really good base of coworkers at the school too. So there's also hockey at edge, you probably know that. And I've got two really good friends who are who have just, you know, made really good friends with over the last couple years with two of the coaches, and then the strength and conditioning staff. And we've actually created a little like workout team. And we work out together every day. If someone can't make it, then we hold them accountable for the next day. And so that's been an amazing coping mechanism for me

**P8:** And whether that was three hours on a Thursday morning, then it was great when I would go hang out with my little friends. And we'd go to the park, and it was just like shutting out life



**P8:** And so, you know, like, okay, biking, I bought a bike, I tore my Achilles tendon A few years ago, and, and so I kind of really reduced how active I was, because the rehab process took so long, and all of a sudden, I'm like, wow, I really took out a lot of these things in my life during that time, and I haven't replaced them. And so I found that physical activity has been huge, like, I'm very busy, but I'm not always physically busy per se

**P8:** So, you know, in past years, I would, if I had an on court session with an athlete, but the time slot was longer than they were coming in, I would spend 20 minutes just shooting around on my own, and just kind of like letting stuff go, like, just sweat it out

**P8:** You know, I think that's been therapeutic. So I started, you know, working out on the end, actually, part of my rehab part of my Achilles was helpful because I had to do it three times a week, and I found that that was actually having that regular routine of physical activity was, was good

**P9:** like I try to get outside

**P9:** Oh, yeah, those people hear it far too much. And they don't want to look at me like, Oh my gosh, like you come out of your like the office and go downstairs. You're like, you're never guess what happened? This person said they hate me. So in terms of physical activity, no, I certainly don't set time aside for myself. I train one of our high performance athletes' every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning. So you know, that's really the biggest time where I'm actually up and moving and rebounding and being on court for basketball

**P9:** And then yeah, it's it's pretty slim, like we do meetings with all the other technical directors in our province. So you know, interacting with soccer, and snowboard and all those all those fine folks. And we meet once a month. And it was always zoom calls. And we actually met afterwards and said, we need to go back to our technical lead who works at the name of facility and say like, as like people that are used to being physically active and interacting with people, we can't just do one hour zoom calls where we check in and everyone says, you know, things are the same, and then we all hang up. So we actually went and played soccer last week. So we're trying to put in every technical lead leads a session in their sport. So I just saw my calendar pop up that said, we're going to name of facility to learn how to snowboard like, next month, I was like, This is fantastic. Like, yeah, so that's a piece where I don't think I realized how much physical activity actually makes me feel better. Because at the time, again, when I have that little bit of downtime, the last thing I want to do is like, Oh, now I need to get up and go for a run, or I need to, like, drive to the gym. And so I should be more aware of it. But I fail at that

**P10:** uhh, I haven't done a lot of that I've, um, I do find just in terms of feeling suffocated. And on your computer, that kind of piece, I like to go outside and take walks

**P11:** So, like having blocks of time scheduled in for myself that I would plan to do something small like go for a walk

**P11:** you know, what, actually, and this is maybe a with the pandemic, but my gym offers a lot of free fitness classes, and I've really been wanting to get into yoga, which would be perfect, because it is scheduled times, um, it would probably be good for me

**P12:** it can be like going to the gym

**P12:** it could be something as simple as like, just going for an hour walk with my dog getting outside

**P13:** Yep, definitely physical activity. Like, that's a part of my daily life. I think that's, I really tried to go for walks outside everyday I can, weather permitting

**P13:** I have done yoga fairly regularly. I mean, I would say once a week for a long period of time

**P13:** I've gotten away from it a little bit, just due to some injuries. But yeah, I mean, I, I don't know if I, the impetus was not to do it to Managing Burnout. It was just, again, part of physical activity

**P14:** physical activity is important. Like I said, I went through about five years where I couldn't really walk because of my injury. So getting back into physical activity was difficult. And then making time for it is hard sometimes, but that's a good use of time for me

**P14:** Yeah, I don't, I don't drive. Well, I do drive. I don't have a car. Like I did buy a car here. So I bike everywhere

**P14:** don't know right now doing those just at home workouts on YouTube or something

**P14:** I've been working on running at a limited capacity, but doing some of that

**P14:** Yeah, I've done yoga yoga with name of instructor has been great. Over the last year

***Code: Planning***

**P1:** So I think, knowing that is what to expect. It's not an excuse, I know, it's coming, but I think expecting it helps to kind of front load and understand like, okay, I can't just, EFF off and not stick to my self care regime, because it'll catch up with me in the month of February when were traveling every other weekend

**P1:** Front loading the stress to be better equipped to handle it

**P2:** I think it's made me a slightly better communicator, because I think and I become better at planning. I will do the planning when I have time and on the front side

**P2:** So, we're all kind of off. Right. So, like, I'll be honest, that some of it I think for this year is a little bit colored by that. But things that are now coming into my head where I'm excited is contingency planning

**P3:** I would say it wasn't until this December that I was like, Yeah, like I'm going home, and I'm not doing any of this for three weeks. And it wasn't like it was an emotional break or anything like that. I think it was it was me looking at September, October, November. And I was like, like, I need to chill

**P8:** And I feel like I've gotten better at don't think about that call on Thursday, until Wednesday night, you have a window of opportunity Wednesday night, and you're just don't think about it. And I've had to become way more selfdisciplined with, like, what I'm allowing to occupy my mind. And I find that actually been helpful with not feeling overwhelmed by everything that I have this coming week, simply because I'm not giving myself permission to think about it until I know I have time to deal with it

**P8:** So you don't there's been times I would say like earlier in my years where I had no idea how extensive it had had become. But then after that summer, I realized like, you need to prioritize certain things at certain times of year to get ready for the big chunks of commitment that are coming

**P11:** I'm definitely big on time management

**P14:** Another area I could probably do better at is focusing on some of the bigger, more daunting projects, as opposed to try to get little things off of a to do list that maybe don't need to be done, or aren't as important, I guess, to be done

***Code: Priorities & Being Present***

**P1:** and manage their priorities and keep them motivated, keep them performing

**P5:** So you know time management, commitment to a task or a goal, going through the ups and downs of that of that plan. So those are things that we valued. So we've chosen to definitely bring the family immediate family into it

**P5:** But we kept our goals as a priority

**P5:** And we didn't we didn't lose our entire identity around having kids. Like that's been pretty important for us. So that would be like why we bring them to the gym. So they're involved, but they're involved from a perspective of hopefully the values that coaching kind of can give kids but they happen to be your kids

**P12:** And, you know, you can prioritize work and life and your partner and I could just, for me, it that doesn't really exist. But I think it's more, more importantly is like just being mindful about the time that you have in certain situations

**P12:** So you may not have as much time at home. But when you are home, you really have to be mindful about that time and be present and make the most of that time. And I think that that's a more healthy way of looking at it

**P12:** And when I walk in the door, I'm present and I'm going to you know, make the most of that time at home. And that's, to me that's balanced right now. And that's a healthier way of looking at it. Because you could spend less time at work and be at home more, but maybe you're not as present because you're not, you know, doing the things that you needed to take care of. So that time isn't as valuable, I guess

**P14:** Yeah, I think all coaches are facing multiple demands of different things. So the degree changes your level of responsibility changes from assistant to head coach. So that'll impact your priorities and timelines

***Code: Positive Feelings***

**P2:** Yeah. 100% it's been, I feel guilty a lot, because I don't hate it

**P4:** Oh, yeah. I actually had talked to our sport psych like at the beginning of this and she was like, it is normal

**P5:** So, getting a little bit more out of my days. So those have been really good things. And the support for the athletes' has been astronomically increased the, the amount of mental health, social wellbeing

### **Sub Theme: Management Within Coaching**

#### ***Code: Relationships***

**P1:** So that can kind of take a backseat. And that's something that, especially now that I'm super mindful of. People are like, Oh, do you still play? And I'm like, No, when, where? Where am I supposed to play like? So I try to find ways to be socially active

**P5:** I don't know if it's a justified like how to justify it my head. But I just think about it as role modeling for our athletes' and trying to just keep that as that is one of my values. And I think that if I don't let that self-doubt creep in that over time, that will make the same difference, as you know, overdoing it with time in the gym

**P6:** And, and so I think that for me personally, it's like, I have to have the outlets of, you know, of my friends, you know, so that, like, at the end of a long week, you know, on a Saturday night, I can go and like, I'm gonna say, like, have drinks and kind of party with my friends on that night, which, in essence is actually probably not what I actually need, but it is what I need. Because I just need to, like, take that hat off of being the leader, the mentor, the role model, the mother, like the aunt, like the big sister, like all the hats that I feel like I wear as a coach, it's like, I need to just take those off and just be name, you know, like, just and again, I the issue with that is that of course it's a short term fix

**P8:** And so, um, you know, most of my family and friends understand my season. And so they know that there are certain times of the year where it's just like, this is not the right time. But, you know, in the offseason, in the early spring, you know, when we're not traveling, all those kind of things, then I really tried to make sure that the emphasis becomes my friends and my families and, you know, just my health work life balance is restored a little bit

#### ***Code: Restoration & Reflection***

**P1:** And then I was trying to find a way to recharge because this would have been towards the end of July after the name of city 4 tournament, which is also a long trip because you drive out there. So I was trying to recharge for summer camps again and get energized somehow to lead the camp full of 20 to 30 children and have the energy to look like I want to be there

**P1:** And knowing like, this is the workload, so and this is the length of the season, umm then this is how you can I guess, conserve some energy so that you're not running into those situations of burnout

**P1:** I was aware then and I think after that summer I reflected more on what my limitations and capabilities were

**P2:** and reflection

**P2:** I do some relaxation stuff, it doesn't always work. I try to do it at night. But you know, at night, your mind's just racing at times

**P2:** Yeah, so a big one is being able to think about the people for me, the people are the why. And so being able to separate out those pieces and connect with them. So, they give me my energy, that's been the weird part about virtual as your, you don't get to benefit from each other's energy quite as directly

**P3:** And for me, I'm a faith based person, so I've sought like a lot of peace and contentment, and just slowing things down through reading the Bible, and trying to get closer to God. I also do fasting, which kind of helps me focus, I pray

**P5:** And if that makes sense, like it was more of a reflective exercise. So that that's definitely one thing that was huge, because it allows me to maintain some level of sanity week to week

**P7:** I know, it's not always 100% healthy to be there. And you need that balance. I think that my balance comes on, let's say we have a weekend off. And it's like a recharge

**P8:** And so I think I've done a better job of you know, having three or four days of, you know, emotional and mental and physical kind of restoration to get ready for big chunks of time that were coming and, and that my faith has been a big part of that as well, where it's like, how do I get ready for the season?

**P10:** Yeah, I think one of the biggest things is I def, I'm very spiritual. So I do, lean on my faith quite heavily in these times

#### ***Code: Routines***

**P1:** I think I've become more like, like, regimented or stricter, if you will

**P1:** so I've noticed on days where you know, I don't fulfill my morning routine I feel way less productive. My sleep can also be altered and so just finding what routines and things that stick for me I think are important

**P1:** Yeah, so on any given day for me, I always start my day with a glass of water. And then it can be anything from yoga or I have different meditation apps. So the yoga, meditation or journaling, between the three of them, I'm doing at least one if not all three, on any given morning

**P3:** Definitely, I think the biggest thing has been building routines

**P3:** Every morning, I have a routine. Whether I have to get up super early for a morning workout, or it's a long night, it's just something that I can build into my day, that helps me to calm down. Sometimes it's listening to a 15 minute revival segment every day. So even as I'm getting ready for a 6am workout, I could listen to that while I'm brushing my teeth changing and doing those sorts of things

**P3:** I feel like that's always helped me because it's been at the start of my day, and something that I can definitely control. Sometimes I can't control certain other aspects

**P7:** And then in terms of like, being able to make a practice plan going into practice. I usually have gotten this routine of making practice plan after I workout. And like kind of think about it all day long. And then stew on it a little bit while I'm working out. And then it just like comes out. And I just type it up super fast after my workout and print it. And it's like, Oh, that's good, right? Because you just have to get your brain juices going a bit. So yeah

**Code: Self Care**

**P2:** I have extremely close friends who want to do that analyze, really into like self growth

**P2:** but I'll put on a sleep story and just try to like, wind down

**P5:** which also for me, ends up leading to things like healthy eating, healthy sleeping, too much caffeine. I've kind of figured that those are all the triggers for me. But it's got to be in moderation

**P7:** I'm in bed super early 830/9 o'clock

**P8:** Yeah. Well, you and you know, when your friends are like, Hey, I'm sure you're really busy, I'm sorry to interrupt, you know what you're doing. Like, there's always that caveat of how people initiate conversations with you, you know, like, I'm, you probably don't have time for this, but, you know, the kids would really like to see you. And so I've had to really, like, you know, give my friends and like, I'm Auntie to a lot of the, the, you know, my friends kids out here. And you know, one, one of my friends, she had said, you know, my kids get exhausting at times. And so I realized that me hanging out with your friend is actually life affirming, for me. My athletes' are exhausting. And so, you know, during my master's, I realized that I needed to give myself pockets of time, where my phone was off, and I wasn't working

**P8:** And I wouldn't say that that's an expectation that I have on myself, because I look at all of the professional development, zoom calls that I could be on and all that kind of stuff. And I've said, I'm actually unless I'm speaking, or it's someone presenting that I personally want to support, I'm not going to be on the zoom call

**P8:** And I had one full summer off. And that was the year after I did my achilleas because I was like, I'm done. Like my, that was physically exhausting. I just kind of went through all this stuff at work as well. And I think that was the summer that I realized, hold on, you have not been taking care of yourself

**P8:** I think that, you know, learning what your athletes' are being taught is a big piece for coaches that we actually do a really poor job of, you know, like, we're talking about nutrition with my athletes', I'm like, oh, my goodness, I hope they don't ask me how I eat, you know, during the season when things are crazy. And then we talk about this. So over, over the fall time, and over the Christmas break, you know, big emphasis has been on mental health. And just, you know, one of the things that we talked about with my team is mental health hygiene, like, What are 10 things that we do that we could do on a regular basis, that are not necessarily how to deal with big mental health issues, but just like what our daily habits that we can use to make sure that we're in a good space, and I kind of looked at that list. And I was, like, I'm not sure that I would say that I do a great job of doing one of these every day. So I just started trying to see if I could do one per day. And whether that was a little bit of mindfulness, or whether that was going for a walk outside, or whether that was just listening to some music and you know, dancing around by myself, or, and all of a sudden, I realized, like, yeah, like, I probably need to do a better job of interjecting these things into my daily life. So that the burnout is not like an accumulation of several weeks of just poor mental health hygiene, you know, and if you take care of yourself a little bit better every day

**P11:** I have also I've kind of in and out before tried meditating with like headspace, or different things that I've never stuck for me. But I, I've seen how it would be useful for people if I could actually make myself do it every day

**P12:** Yeah, and then I think for me, it's just like, continuing to take time for myself

**P12:** I think helped me to just keep the things that are important to me at the forefront

**P12:** and do some personal development, like, you know, read, reading and listening, learning, like all those things

**P13:** Mindfulness, I have done a little bit with our national team, just kind of partook in that but again, it's not something that's not part of my daily routine

**Code: Step Away**

**P8:** like, there's a few things where I give myself permission to kind of turn the world out for a short period of time

**P8:** Okay, well, there's like an emphasis in prayer and kind of spending time in my faith community before the season starts, because I need to clear my mind of things that are from last year

**P8:** I need to let some things go

**P8:** I need to figure free of myself for some things, and then just kind of go into the next and I find that that's, that that kind of has helped me, you know, turn some things off.

**P10:** I'm not big on wanting to do that right now during the winter. So I'm just waiting for it to get nice and warmer, out but kind of like getting up and getting away from your desk or something for a little bit as that helps for sure

**P11:** Like, whether it's super heavy, workwise, or super heavy, maybe with personal life and other things. Like I definitely have a tendency to, when I when it's not a busy basketball time, for example, like around Christmas and stuff. I'm still always thinking about it, or like trying to watch film or just, it's always on my mind. And I think it would probably be better for me and my mental health if I were to just really take a break when I have one. And, you know, focus on what I'm actually doing

**Code: Support**

**P2:** And yet, I still can say that I love parts of it. It is my why that keeps me going. But specific times I think, at first, the most important thing to me was showing these young women we can do both. It was important to me to be visible and to have the kids with me. And to be like, I can do this, we can do this, I was lucky to have a support network behind me

**P2:** And so for me, I'm feeling so anxious about something right now. But I can like recognize it, and still then be like, so what, what's the action that I can take. And so for me, big pieces that have been hugely helpful are going, I have to be creative with this. And so I just talked about like the scheduling changes, and like figuring out and talking to admin and being open and vulnerable to go, if this is going to happen, like I need, I need some help and support. So you got to be able to come with a solution in mind and then then you can feel okay, asking for some help and support. If instead of just being like, feel bad for me, it's going this is where I am at, can we do this, and I go in with a bunch of solutions. And so how we've integrated has been amazing

**P3:** Nothing that's formalized. I have a few friends that I text. Every so often again, I'm over at my assistant coaches place I think when I'm more stressed, I'm there more because I can talk to him and his wife after they put away the kids, we usually would just be up kind of, you know, name of person, we'll be working but, I'll be watching a movie or something. That's been great for me consistently. I would say, on the average of the week, I'm probably there three to four times a week. So that would be the closest in terms of that. Maybe texting with some friends back home

**P5:** Yeah, I think I'm in a really unique scenario and that my partner, he's essentially is like an assistant coach. And he's as invested. And I don't think I'm talking to my colleagues. Like, that's not a common thing

**P5:** yeah. And I think to like really like our values around sport, align, which again, I took probably two for granted that it's that is the case, all the time. So that's one and then two, like we had a new athletic director come in, and just his different way of thinking was really helpful for me. It was a little bit of pressure, because the previous athletic director was the former coach of the program. So that was it. And she in no way put pressure on me. But it was just like, I felt that pressure and didn't want to disappoint a little bit. Right. And yeah, so I think those two things really helps just manage it, it could have been a lot worse

**P6:** when I'm going to say maybe as you get older and wiser, you start to recognize that, you know, that even if you can't, like you have to right, so and realistically, you know, your program can survive without you for you know, once you've got your team and your program established, I do think that it is it becomes easier that you can be away from it for a certain period and, and, you know, empower your assistant coaches

**P7:** I'm really lucky. I've got super supportive group of family and friends that they, you know, it's like, whenever you need anything, you just have to reach out and ask

**P7:** And now it's like, yeah, I'll meet you at the patio. We'll you know, we'll catch up on some drinks, we'll you know, go do whatever it is, we usually do. And that's kind of my catch up. I think honestly, it comes down to me being so lucky to have such supporting people around me that they're not always nagging like, oh, you're too busy for me now

**P9:** But my, my family and friends are, they're awesome. They pretty much know my burnout phase, they see it coming and kind of everyone braces for impact. And you know, they give me a little bit of, don't forget to take time, and things like I'm gonna bring you lunch. Do you need a coffee? What do you need from me?

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**P12:** And then leaning on people when I need some help, or I need a hand

**P12:** Well that's the thing I was in that place of like, feeling like I was burnt out, I didn't have an assistant coach. So it's like, you're just doing so so so much. And now the position I'm in, I am the assistant coach, but it's like, oh, my goodness, there's so many more people and just to do things to alleviate those stresses that I was feeling at my last job

**P13:** Honestly, I think a big part is, is having some amazing friends being part of my staff and people that are around me in my professional environment. So you know, when you do go on the road, or you're working long hours, you're spending it with good friends. So I think the Yeah, it's an enjoyable environment to be in. So I think that really has been a big secret like, yeah, I really do chalk it up to that

**P14:** I think they understand like, I think everyone in my family has coached at some point maybe not at a high level and not as a head coach might have been an assistant coach at a high level, but I think they understand. Yeah, the some of the challenges with coaching

#### ***Code: Talking***

**P1:** Like I have a twin sister, I don't know if you knew that. But she and I play basketball together. She's not involved in basketball now. But you know, I can brag to her. So sometimes she's telling me things like, Oh my god, I saw on Twitter U Sport team name beat other U Sport team name or other things she saw, so it's kind of cool to have someone like that, that isn't someone that I work with on a on a day to day

**P1:** I do have people I can vent to it. If it's basketball related, most immediately, it's probably my staff. At the moment. I mentioned before my sister is always a big go to

**P2:** For me, I'm a verbal processor, a major piece is connecting

**P2:** Being able to talk to other coaches about it is awesome, it can reenergize me

**P4:** I can't really think of like other times when, like to be frank, like, I'll have a bad practice we'll have about like, and I'll just kind of like leave practice. And then I'd go to my office and my assistant coach, and I'll sit down. I'm like, Oh, my God, like, that was the worst practice ever. But, yeah, I found that my assistant coach, he and I have a lot of those frank conversations

**P4:** And I know that my ED was happy with, 5 and 15 in comparison to what has been, which was like 1 in 18 or 19. But for me, that was really hard, I've never lost that much my entire life. Not at all, you know, so that was a super hard and my response is hey, let's get back on the horse like we're going to get better next year, next year is going to be better and then COVID hits. So I think that it kind of has like really carried that last year into this year. Like you can't just move on from it. But yeah, I don't think I'm great at always like shutting the losses out. But I think most of the other stuff. I'm pretty good. You know, I really try. It's super important to me that I'm not talking about everybody's business with everybody. Right? So like I said before, like my assistant coach basically he hears everything but I'm not saying it to the team. Right. If my starting five is pissing me off I'm not telling the other players, right we try to keep it again try to keep it in house

**P4:** think I as a female, I've noticed that I just need to talk about it. There's not a solution. Sometimes there is but I just need to like the words need to exit my mouth. And it's almost like the stress has exited my body

**P4:** We have a sport psych person now. And she was hired in, I want to say November of last year. And so we kind of just started to really have a relationship in COVID. But I think she's phenomenal for me, she very much tries to have a relationship with all of us as coaches. And I know she's talking to the athletes' as

well. But she is someone that I will like, bitch to about, you know if I'm struggling with this or that and just tries to help me

**P6:** I think that the other thing, which I did do, which I only started, maybe within the last two years, I think maybe now I started seeing a therapist, right. And it was always something that I probably saw as a negative, I would say in general. And then, you know, again, I'm not I'm not saying that, like seeing the therapist has like, changed everything, but it's definitely, you know, I think forced me to reflect on some decisions that I've made and or on how I like, yeah, how I've tried to navigate things. And it's definitely helped me in terms of just being able to let some things go and not let's let them weigh me down. Right

**P6:** Yeah, well, so for me for sure. I mean, I have, like, two of my best friends are U Sport coaches. And I think that that helps a lot. Because they, it's just like, they get it right. Like you're I can talk to two people who are literally living and breathing the same thing I am. And, and so that's awesome. And then I would say outside of that, like, you know, yes, I then also have my, you know, probably one or two super close friends that aren't coaches, that, that like, you know, I'm not going to super hash it out necessarily with them. But I would say, in a different way, they can then also be there for me. And then for sure, my, my therapist as well

**P7:** What I also do, I on the basketball side, the basketball director and the boys coach, us three have a really good relationship. So if I need to just sit down in the office, close the door and just like talk it out. They're always open to listening and helped me kind of talk through things

**P7:** Um, my best friend also, she played hockey at a high level down in the States. And so she she's usually my go to if I need to just kind of vent or something. And she'll kind of see like her point of view on it or whatever. So she's not in sport anymore right now. So she's usually my go to if I need to, you know, talk something out real quick or have had a bad day, just call her or text her and talk through things. So outside of coaching. That's usually how I go

**P9:** The people that, you know, I'm thinking about our board members have no clue like not a clue. The time commitment that lands on my shoulders, I think they oftentimes think it's, you know, nine to five And then she's done. And it's like no its, like seven to five. And then I have meetings from seven to 10. And sometimes later, because you're trying to work with the people out in name of province, if you're doing a national call, and all of a sudden, you know, seven o'clock works for them, and I'm starting a call at 10pm. And then I wake up the next morning to train an athlete to be on court at 8am. Like, that's not healthy. And so trying to figure out a way to say like, you know, if I'm not instantly available in the middle of the afternoon, it's probably because I worked, you know, I look at my calendar, and I see literally an extra day of work every week, whether it's, in the morning, or in the evening, when the hours add up, it's a full day. And so, you know, I don't know what this the piece looks like that you're putting together. But for me, it's like, I know when I'm burning out, but when I try to articulate it to the people that, you know, that pay me that oversee my job that determine, you know, when I can and cannot have time off, that can be a really challenging space to navigate, especially when it's someone or multiple people that don't know what you're doing, and they've never experienced it themselves

***Code: Time Off***

**P3:** And then lastly, designating a day that's a reset or rest day. So hey, that's like Sunday, which I do as the Sabbath. So right now I do have an hour that I do community outreach, like a workout here at the gym. And I mean, I kind of hoped it wasn't on a Saturday, but just again, with the COVID stuff and booking agents, it's not ideal. But generally speaking on Sundays I'm sleeping in for sure. Even if I'm not sleeping, I'm just laying there. Taking my time I'm cleaning, I'm doing my meal prep. So just I always have a day that nine times out of 10 it's like a resting, not doing not going crazy

**P4:** or, like lack of a better term and then it's not a stop. It's like, Oh, no, no, but you have to like you need to recruit you need to be at this tournament need to be seen here. You have to go to your Canada basketball stuff. You have to do this. Like I think what I needed in that time was like a hard week. And I'm just trying to figure out when that would even happen

**P4:** Sometimes like having a time to put down your phone for an hour, hour and a half. Yeah. I found that helpful

**P5:** And I think that came up a little bit too, because I think we're one of the, I think it's I don't even know what the what the percentages, but we don't have sabbaticals available to us. So for that I've had to kind of ask coaches that, have you ever had similar paths. And for me, having kids, young kids is an important criteria, when I've asked them and having started at the age that I started out those two are kind of things

and most of the coaches that I've been able to connect with that have those two criteria, are saying like, hey, if you don't get a sabbatical in the next three to four years, it's going to be you're going to be into a pretty, pretty tough place. So from that perspective, I've been trying to lobby it with, with our admin to like, hey, can we do some stuff on this, but and they're not, they're not opposed to it, but just not on the radar

**P6:** making time to actually have like a vacation. And when I say vacation, I really just mean time off, not necessarily going anywhere. Just downtime, right?

**P7:** And then and then couch time

**P7:** I love. I love turning on some dumb show on TV and let my brain just go away for an hour and then and then

**P7:** And you're to this and you're to that and it's like, I don't have that and it would be a nightmare. If I did, and I, you know, it's it would be really hard to be that kind of person. Sorry, to have those kind of people in my life. The balance comes from, I guess the little check ins that with friends, right? Like, Hey, how are you? Hey, what's new? Good. You're busy. I'm busy. We're all busy. Okay, good. Talk to you soon kind of thing. Yeah, like the little moments when you do have time to breathe, I try and make a plan with someone that I haven't seen in a while

**P8:** I'm trying to help people understand that I need this time off. Hey, name, we'd love for you to do this. And I'm like, I'm not available until this this day

**P8:** And I'm just like, okay, like, actually, when do I shut the computer off and be like, No, I'm not available for the zoom call, or I actually need a full day off. So I've been working through that over January and February. And just like actually forcing myself to take a full day off

**P8:** I'm notorious for half days, you know, I'll give myself half a day off here and half a day off there. So at the end of the day, I kind of you know, at the end of the week, I've had a few days off, but I haven't actually had like a full day off

**P8:** That and that's one tool, but then you then have to give yourself more time off in between kind of not waiting for four or five weeks before you have a full day off, or whatever it ends up being

**P9:** Well, I took a day off yesterday, I took a four day weekend

**P9:** Yeah they're like name of person What are you doing? I'm like, I'm still sitting in my pajamas. I just don't have time to do anything. In the summer I do go to name of city for a week. And that is, you know, the work phone goes out the window. And that's the time where I'm like, great. Like, there's the beach and there's some ropes courses, and there's bonfires and all that stuff. So I'm a little bit more engaged in the summer, but the winter it's like, you know, give me a blanket and a hot pack. And I'm good

**P10:** So like, I try to, especially if I don't have like a, like a meeting like this or something like a one off kind of thing. I'm off my computer by like, 4pm. No later, that kind of thing. So that I do take that time. And then I hope that kind of translates into when we're back, like, full swing kind of thing

**P13:** I was fortunate enough to have a sabbatical A number of years ago to kind of regain some of it



## Appendix D: Quotation List: Theme: Educating Coaches

*Table 4: Summary of the Sub-Themes and codes within the theme Educating Coaches*

Sub-Theme	Code
Formal Education Experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No Formal Education</li> <li>2. Shared Stories</li> <li>3. We Need to Talk About Burnout</li> </ol>
Preferred Methods of Delivery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Answer Questions</li> <li>2. Online Resources</li> <li>3. Practical Tools to Use</li> <li>4. Reading</li> <li>5. Round Table</li> <li>6. Shared Experiences</li> <li>7. Talking</li> <li>8. Visual</li> </ol>

### **Sub Theme: Formal Education Experiences**

#### **Code: No Formal Education**

**P1:** It wasn't like a formal workshop or how to manage stress, but even the stories along I think for myself was helpful to me. We have also had workshops on suicide awareness, things like that. It will be interesting to see what comes after COVID, I think we talk about it a lot in our meetings but there's no PowerPoint presentation you can give

**P2:** And I don't think I ever felt like that. But I wouldn't say there was a lot of education around burnout, I think, and I think there's more and more emphasis put on athlete's mental performance and mental health

**P3:** Nothing formally, like our ED is really great at like sharing things that are usually like leadership. I feel like maybe once or twice, some of that might have included like, taking care of yourself as a coach, I can't really remember specifically. But I think that's like a personal trait of his and you know, he's a motivator of sorts. And, you know, he's a, he's a great guy to have as a boss. But no, nothing formally

**P4:** I think we talk about it more with athletes' than we do with coaches. I know when I was doing my masters at name of university, there was a big coach's conversation about it. But that would be the only time that I can recall talking about it from a coach perspective. I know. We also talked about it there a ton about the athletes' and burnout. I don't really remember. I know, we I know that like it was brought up there. And it just obviously transferred to other places for me, just being really aware of like, you know, not doing too much with the athletes'. Yeah, I wouldn't say that. There's been a ton of like education or with it

**P5:** No, not at all

**P6:** But the challenge with that is that at the time, you know, I coached I like I been at a university for six years, right? So I'd coached High School for six years and coach provincial teams and all that. And I was the lead assistant coach for name of university while I was doing my masters. But in my opinion, when you're an assistant coach, you just like you just don't understand the stress of the head coach job, because you don't get it like it's just not, you don't own everything, right, like the head coach owns everything. And so until you're in that role, because I still remember when I was doing my masters and we're talking about stress and coaching and I was like who could get stressed like, coaching is the best. Like this is amazing. You know, I can't wait till I'm a fulltime head coach and you know, this is gonna be great. And then fast forward, you know, to when I got my first head coaching job like I still remember because when I was at name of city. We didn't use synergy yet. So we used dark dartfish. I think it was called. Oh, yeah. But so like, we had to clip all of our own film. So Sunday's was like eight hours of clipping film, because you had to clip it to then actually tag it and put it together, right? Yeah. And that's why I mean, think, thank goodness for Synergy because it saves you that time. Just because like Sunday's you're just you're clipping and tagging so much film, you like that you literally get no days off. Because you that's the only time that you can do that, to then be prepared. You know, going into like your video sessions and your scout meetings and all that that next week. But yeah, no, no one. That's my long answer. No one talked to me about burnout. So definitely not PSOs and NSOs, for sure

**P6:** No. Maybe, when I did my Master's in coaching at name of university, maybe we talked about it in our coaching issues class.

**P10:** I don't think so. From what I remember, no

**P11:** No, never

**P12:** No

**P13:** Um, I wouldn't say so. No, I think where name of University is I think it was probably the first one to incorporate these sabbaticals or your leaves for our full time head coaches. So I thought that was really a really big step on their part to acknowledge it. So I think that's been really positive that was acknowledged the number of hours of work that coaches are putting in. So I guess that would be the only way of kind of recognizing it, but certainly no, like educational material or things like that around it. Okay

**P14:** I don't think it's emphasized

**P14:** or talked about

**P14:** I I'm a sport researcher as well. So I find I'm bringing a lot of information to other people, because that's where I'm doing a lot of my work as well. No, I actually would read it. Like, I'm interested to see what comes of this. And I don't know if you're going to look to publish it after as well. But yeah, I would be interested at least now

**P14:** I don't think there. I mean, I don't want to say there aren't any, because there are. I don't think it's accessible

**Code: Shared Stories**

**P1:** I think its just that you know even just even just listening to podcasts like Brene Brown and understanding those things and understanding vulnerability and understanding emotional intelligence can go a long way even if they aren't as text bookie if you will. I think that the conversations alone and story sharing alone is powerful

**P1:** thinking We used to have a lot of staff meetings quite regularly at name of U Sport school and we used to have something where a staff member or multiple staff members, like maybe 2 per meeting, would come up in front of everyone and would basically just share their story which was so interesting and another opportunity to be vulnerable. And I remember 2 stories in particular, one was name of a coach he talked about his long story way that he came to name of U Sport school. There was one year where he took a sabbatical because his mother felt ill so he took that time because he needed that time away, and he had been coaching for I duno a considerable amount of time before he took that time off. But he discussed burnout and moments of burnout and having to you know priorities and be there for his family. And another story that was shared was from name of a coach who after winning the schools first ever u sports championships, had like, was actually like in the worst place ever of his coaching career because it had built to this 'oh my god this amazing thing you must be elated and you must be at the top of your game and feeling so confident' time, and he was like that couldn't be further from the truth. He wanted to escape, he wanted to get away, because he was experiencing burnout. And so to hear two prestigious coaches and coaches who have been coaching for a long time to talk about that experience and even to depart wisdom to the rest of the department and even to a young coach like myself the need and understanding that if you want to coach in this for a long time you have to find moments where you can catch your breath. If that means taking a sabbatical, if that means you know giving more, letting your assistant do more an giving them that experience. Whatever it is, I just thought that was such a cool way to share

**P2:** Yeah, that's been helpful to see like a name of a coach. That has kind of come back. But again, you don't come back. Like you got to kind of start over a little bit like that is the idea of stepping away. I'm like, I don't know how easy it is too come back. That is part of it

**P7:** No, I don't think so. I think that comes from other coaches talking to coaches about it. It's definitely never come from the top down in an organization for me is coming from other coaches with more experience saying, well be careful

**Code: We Need to Talk About Burnout**

**P2:** This summer I went on a deep dive into the psychology of coaching like us as coaches. And I really laid it all out on the table. And I did it because I was like this is not out there. No one's talking about this

**P2:** The literature and that stuff needs to come down to here where it's like a big piece and normalizing it

**P8:** You know, like you said earlier, everyone's burnout is kind of unique to their own situation. And so, to me, I think let's talk about burnout. I'd be like, I don't need this

**P9:** umm humm or to have conversations like, you know, it's not to say that my boss isn't doing a good job, but things like you know, take, you know, take two hours off on Thursday don't want you to burn out, and it takes everything I have not to say like, I'm already there, like two hours, isn't gonna change anything like I can't decompress. Because I know, after those two hours, I still have four more hours of work to do. And I'm probably coming back to 15 text messages and three emails, everyone asked me to do something. So you know, how to have how to recognize burnout

**P9:** Yeah. And I think, you know, there's more conversation around coaches as their high performance athletes' are, in a sense, right there, their mental exhaustion is much higher than their physical exhaustion, which is, you know, obviously different than an athlete, but an athlete's physical exhaustion is typically much different than their mental exhaustion. So how do we make sure that we're recognizing that and in these people, and, you know, the last thing that I ever want to do is need to take vacation days because I'm burnt out. That's not a vacation to me. That is, I'm shutting down, I'm not going anywhere. I'm not, you know, going into name of province. Or taking the ferry to name of place. I'm probably, like, curled up in a ball trying to get myself ready for going back to work. It's not vacation

**P9:** and how to have those conversations and understand like, you know, if I'm saying I need a break, it's not because I'm lazy. It's literally because I've busted my you know, what? To get us to this point

**P11:** What's funny actually, though, is what's so funny now that I'm thinking back at all these things. I mean, you provided a very good comprehensive definition of what burnout is to you. And I did the name of fellowship this past year with the name of pro team. And then in my interview, one of the questions was just about what are some of your weaknesses, and I did say I have a tendency to burnout. And I guess maybe at the time, I didn't really even know what we were talking about. So, in my feedback from them that was addressed, and just talking about like, not that that's a problem, but that's definitely something that I need to learn how to take care of. And here are some steps within the organization that they often take, but never in like a U Sport or provincial team scenario, have I been warned and prepared for burnout?

#### **Sub Theme: Preferred Methods of Delivery**

##### **Code: Answer Questions**

**P1:** I think obviously the education is one piece pause I guess the how is the more important piece. So there's the actual knowledge of like this is what burnout is, that these are the symptoms, and this is what leads to it

**P8:** But I think if, you know, like I said that the deeper levels of where the burnout comes from is probably more helpful

**P8:** So, you know, why do we say yes to everything?

**P8:** You know, how, how well how to say no, and not feel guilty about it

**P8:** You know, how to how to self assess, like giving yourself seasons of time

##### **Code: Online Resources**

**P7:** Yeah, definitely. I think the if you were to say like we're going to do something like this back in like April or May I'd be like oh, that's kind of weird, like. But now these likes talking through zoom and all these different things like this is this is life right now. And it's it there's a comfort level that you have to get to with these things, but I don't think it's weird at all. Like I in May, March, April, May, maybe even June. I'm like, Oh, I like this, but now it's like bring in I get it

**P11:** But also, and this is gonna sound funny, but like, if, if a PSO like if name of a PSO were to literally just maybe make like a tweet or an Instagram post, that I could like, flip through with different strategies to help prevent burnout or to help with burnout

##### **Code: Practical Tools to Use**

**P5:** and then some things that exercise that you can go through to kind of do I mean, you know, coaches, coach's kind of all think that they can fix everything, right? So, you are only going to give them suggestions, and they're only going to take so much of it

**P5:** The one thing that would be interesting would be something for administrators to kind of fill out a survey of these are trends we're seeing within this coach

**P5:** and these are demands that we've put on them. And then these are demands that we actually aren't aware of, in the sense of job

**P5:** So one of them would be you know, having a kid that that would ultimately it's not part of the job description, but it would affect the feeling of the load of coaching teaching, you know, committees in university and just allowing administrators say, hey, like this coach probably should take Hey, they've you

know, they had a parent passed away last year. They should probably take some time in the next x.. Like I think coaches will never ask for extended time off. Yeah. But if they're, but if they're men says, Hey, why don't you take some time and it's like, you're not I I know that I am very lucky in that our, our athletic directing team is very, we're really like all coaches are really close. We can talk to them about anything. And that's not the case everywhere. I think some coaches would get fearful that are they tried to kick me out, or are they are trying to push me out to get someone else in here. But it would be an interesting tool for them, because now it takes away. Maybe some of the personal decisions have like I think your goals, as opposed to like, oh, if you had a metric of your in the range of burnout coming up in the next year or two, how do you feel about you know, taking even the offseason. Like I think coaches aren't great at, like literally shutting down for an extended period of time. Like, I talk to our football coach a lot. He's coached for like, 35 years. He's just like, Oh, yeah, I love it. Now, because they have a, they have a recruiting blackout period. I take two days off at Christmas. I was like what Two days. In 35 years? You're like, okay, that like adds up to maybe 30 days. 60 days? last 30 years. That's crazy. Yeah. So yeah, like I think about, you know, we often I mean, we only have, we have three universities in the province, right?

**P9:** I think that that's something that I would want something that I could actually tangibly take with me or go back and revisit, but I don't think there's any harm in doing even a, you know, zoom meeting and then saying, Here's, you know, this document that you can use in your future, you know, when you're talking about burnout, or whatever it may be

**P11:** If you're having it, I would probably look through that and take it seriously now. Maybe more so than before I had experienced burnout. But yeah, something quick with like, very clearcut steps. I think that I could read

**P13:** So I think sometimes hearing from successful coaches and hearing them speak about, like, some of their downtime, or what their typical day is, like, you know, you always hear about the stories of people putting in, you know, 20 hour days and sleeping in their office and getting up and doing it again, the next day. Like, again, I feel like that's revered and the balance is not. So seeing the value in I think the balance and knowing that you can be successful, or, or more. So it would be important to hear

**P14:** Yeah, I think, I think it depends on what it is and what the intention is. So if you're just trying to tell people what burnout is like, could probably be a one to two page, like, reading or infographic

**P14:** Like some things that do come up in sport sessions are inaccurate, or they're out of date. And that's a big thing for me, that loses credibility right away

**Code: Reading**

**P2:** You think people want a shared experience. So you have to have the one pager that's just like information and get stuff out there any type of connecting

**P2:** So, I was going to say that one that'll be important in academic circles. Yeah. But like, more and more with academia, with the advent of social media, it can never unless that goes to a very specific audience. But then it's like, who can do the best job of figuring out different ways to disseminate it simply because for me, you need it's not just about me, you need all of those! the two one pager or a two pager with graphics, extremely important

**P4:** not paper. People don't read! Yeah. Even a two pager, I think people wouldn't read it not to be a jerk. But it's like the reality. People are lazy, right? I don't know

**P5:** or just like a kind of a two page resource of signs, symptoms

**P6:** Yeah, I do think that for sure. For like, some kind of pamphlet, you know, or like, some kind of pamphlet i think is always great, because it's something that people can then take with them, let's just say after. Whether it has like signs and symptoms, but then also say suggestions on, you know how to manage or how to avoid it, you know, where possible

**P10:** Um, I do like one pagers because it's quick, and like, everything's kind of right there

**P11:** Good question? Um, so this is interesting, and maybe my answer is a little skewed. All of my Masters work is on how coaches learn, and what formats they like to learn from. So for me when thinking of something like burnout, I mean, the academic side of me, I think I would appreciate reading something, maybe not something like 400 pages, although I would probably read your thesis if I had access to it. But I would definitely read like a summary document of some sort

**P12:** If it's reading, again, not anything overly lengthy, like, more of like, this is what this is what it is. These are the things that you should do or how you can do them. Yeah, something short and sweet to the point whether it's presentation or reading, I guess

**P14:** I think the working at your own pace stuff is good, like the self studies to manage the different schedules. biggest thing for me is it has to be accurate

**Code: Round Table**

**P1:** hesitates Yes but I think it depends on the setting. The thing with sharing and feeling vulnerable includes feeling safe. It can be harder with people you don't know, it can be harder with people you work with and in a sphere where you feel like you have to uphold a certain image if you will

**P2:** So, I think the idea of having a roundtable just like how amazing it is when there is a small group of a woman in coaching

**P2:** whether it's presentation or roundtable panel, something that's interactive

**P10:** I: Awesome. Yeah, so that's just something I was like, I'm just gonna ask people what they want. Because if I'm gonna have to make this stuff up, I might as well see how they call it, the best way to send it out after is because I don't want to keep it in to myself. And then another thing that has come up is like a forum or like a community chat, where people can come and share their experiences and read like testimonials or go in and say, Hey, I'm dealing with this. Does anyone have advice? Is that something you would look at? participate in? But would you be open to looking at something like that? **P10:** yeah, definitely open to looking at something like that for sure

**P13:** Yeah I think anytime you can hear from other people's experiences and share those, I think those to me seem to be the most valuable, real life experiences that are shared

**P13:** Good idea

**P14:** If you're trying to talk about ways to cope and deal with burnout, or ways to self identify or identifying a colleague, it would probably be more of a workshop or workbook type thing

**Code: Shared Experiences**

**P2:** Presentation, those are always powerful, and inevitably, we'll talk basketball, but it comes back to the shared experience

**P2:** And my story is different more about struggling with self-confidence. But in general, I don't think there's a lot for coaches. I think there's a lot about coaches helping with sport psychology. And anytime right now that we're talking about mental performance and wellness people are like, oh, we need to teach people to meditate. I'm like, that's one part of it. But there's so much more to it, like how do we help people be self-aware? How do we help people move from awareness to like, what now? And so, what you're doing, I think is quite untapped. But I think it's necessary because maybe people are getting out of it too soon. Maybe people are being crippled by it and we don't even know. People do need to know it's okay if you step away

**P4:** In a sense, like, I don't get to where I am, if I didn't push as hard as I did and do as much as I did. And so it's hard because people I mean, the funny thing about females is no one asks me, hey, how did you do that? I have no idea why I think as males men are like, oh, I want to do that. Like how did you do that? Right. But I don't really get asked that question. But I don't think the way the world is like kind of set up right now

**P6:** Because I think at the end of the day, what young younger coaches, let's just say, you know, whatever in their first like 12/15 years need is they need whether it's that mentor or that older, more experienced coach just to be able to communicate to them. First of all, in terms of their career choices, like hey, you don't have to move on to the fast track. Like if you just because you're offered these positions, or offered these opportunities doesn't mean that you have to take them and doesn't mean you have to take all of them, right? Because I do think that that becomes one of the bigger challenges

**Code: Talking**

**P4:** Maybe you're gonna feel like five years from now you're like this did nothing. But I think what could happen is, you know, just starting the conversation. It's like Bell, let's talk or any of those initiatives that are a little bit newer, I think it just in the first year, you're not really fixing anything. It's more like years and years and years of like, like you said, right? Like women experiences the world differently. We are, like, generally more emotional. Like, there's just so many things where it's like, yeah, you we're not asking to be treated differently. We're asking to be treated the way we needed to be treated

**P7:** even something like, sit down and talk about it. Or since we can't be in the same room with people anymore, something like this

**P12:** Definitely not group chats. Those go sideways quickly, I find

**Code: Visual**

**P2:** I think having a video you need because the emotional implications people are highly you're talking about a high performance group. So the stuff that people have invested in this, this is like

**P4:** I almost feel like it has to be through the PSOs. And I like the idea of having it be like videos, something that's interesting

**P5:** Okay, I kind of see this as almost three different resources then. So, the management piece would be around education. So yeah, like a video

**P6:** I do think that at the end of the day, the bigger piece, which like with your idea with, like, say a video, or something like a video that, you know, had also the testimonials of coaches who've gone through it, because I think that then there's a better connection right for another coach to hear from a coach who's been in their position kind of before. And once that connection [has been made] and they can relate to that, then the pamphlet I think becomes useful to them. Because they like because they've made the connection to that other coach

**P7:** My top two ways would be like a one page, mind map type thing

**P7:** Or video, honestly, I think a video would be so key

**P7:** But I think actually seeing a person and actually being able to read their body language, their facial expressions, all that kind of stuff. I think that to me is more powerful than anything I could read, or look at, in terms of on paper or on a screen

**P9:** A lot of people who have never experienced it don't understand when someone else is saying, you know I need a break. It's so there is that piece where zoom would be better or something that is a video again, it's back to that something that I that's visual that I can listen to versus needing to pick it up and read

**P10:** I think I like a combination. Video is good

**P10:** Um, but a PowerPoint is always helpful, because it goes from section to section. It does a lot of information. Yeah

**P12:** Yeah, I think something short and sweet. Like, if it's a presentation

**Appendix E: Quotation List: Theme: Recommendations.**

*Table 5: Summary of the Sub-Themes and codes within the theme Recommendations*

Sub-Theme	Code
Advice For Coaches	1. Be Self Aware
	2. Delegate
	3. Find a Support System
	4. Find What Works for You
	5. Have an Accountability System
	6. Mentors
	7. Normalizing Burnout
	8. Plan Ahead
	9. Relationships are Important
	10. Say No
	11. Someone to Talk to
	12. Time Away
	13. Time for Self Care
Advice for Experienced Coaches	1. Be Open
	2. Self Awareness
Advice for New Coaches	1. Be Aware of Your Current Experiences
	2. Be Yourself
	3. Boundaries to Help with Balance
	4. Find a Support System
	5. Time Management is Important
	6. Time off of Basketball
Advice for Organizations	1. Empowerment
	2. Give Support
Advice for Young Coaches	1. Awareness
	2. Opportunities

**Sub Theme: Advice for Coaches**

**Code: *Be Self Aware***

**P2:** You don't have to feel guilty about having these feelings

**P2:** I think if you're looking to avoid it, you're just going to create, you're having it's like trying to quiet a voice in your head, right, which is how I spent a lot of my national team career. I think you're better to learn to be aware of it and welcome it in because then you don't have to worry about beating it down. It's just like, okay, you're there. I'm an observer of it, it's not dictating where I am or what I'm doing

**P8:** But there's also but it was so much fun when you were like this, or, you know, like when you were refreshed, it was just so much more fun to be around you and to be in your program. So I think I've had to keep reminding myself of those types of conversations where it's just like, the athletes' love playing for me when this, you know, this is what they're encountering. And this is what they struggle with and making sure that you kind of recognize when those things are happening

**P11:** and listening to kind of your gut and your body and your mind on it

**P14:** I can't think of anything specific. Like just knowing yourself, and how you can deal with it

**Code: *Delegate***

**P2:** I tend to be quite honest, which has allowed me to delegate and empower other people

**P10:** I now need to be more assertive. I think that's the next piece to that. Everyone on my staff are like, prior relationships or friends. And I think the more I'm assertive, I feel like they might take it more personal. So that's why I think sometimes I can't be that assertive. So, but I realized that not being assertive of doesn't help the situation. So I really do have to do better in that department. And I felt like I've made

adjustments and things are really good. So, yeah, I mean, we're not on court. So it's not as if there's not much to delegate right now. Oh, yeah

**P10:** I don't know. I think another piece for coaches if you can really get the delegation and the managing piece, like managing your staff piece that goes into delegation down and makes the job easier. Like it literally that's like because you then doesn't don't have to micromanage Yes, I think that's for me a big piece that I really want to have down by next year. Well this year. We're back on court, hopefully

**P12:** Yeah, it's like, it's kind of what we're talking about. Like. It can be managing or avoiding, I think, for managing, it's like, I mean, the delegation piece is huge. And you gotta lean on people and rely on people

**Code: Find a Support System**

**P2:** So that has helped and inevitably, that's a good thing for me, because I'm getting to see how other people do it. Right. And I think it's good for the kids to have like a different viewpoint. So probably that might be different than what you asked me those two things I think would be really helpful for coaches coming through to think about. Being able to go to your club, being able to go to your administrators. Being able to go to your organization and say you got to hire a babysitter for me

**P5:** I would say maybe one thing, maybe it may, this is under the advice thing, but trying to figure out the culture in which you're coaching in both from like a community level and from for us, it's like a school level. And like, what what's the work culture like? What's the culture of the sport that you're coaching in, in that community, because I think it really influences one, the engagement that you get from people outside of your program and your coaching. But it also I think, if you're constantly going against that culture, you're going to get to burn out a lot quicker. And I think the one thing that allowed me to, again, reflection, like I've never knew any of this stuff at the time, was comparing, having grown up in Ontario, and the culture of basketball compared to what it is here. And yeah, it's easy to say it's better in Ontario, but it's not, it's just different. And you got to leverage it a little bit differently

**P8:** well, for the experience coaches? I'd probably say, like, Who is your circle of trust? You know, do you have two or three people that have permission to tell you that you're being a jerk right now?

**P8:** Or, you know, like I said earlier that your tone is sharp, or, you know, hey, like, I had an athlete who had permission to ask me if I needed a granola bar, that was our code for your hangry, right now, have an apple have a granola bar, I don't think I had, I think as a coach, it's important to have one athlete as well, whether it's an older, mature athlete that gets you that has permission on behalf of the athletes' to say, like, you know, your tone is pretty sharp today

**P8:** So I think that's been important for me, or to have a younger assistant coach, who is a little bit more connected to the athletes' that can help you understand how they're responding to your stress, because oftentimes, it's just, you don't know how they're handling things. And sometimes you're just exasperating challenging things that are going on in their life, and then you're just adding to the, to the mess

**P8:** For the experienced coaches as well, I mean, as a female coach, it's really hard to feel as though opportunities are going to keep coming up. And so when something does come up, there is this fear of, if I don't say yes to this, then I'm never going to get another window of opportunity. And I can't say that that's not untrue. You know, I would say that, you know, I've seen, you know, young moms that are trying to coach and do everything, because they feel that if they take a step back while they're trying to raise a kid or just even spend some eternity time off, that they're going to completely miss out on their opportunities. And I think that experienced coaches probably need to spend more time speaking into those situations, and supporting each other through that, because it ends up being a very competitive world. And so I don't know, if we do a great job of supporting each other through the fact that we all probably share a lot of the similar challenges

**P8:** You know, I think that every generation of female coach has had to learn hard lessons. And it's like if we can prevent the next generation from learning the hard way, they'll learn their own hard lessons, but there's probably few there that we could support them through

**P12:** even if it's two coaches who you can call and you can talk to about these things. And I think we just get so caught up in, you know, our team and, and trying to win and focus there that we don't have a lot of outside support. And so I think developing a bit of a network is really important to be able to have these conversations and to lean on others who are going through the same thing that you're going through

**P13:** I think managing is just again, the, the stuff that I talked about would be well, it's probably the same as the advice for young ones to like surround yourself with people that you want to be spending that time with



**P13:** For sure. So it's a really enjoyable fun environment to be part of

**P13:** I think there's always people willing to give up their time to be involved in coaching, you know, I think it's a matter of just finding that that connection, it's making, making those connections and somehow getting them involved in your program

**P13:** it might not be on a daily basis, but maybe it's, you know, every once in a while, maybe it's you going out and helping out other teams or groups to make those connections and to have a bit of like, I know a lot of high level coaches that have even just volunteered their time with, like young kids, right. And they feel so much like gratification and joy and fun out of doing that. So maybe it's just like a completely different environment where you long pause get a little bit of a different perspective, you play a different role. But as far as like getting people involved in your program

**P13:** Yeah, for sure. I think that takes time. Absolutely. I think. And you have to kind of put yourself out there too

**P14:** and as best as you can put yourself into situations that are supportive of that

**Code: Find What Works For You**

**P1:** So like I said before I never get sick but if I'm like oh well its that time of year to get sick again. I would just like to never be sick if I can help it. And I think coming from I think what unique about my coaching experience is I was coming from the ncaa into U Sport and the lifestyles like people ask me all the time do you think you will ever go back? I always answer no absolutely not because the lifestyle differences to me are remarkable. I cant vividly remember that first year its like a blur to me. I'm sure I experienced burnout for a myriad of reasons. But what was a breath of fresh air when I came to Canada was to see that I don't have to put all my time and effort into my job. Where as like in the ncaa it felt like your job is your life, you lived for it. That's not to say I chose the easier route, I chose the route that was more fit and better for my lifestyle. And when you work in an competitive environment its very easy to get looped into that game of more is more and if I want to be the best I have to keep pushing. Certainly those things are true in some aspects but I think that at the risk of putting your own health on the line I don't think it's a reasonable risk. I think there is healthy ways to stay competitive but also not be burnt out and keep your sanity on a daily basis

**P1:** There is always things that will stress us out. I would like to say I am going to be one of those coaches like a coaches name and coach for x amount of decades so if I'm getting burnt out in my first 5 years I'm either in trouble or I have learnt from it quick

**P1:** You can give these breathing strategies but if your not suffering from sleep deprivation or heart palpitations is that going to help you?

**P2:** And again, then helping them decide like, it doesn't mean you have to quit

**P4:** I think one is, if you can learn to compartmentalize, I truly think it is like one of the greatest skills. We ask our athletes' to do it all the time. So, I think those are things whereas a coach like I really try to practice what I preach, right? So I'm not just going to tell you to compartmentalize and be able to like, shut out the stress of your boyfriend breaking up with you. If I can't. So funny a couple years ago, the coach who was at name of university before me, I guess his car got broken into a game. And he came to like game day shooter, and he was all flustered about it. And he mentioned it like four or five times, and the girls were like, dying, because they're like, listen, you tell us all the time how important it is to make sure that we can be ready mentally and you can't shut that out. And it's funny because the same thing happened to me when I was at name of university. My second year, on the day of a game my car got broken into. I like, dealt with it drove to work, drove to the game, acted like everything was normal to the whole game, not a single word. And then after the game, I mentioned it, and they were like, why didn't you say anything? It wasn't important, right? Like, it wasn't important for me to tell you guys and then what if that like stress anyone out or like someone had had that experience before? So I feel like compartmentalizing is super important

**P4:** And then the other one is, I'm not good at this. But I think balance, right? So if you're someone who likes yoga, or you like to work out, or, you know, you really like a movie in a movie theater. Those are things where I've seen people do those things. And it's like a reset or like a moment of their time. I think I've never been great at it. But I'd like it to be something that I've like started and COVID and will take forward is just have balanced. Like we asked the kids to take care of themselves. And I don't think as coaches, we are very good at that

**P4:** I mean, I always argue that I actually think it's somewhat easier, because I think you have an easy excuse. I know, for me personally, I just find it hard. Because if I don't have the excuse of, if I don't have if

I don't have a partner at home, like that I have to get home to or that we have to go on a date or whatever. Then like it's not a big deal for me to stay at work longer or to go out recruiting more or whatever, right? Whereas if I have that person, then to me, it's an easier justification for myself. But I've definitely had a lot of conversations where, you know, that's the mistake, right? Is that you don't, there doesn't have to be that other person or those kids. For you to justify making time for yourself. Like just yourself is actually enough reason to do it. Yeah, yeah, I just, yeah, I personally still find that hard. And I think that that can also be an issue, right, like, first of all, not all women necessarily want to have kids, you know, or going to have kids or whatever. So I just feel like we can't say that only because they have kids is like a good reason for them to, you know, to not be here you know, like you can you should be able to also just just fine. I'm just going home

**P7:** So, to kind of remove people like that out of your life and to always just go back to like the why like, why do you do that? Why do you Why do you coach Why do you love it? Why do you Why did you get into it in the first place? And I feel like that's a good recharge. When you're feeling the burnout, the burnout setting in. The Why, why are you doing this?

**P8:** And it was very, it was very good for me to look at that and say, that's not who I want to be, you know, and whether it was someone in my church who was an older single lady, that was so overwhelmed by all the things that she was doing. And was out actually missing out on new, really exciting opportunities, because she had bogged herself down. And I remember looking at that saying, I don't want to be like that, if there's an opportunity that comes up, that's great and exciting, I want to be able to say, Yes, I'm important to what I'm doing here, but you will be fine without me. And I'm going to take on this new opportunity. And that's why I'm in name of province right now

**P9:** Um, I think finding a hobby that you like doing is important. Like I said, you know, I, I taken up a little bit of photography. Yes, I've played video games. But again, I don't have to think about anything. I just, you know, can play for a couple minutes and then be on my merry way. And for me, it kind of takes me back to hanging out with my brother and by ever go and visit him. I know, he's probably playing video games. So it's that connection piece that I'm creating with him as well

**P11:** First, so block out time to go for a walk or to

**Code: *Have an Accountability System***

**P12:** I'm sure you've, you've had that feedback a lot in this. But I think there has to be some kind of accountability piece

**P12:** And that's, like, you know, if I want to be this type of coach, so if I want to be like, a relationship, coach, a player centered coach, or transformational coach, whatever, you know, kind of all those, those key words are right now, like, if that's what you want to be, but then you get into practice, and you're so concerned about, you know, winning, winning, winning and the score and this and that, and you're, you're trying to micromanage everything in your program. Like, there's things that don't align, right, like you say, you want to be this, but you're doing this. So I just feel like if you can have something in place, to hold you accountable as a coach, and I think that's the biggest piece that we're missing in a lot of this is we're holding our players accountable, but who's holding us accountable? And I think to fall back on like, Okay, did I do if these three things are really important to me? Did I do these three things today, and if you can say that you're consistently, you know, coming close to doing those things, and I think that, that will just help you in your management of yourself, and, and the people around you, I don't know what those three things are. But I think if you can have some kind of accountability system in place for what you're trying to do and what you're trying to accomplish, then I think that can alleviate burnout down the road, hopefully

**Code: *Mentors***

**P1:** But the knowledge of how, I think mentorship goes a long way. And so I try to surround myself with people I admire, like name of coach is still a resource for me, name of another coach is still a resource for me so I think mentorship goes a long way with helping with the how. I think every persons situation is unique

**P8:** I know that there's about a year and a half ago, like I have, I have a former athletic director, that was a workaholic. And so when he was asked to step down, it literally took him three and a half, four months to realize how burnt out he was. And so I think that when we're leaders, and we're burnt out, and we're trying to lead other people, like it's disastrous, and I, obviously I experienced. So that's kind of where I have some grace for him, because I'm like, you were so burnt out, that I don't agree with what you did. And there was damage to what you did, and how you did things. But I also know that you were coming from a place of

you were trying to get quick fixes, because you were burnt out yourself. So I think when we recognize it in other people, you know, one of the things for me is that I've had two or three people in my life that were mentors to me or leaders to me, that I saw their burnout

**P13:** The mentor piece is a huge one. You need to have people outside of your direct working environment that you can communicate with and share some of your feelings and experiences with them

**Code: Normalizing Burnout**

**P1:** long pause I think that well this has already been said but burnout is normal burnout is expected and we shouldn't be ok with it. Similar to how I was saying about motivation, its ok to be demotivated but its not ok to stay demotivated

**P2:** For newer coaches, I think the normalizing

**P2:** I think I was the driver of it to be honest. I I've always been extremely sensitive to the experience the social emotional experience of athletes'. And so went through it with some kids hardcore and had to really work them through walk them through burnout. And I think PSO's were really open to it, they just didn't know what to do with it. Now Canada basketball has more money now so they've got some mental performance, people, so they're talking about these things. And a huge piece of it is a) normalizing it

**P6:** Like, I don't know that that's I don't know that we're, you know, that we've normalized maybe having that conversation. I think it's more just like, haha, we work all the time

**Code: Plan ahead**

**P13:** Yeah, I think like scheduling your day

**P13:** Making sure you I mean, the to do lists and things like that. keeping things organized so you can prioritize. So it doesn't feel so daunting. I know a lot of times there's a million things on your list and you know, you don't get to them. And then it's again, it just continues to be this daunting task that you don't feel like you're ever picking away at

**Code: Relationships are Important**

**P8:** And I would say that if I hadn't had kind of that visual of what it looked like, I don't think I would be here and obviously with with the administrator that I dealt with seeing how he led completely burnt out and the impact that he had on me and my socio emotional state. I'm like, I never want to be that kind of coach. And have I have unfortunately, you know, but it's kind of working through that and trying to have like restorative conversations with athletes' who kind of said, you know, like, I just really didn't enjoy that season or, you know, that span of time. And for me to have to be the big person say I apologize, you know, that that wasn't your experience during that time? Or, or how can we work through that and not to condone my behavior? This was what was going on. I know that I didn't explain that to you guys, when you were playing for me. But the reality is, I was so stressed about losing my job. And you don't talk about that with current athletes', but former athletes' who now have been in the world a little bit are like, oh, okay, that makes sense. So I think it's been healthy to go back and kind of try to restore some relationships that were impacted by your burnout, I would actually say that for experienced coaches as well, where therapeutic is, you're sitting there thinking about all the damage that you've done, potentially

**P7:** Oh advice, I think maybe the one of the bigger things would be if you, if they have people in their life that are constantly demanding of them then they don't understand how much they love the coaching to tell them like you're being overbearing, Please stop. Or and they don't just try and cut them out of their life a little bit too right? Like give them the warning be like I can't handle this in you in this state right now. Please stop and then if they don't listen and respect that just cuz you got to think of yourself first

**P11:** hang out with a friend or do something like that. Basketball will still be there after

**P13:** You know, I think a lot of times we kind of wait for people to approach us when there's so many people that want to give and want to support and want to be involved. And yeah, I think it's just a matter of putting yourself out there and then weeding through Who do you have a good connection with? Who's going to be a good fit? But yeah, I think that's a tough situation to be in when you're when you're young and new and new city or environment

**Code: Say No**

**P4:** I just think you know, I think the way that I got into this into where I am now is by saying yes to everything. But I don't think people should feel like they don't have to do that. I think they should feel okay, about prioritizing something else in their life

**P6:** Like, it's like, yep, yep, yep, yep. Oh, yeah. No, I can still do all of this. And for sure. I mean, again, that was in 2012. It was a while ago now. But it's like, I just didn't feel like I could say no, because if

people were giving me these chances, I should, I should take advantage of them. And I wish that I had had more guidance or advice that like, that's awesome that you're getting these all of these options, but like, it's also okay for you to say, Okay, I can only do these couple things

**P6:** I mean, I always argue that I actually think it's somewhat easier, because I think you have an easy excuse. I know, for me personally, I just find it hard. Because if I don't have the excuse of, if I don't have if I don't have a partner at home, like that I have to get home to or that we have to go on a date or whatever. Then like it's not a big deal for me to stay at work longer or to go out recruiting more or whatever, right? Whereas if I have that person, then to me, it's an easier justification for myself. But I've definitely had a lot of conversations where, you know, that's the mistake, right? Is that you don't, there doesn't have to be that other person or those kids. For you to justify making time for yourself. Like just yourself is actually enough reason to do it. Yeah, yeah, I just, yeah, I personally still find that hard. And I think that that can also be an issue, right, like, first of all, not all women necessarily want to have kids, you know, or going to have kids or whatever. So I just feel like we can't say that only because they have kids is like a good reason for them to, you know, to not be here you know, like you can you should be able to also just just fine. I'm just going home

***Code: Someone to Talk to***

**P1:** I don't know it could still but having someone you trust, having someone you know that can speak to your specific situation goes a long way

**P2:** it and talking about it

**P3:** Yeah, well, you know what I think one of the things that that I kind of think about is I have a texting group with the other black female head coaches at the U Sport basketball level, and I think would be great to have something like that

**P6:** And then I think in terms of like, you know, sitting around talking to other head coaches, again, for me, personally, you know, I'm more only going to talk to the ones that I think that whether it's like that I'm friends with or that like, you feel like there's that safe space where, you know, look, I'm not, we're not like complaining, you know, of course, we love our jobs, but at the same time, just acknowledging the fact that like, Yeah, man, like, you know, Sunday's after you had some wins on the weekends are great. And Sundays, after you had losses on the weekends, you know, they suck. And, you know, and like, November is a grind. And yeah, you know, February, again, depends, especially depending on how good your team is, is equally a grind. And I think the challenge, I think that when you're talking, I don't know that anybody is really saying that they're figuring out how to avoid burnout

**P8:** And sometimes you need to take a step back and be bold and have that conversation, say like, how did, how did I impact you, you know, and there's some athletes' that were like, I didn't actually enjoy coming to practice, you know, because it was like, we had to brace ourselves for how abrasive you were going to be that day or whatever

**P12:** And this is a profession can be very, it can be very lonely in the sense that you're competing against your, the people who you you work with, right like

**P12:** And so I think it's important to and this would be something that I would say is like reach out to other coaches and try to develop a network

***Code: Time Away***

**P3:** Don't coach every day, find at least a day if you can, like as much as you can, that is not you servicing your athletes' or doing something coach or work related. And I know, it's a challenge for many people, but the reality is, there's 56 professional coaches in the country at the U Sport level, and there is even a smaller than that amount at the pro level in Canada. That means everyone else is volunteering. And so we do feel like there's this big task on us, and we want to get back. But I would say certainly find a way to designate time for yourself. And whether it's two days, whether it's every other day, I'm going to be this volunteer coach at the local club, but make it something that allows you to still get the rest that you need

**P11:** Um, no, not in particular. Well actually, I think what would maybe be important for coaches to hear. And maybe this is obvious to some people, but it's okay. And it's actually good to have a life outside of basketball, or in our case basketball

**P11:** Like I've had a couple of different mentors now. And it's safe to say that the first few and this is no knock to them, but basketball was their whole life. So I think I know you'll pick names that it was like name of coach in particular, who was my coach and university really had no life outside of basketball. And I think it led her to be very burnt out and very angry all the time with all of us. And now like name of

coach/university, and I consider my mentor right now, and she has children, and she has a life and I think because of that she's a much better coach and role model for everybody in the gym. So, I think just making sure that you have outlets and other things going on, like it's not only healthy for you yourself, but I think it's also good role modeling for other young girls in particular to see that you can be a mom and also coach basketball and also have hobbies and stuff. keep yourself healthy and not burnt out

**Code: Time for Self Care**

**P7:** Yeah, the my athletes' see a whole different like side of me when I start reminiscing and being like, oh, when I was at name of university, and we were in a game and actually when we played Memorial and we beat them and we weren't supposed to beat them right? And it was in their home gym, right? Like that was like that's a big thing. Then the girls kind of see in me too, right? And it's like, oh, like she was a real person, or afraid, because always athletes' always holds Not always, but often hold her coach to this higher, like level of like, oh, they're not really a person. And then you know, you hear these stories and see these pictures and you go through it and you're like, oh, wow, like you actually did do cool things. And you were 21 at one point and that kind of stuff. So those stories definitely help bring the energy back in me. 100%

**P11:** Hmm, I think the biggest one that comes to mind is just to make sure you're taking time for yourself  
**P11:** I've learned that our intuition is pretty smart, and you don't feel burnt out or exhausted for no reason. Like, it's because you are. And if I could maybe even speak to myself two years ago, it would be if you're burnt out and exhausted, then none of your work that you're doing and none of your coaching is actually going to be your best. So like, you need to take care of yourself

**P13:** Yeah. What else? Yeah, I think the scheduling piece is big, like scheduling in your time first, maybe, if that's like exercise, or meditation, or whatever it is, like making sure that that gets slid in first, and then that time slot is reserved, or else fills up, I think, for the longest time, I would always kind of procrastinate, that time for me for like when stuff got done, and you know, the day just ends up getting away from you, and you never end up doing that thing for your mental health or well being that you that you should. So definitely making that a priority, I think is one for sure.

**Sub Theme: Advice for Experienced Coaches**

**Code: Be Open**

**P14:** being open about it. So if you're a head coach, creating a space for you and your assistants or staff to talk about it and bring it up. is important and like that safety piece? There probably be the biggest piece of advice

**Code: Self Awareness**

**P2:** You have to be compassionate with yourself and or go like, if I'm feeling this all the way, then it's, then it's time to step away

**P2:** I think for for experienced coaches, it depends where they're at in their lifecycle. But I guess probably, what would I want to be told is, long pause you're still enough like, you have to, you have to be able to make the decision

**P2:** I just, I just think I think that's the big one for experienced coaches is being able to go. And where I'm like, is this is me, not at my absolute best. Is this still, Is this still enough for my being fair to them? And you know what, I guess I keep I don't know if that's a selfish decision or not, as I guess it is, right? I think I can still offer a well rounded enough program that it's worth it. But it's like, the big thing to figure out and I don't know, the answer is how do you how do you know when it's time to walk away?

**Sub Theme: Advice for New Coaches**

**Code: Be Aware of Your Current Experience**

**P2:** like you said, and being able to recognize for them how it manifests where it's, this is too much, I need to make a change or like this is just this where I'm at, or we're in playoffs or like I've got report cards do and I'm doing this like, you know, it's nuanced, and that might be like my word now. It's okay to be anywhere here, and if we use that bell curve that I mentioned beginning, you're not always going to be here. There's many times you're here here and like, again, just be aware of it

**P5:** and the experience of your athletes'

**P5:** It's really hard to do when, when you have competitive, you're in a competitive environment, and then you have competitive goals, but it allows you just to kind of process information a little bit easier failures and successes. In the sense of, well, you know what, like, yeah, that didn't go well. But we ultimately got out what we wanted it or we didn't, and this is what we learned from that. And we can kind of go back to the next step. Right? That would be one I think the other one is, is to try not to get too too hung up on the

structure of your personal life. I would say, you know, a lot of people are like, Oh, how do you get like, so lucky, you have a supportive partner, you have kids or you coach. And I think it's like a lot of professions early, when you get consumed by it. You start to like overthink other areas of your life. And that was a big one, like, we've never planned, we've never done any of this, like it's just kind of go with the flow. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, we'll just go back to the drawing board

**P5:** So I think that's one and then when I get asked that question, I was just like I, I honestly don't have advice in the sense of finding a supportive partner. But it definitely it definitely is. 80% of the reason I can manage it all in the sense of like just sanity not even, at a high level or successful. So and it doesn't have to look traditional, I would say

**P8:** self awareness

**P8:** I've encouraged like a lot of the young coaches that I mentoring to take personality tests that specifically give them answers to what stressors are

**P8:** they will encounter type of personalities that will challenge them, so that they can, they can know when those battles are coming up. Because those tend to be the things that exhaust us and lead, I would say more to burnout

**P14:** Yeah, I don't think they can avoid it

**Code: *Be Yourself***

**P3:** Don't be afraid to build something and then bring it to others. I feel like I did both. On the one hand, I see a gap here and I'm going to try to fill it. But then I also was like trying to do a lot to prove myself. And I feel like if your efforts should be in one place it should be trying to build whatever your brand or whatever, whatever makes you unique first, and then able to turn around and provide that. So now you can leverage whatever brand recognition you have, or the value that you can bring to the table to use versus saying, Hey, I really want to be involved, let me know how I can help. And then you just become like a token volunteer, which a lot of organizations have a little too much of right

**P3:** So like, if I could go back, that's probably what I would have done differently. I certainly think everything happened for a reason. And I love the experiences I got. But I would have probably focused a little bit more on the building of where I can fill a gap. And then being like, this is how we can help. This is how we can help you. When you go to the table and say like, how can I support you? Because this is what I can bring? I think that's a lot that puts you in a better position for advancement

**P5:** So yeah, maybe we are maybe we talk about the holistic side of it a little bit more here. Or maybe we do talk about ok what are other pathways for athletes'. Not everyone can be a high level basketball player, because there's only three teams, you know. So I think that's an interesting one. I don't know if it's something that you've kind of seen in research or anything like that. But it's definitely something that's come across my table more than I thought it would was understanding the culture of where you are and how it influences your coaching

**P5:** Yeah, I mean, I definitely don't have advice for experienced coaches, because if they're, if they're experienced there, they're there for a reason, right. And I would say, for just younger coaches, kind of some conversations that I've had with some female coaches that got into U Sport or provincial team for the first time this year, just more about try to, to really keep in mind what you originally valued as a coach

**Code: *Boundaries to Help with Balance***

**P8:** I think, to young coaches, I would talk about boundaries

**P8:** That's probably what I would have wanted for myself as a young coach is to have some nonnegotiable in terms of like, I'm taking this day off, or, and I've had people kind of challenge me from a faith perspective, where it's like, do you have like a Sabbath? And I'm like, well, from like, Saturday night at 10 o'clock to like, four o'clock on Sunday, then and then I'm back to work because I have to practice plan for the next week. And so, you know, some of my friends are really that's kind of sketchy. So fitting things in that should take up more time

**P8:** So yeah, I would, I would say younger coaches, I would, I would probably talk about boundaries and self care

**P9:** And, you know, set your own boundaries. It's something I'm, again, still trying to figure out. Like, why did I say to No, why didn't I say no to the meeting tonight, and tomorrow, when I know that I was already booked in my personal time. So say no, and setting boundaries

**P9:** The advice to new female coaches would be you don't have to say yes to everything. I feel like that's so I feel like a lot of people probably answered that, like learn when to say no

**P10:** I think the biggest one is to really have a work life balance

**P11:** Will, I think probably help with burnout during the season and long term. Just because, if you go into something with a plan, knowing things don't always go according to plan. But at least you have some kind of guide and you're not doing all the work in the middle. But yeah, I think having times blocked out for yourself again, it's just important

**Code: Find a Support System**

**P8:** So whether it's like, man, this is my boss right now. It's like, okay, like, clearly that personality is a stressor for you. Don't go into that meeting tired. Like, don't go into that meeting without following up with someone else first. Okay, you're dealing with this challenging athlete, have an assistant coach there during your meeting. Don't do that one by yourself. Like you're going to say something that you're going to regret. You know, give your assistant coaches permission to cut you off. When you're about to say something that everyone knows you're going to regret. You know, just little things like that. And I mean, that's kind of what I advise the young coaches that I'm talking to now already, or it's just learn from the older coaches and the mistakes that we've made

**P9:** having the people in your inner circle understand, you. I know, that if I didn't have the right people around me, like, I wouldn't still be in this job, I would be probably working a nine to five job with the government or something like that. So you have to have the right people. And, you know, realistically, you're going to have people that don't understand and might make you feel a little bit guilty. And there's times where you need to reassess and say like, Are you the person that's going to help support me through my journey? Or are you, you know, turning this into something about yourself? So, you know, trying to balance that out? And then what was the what was the first one any advice, there was any advice for new coaches, and any advice for

**Code: Time Management is Important**

**P6:** Yeah, so again, I think my advice, for younger coaches, to avoid it first would be the fact that, you know, you'd like to not take on everything, that you need to prioritize, and manage your opportunities

**P11:** I think that, um, someone actually, this is gonna sound so corny. Somebody showed me a quote the other day, and it makes me think of this. So I'm going to pull it up right now. It was okay, I was going to some funny, it was "give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe". It's like Abraham Lincoln, we were talking about preparedness. So, I think, at least in my experience, and if I again, can talk to my younger self, taking time to be prepared in terms of your time management, and just you're planning for a season or something before it all begins?

**P14:** I'm hesitant to give them the classic advice of just say no to things because I don't think it's that easy

**Code: Time Off of Basketball**

**P8:** don't do as I've done, like, you know, if I could look back at my young self, as a coach, I would have to learn how to take time off

**P10:** I think that's the biggest thing, like you have to be able to step away and do things that you enjoy joy outside of coaching. Whether that's just spending time with family or hanging out with friends, or even just watching a movie that has nothing to do with basketball. Like, just that little balance will make everything easier. That's what I found

**Sub Theme: Advice for Organizations**

**Code: Empowerment**

**P2:** But also, like, they need to hear from adults. If you change your goal or wanna change your pathway I'm not you're not doing this for me, like, kids are pushed. And I think with coaches, maybe I'm so sensitive to it, because I always feel like my parents, I was never pushed, but I always felt this, like, I can't let people down. I can't let people down and coaches and athletes' get so stuck in it. I think the more PSO's and NSO's can keep it as an option, not as a mandatory thing, there's a difference between empowering someone and like, not treating them as a commodity

**Code: Give Support**

**P1:** And even just other opportunities and resources. I think professionally as a coach how we spend our time in the off season, when I talk about the burnout I probably wouldn't have dealt with that summer any other way. I probably would have said yes to all those opportunities because it got me to where I am now. So I'm not saying like club team name and provincial team name need to plan their schedule better so their coaches don't burnout. Like no, its easier to teach us how to manage as opposed to having organizations plan around their coaches. I think just being able to provide opportunities for coaches is important

**P3:** Actually I think having someone who's appointed, like job wise that you can go to when you're experiencing things that are related to burnout, or discrimination of sorts, I think that's really what I find the biggest resource because, like, we've got HR here at name of university, but their priority is the staffing side of. I think, as an athletics department, and as a coach, what would be really good as if we did have someone that was available for coach support. And whether that person had a hat of sport practitioner or a sports psychologist, we actually hired our first professor to teach sports psych. And he's also concurrently trying his best to support athletics, it's definitely like a new thing. But he's been kind of talking to the AD about trying to get something going formally. And he I mean, he was introduced to us more in a capacity of helping athletes', but in kind of two dialogues with him. He's also said, look, I'm also here to support coaches too, because it's, it's definitely a challenge. And, and that's a piece that I think we are certainly missing

**P3:** And as, again, just representing that female piece and a person of color, I think it is needed, you know. I've had some friends outside of here be like you should talk to a therapist, you know, but through our job itself, there was some supports there something formal, because now that person could be a point of contact for resources, or, hey, this is what you're struggling with. This is what we recommend based on that. I think that's a, I think there's a great deal of opportunity there

**P3:** Now, from a kind of strategical planning standpoint, there's certainly things we have in place through athletics and our school to make sure females are supported. So each year we have our bystander training for anti-sexual violence. There are certain resources and organizations that are here for women, specifically. But yeah, as a coach, I would say it's been it's been really pretty tough from that standpoint, like outside of the X's and O's and players. I've never felt the pressure in my early career to like win right away. It's been about kind of doing it the right way, getting the right people on board. And I've had really great support in that sense, but yeah, I think the first time U Sport coach and being black and being a female, pretty inadequate in some of those sports

**P14:** And until we can get it fixed from a top down approach as well

**P14:** I would put the pressure and challenge back on the administration and the sport organizations to better manage their new and current coaches. I think the system could be improved. More than one individual could improve it for themselves

**P14:** I don't know how you can ask an unpaid 22 year old female coach to start saying no to things. When you're the one who keeps asking, like, I don't know, I just seems ridiculous

#### **Sub Theme: Advice for Young Coaches**

##### **Code: Awareness**

**P2:** And maybe for younger coaches, what are your triggers?

##### **Code: Opportunities**

**P6:** And again, I will always say that, I think that, if you're an assistant coach, in your main coaching job, you know, my biggest thing would be, you need to find a head coaching role in any other kind of, you know, teams so that you're gaining experience being the one making decisions. As well, even if that's in a smaller or different capacity, I just think it's super important to really get that head coaching experience. And so that's where, you know, I feel like it's trying to give, it's trying to manage and give that career advice to younger coaches, so that they're not going safe from playing to just be in a university assistant coach, and not getting any, any head coaching experiences at younger levels, to help better prepare them to eventually if that's what they want to be right, to be a head coach



## Appendix F: Quotation List: Theme: Misc.

*Table 6: Summary of the Sub-Themes and codes within the theme Misc.*

Sub-Theme	Code
Characteristics of Burnout	1. Burnout is Different for Everyone
	2. Cognitive Effects of Burnout
	3. Feeling Overloaded
	4. Limited Capacity
	5. Push Through
	6. Taking Time Away
Memories	1. Big Events
	2. Firsts
	3. Give Back
	4. Goals
	5. Reflection
	6. Travel
Why Coach	1. Family Encouragement
	2. Giving Back
	3. Goals
	4. Injury
	5. Love of the Game
	6. Next Thing on my Path
	7. Relationships
Broader Burnout Considerations	1. Female
	2. Normalize It
	3. Self-Care
	4. Support
Potential Burnout Research Areas	1. Athletes' Transition
	2. Burnout Levels
	3. Gender
	4. Self-Awareness
	5. Sociocultural

**Sub Theme: Characteristics of Burnout**

**Code: *Burnout is Different for Everyone***

**P2:** I think burnout can look different. I think there are stages of burnout

**P2:** I: So, for my study, what I'm looking at for definition technically wise, is burnout is a results in feelings of reduced personal accomplishment such as your work is never good enough. Or I'm not reaching the goals I want to reach, decrease emotional, Increased emotional exhaustion, feeling mentally drained by just everyday tasks, not just the going into coach but thinking about practice planning, thinking about those basic things. And then I depersonalization which you touched on kind of detach from your task, why am I doing this? blaming others making negative comments toward others. I know for me when I feel burnt out, I get snippy with my athletes'. That's one that I find where I noticed that depersonalization happening, and then physical symptoms, pain, trouble sleeping, cardiovascular issues, heart palpitations, some of those things are all what you might have experienced at some points. P2 response: Everything you talked about. I'm like, I'm feeling that all the time. I don't know if some of it is just coaching. I don't know if some of it is being a female. I don't know if it's. But I mean, I agree with all of that. But that's the interesting part. Is this just now is this just part of coaching? Or like, what if I'm burnt out like, it's the now it's the now what, like, I just still don't see not doing it as an option. And yet, I'm like, I feel all of those things. Oh, this should be interesting.

**P9:** So I think that's a bit of a downfall to certainly to me, I know that I'm guilty of it, you know, I sit there and look at my schedule and say, like, that's not a problem I have all the time in the world, because I have five hours off today. And then I just fill it with something. And, and like I said, I think burnout is it's probably different for everybody. But I would say most people don't realize it until it's at the, you know, yeah, it's bad

**Code: Cognitive Effects of Burnout**

**P1:** Burnout also speaks to for me more of a mental capacity

**P1:** I think of decreased motivation

**P2:** I think it's important that we can normalize it at times, where it's I'm verging on it or I'm in a burnout phase, and it doesn't mean you need to quit. I think we've all probably experienced it. I think it also depends on where you are in your life. So when you're up at night, coaching is one career where you're going to be feeling overwhelmed, over aroused regularly. All of those things I don't think are burnout.

Burnout is when there's the incessant questions of 'am I good enough

**P2:** Is this what I should be doing?' When it's not the choice that you want to make anymore.

**P3:** And emotional toll on an individual

**P3:** Or I think in the most extreme case, like a mental breakdown, I would see that as burnout

**P5:** Like complete mental fatigue

**P5:** Surrounding whatever task takes up the majority of your day. And then it affects other areas of your life

**P7:** Yeah, so that kind of burnout I guess, is just complete exhaustion. And on a mental side, not necessarily on the physical body

**P7:** But I think burnout, it's more of a mental thing. You, you it's hard to focus

**P7:** Sometimes, and you just kind of float through your day

**P7:** But I really think burnout has evolved to more of a emotional, mental, psychological state

**P11:** Oh yah, good question. Um, I guess I mean, stress

**P11:** Is the first thing probably that comes to mind. Probably being stressed out to a point that it's affecting me in my daily life

**P11:** Or other activities. That's probably the gist of it for me. Is there a correct definition? I'm sure there is

**P12:** And the stresses of work and the commitments

**P12:** Or demands of work, start to have a negative impact on who you are as a person

**P12:** It might not necessarily just be specifically your performance at work, but who you are as a person in your daily life, I guess

**Code: Feeling Overloaded**

**P1:** And decreased performance overall

**P1:** Decreased productivity

**P3:** And I see it as kind of like when someone has a breaking point

**P3:** Also, whether that's like an emotional upheaval, so it's just like, oh, my goodness, like, I'm just overwhelmed

**P3:** As a coach, though, I've always felt like all of the coaches that I've ever had, were always doing too much. So I don't know if that's the real definition of burnout. But I certainly think I do a lot

**P10:** Well, when I think of burnout, I kind of think of like, overexerting like

**P10:** Yeah, I think when you're overloaded workwise

**P13:** Just again, from feeling a bit maybe overwhelmed

**Code: Limited Capacity**

**P7:** It's hard to be engaged

**P7:** And show that you care

**P7:** Cuz there's lack of compassion

**P8:** And, I mean, I've experienced burnout from an athlete's perspective as well. So, I think that from a coach's perspective, it's you're, at a point where even simple things become challenging

**P8:** You know, every task just seems like it's gonna take too much out of you

**P8:** And, and I would say that your cup is not full anymore. So that briefly, that's kind of how I would explain it

**P13:** I think just losing a bit of your motivation

**P13:** Losing passion for what you're doing

**P14:** Someone who is like putting a lot of time, effort and energy into something and then maybe reaching a point where they don't have that same energy or commitment to use or expel anymore on the area

**Code: Push Through**

**P9:** I think it's something that most of the time, when you're thinking about a high performance coach, they've likely played at a high level, and we're probably all programmed to, like, just push forward, and, you know, it's gonna be fine, you know, your high performance, this and that. And the other thing, so you know, you just find a way to keep pushing through

**P9:** Oh, boy, I think burnout is something that a lot of people are not familiar with. And they don't realize that it's happening until they're in like complete destruction mode

Code: Somatic Effects of Burnout

**P1:** But it can also be extended to physical burnout where, you know, extreme fatigue, or just getting sick and not feeling well

**P3:** When I think burnout, I think of like a physical

**P3:** I'm crying

**P3:** And I'm venting to somebody about all these things I have to do

**P3:** And physical fatigue

**P7:** Um, burnout has been a term that's kind of evolved over the past I think even year in my world. Just in terms of when I've heard people talk about burnout. Initially, it was all physical, when I was like, when I was an athlete coaches would talk about, oh, we can't have you burning out too early in the year and the season, the basketball season, that kind of stuff. And that was all physical

**P7:** Now, in terms of if you're, if your head's in it, your body will also be in it. Unless you have some type of physical inability, like you break your leg or something like that, then you can't necessarily keep going

**P7:** It's hard to sleep

**P8:** Well, I think that there's this there's being tired, and then there is being burnt out, which I think is kind of like an exasperated level of tiredness

**P8:** Where you're kind of beyond brief recovery time

**P10:** And you just continuously going until you're at a point where it's almost like you can't come back from it like you can, but it's almost like you almost make yourself sick, right?

**P10:** So that's what I think of like in terms of burnout is so tired you can't do anymore

**P11:** Okay. Um, I mean, as you went through that kind of definition there, what actually sticks out to me a lot is the physical which is interesting for me

**P12:** Your performance at work and or just

**Code: Taking Time Away**

**P3:** Feeling I need a break

**P4:** Need time away

**P4:** And then you know, you're doing three programs at a time. And it's like, oh, yeah, I could do this. And you know, at the end of it maybe there's a lot of time where you're like, I need this time to refresh, and I don't know if I want to be back in the gym

**P10:** Putting so much time you're not enough rest out of it

**P13:** Or not taking enough downtime. So that's probably how I would describe it

**Sub Theme: Memories**

**Code: Big Events**

**P2:** And building the relationships is the biggest one but probably if I had to pinpoint the moments that really like brought out the most emotion in me. It would be anytime you see you see them or anybody but if your staff link up and hear the national anthem wearing it for the first time, it's still, every time I did it, it would still make me tear up a little bit. it is profound

**P9:** Ah, geez, I have lots. I would say my memories was taking a name of provincial team to Canada Games as the head coach

**P10:** Hmm. Let me see, so hard. I haven't thought about it. I know my playing memory. I never thought about my coaching memory. Because I've been coaching for four years. This is my fourth year. And I'm not necessarily coaching because we're in COVID. So in the first three years, my second year, we won the second place. medal with at a name of competition. So that was probably my memories so far because it involved winning

***Code: Firsts***

**P3:** And then third, at my U Sport level, having my first graduate was a big deal. That was last year. And just seeing her like, we do this thing at the game. Where, right at halftime, we honor, we honor seniors, I just feel like it was just a moving time

**P8:** Oh, my goodness, my memories. You know what, with my university team, there's been a lot of firsts. The first time we beat name of university, the first time we you know, made it to playoffs. The first time we won a playoff game The first time we made it to the final four name of conference, I would say the first time winning our programs like it was it was our program's first ever playoff game

**P11:** Hmm. Boys these are good questions. This is kind of made me feel nostalgic. Um, there are a lot. To be honest. My first head coaching experience was a couple of summers ago, just with the name of provincial program stuff, and that was kind of the first team that I ever had, that was completely my own, from scratch. So going through that experience, and then I would say probably at the end of the summer months, the name of large provincial competition, which is like the big culminating tournament. And I think our final game of that is probably my most memorable experience so far, hopefully not for too long, but just seeing kind of the final product or the peak of what we had worked on. And knowing that that was the first time that I really got to make decisions and stuff like that. It was a big fun experience for me. So probably name of large provincial competition. However, many years ago

**P14:** Winning a league was exciting. As my first head coach kind of set up, and we had lost to the team, we beat the finals by one we had lost three times earlier in the same year. Oh, it was nice, both from a competitive side, you get a good win. And then from an athlete side, just how excited they were and must have taken a lot of perseverance on their end to actually compete and get it done. So that's exciting

**P3:** And I guess my first win my first win as a U Sport coach, I think was pretty big. That would be huge. Yeah

***Code: Give Back***

**P9:** And I say that because I was privileged enough to play for my province and won a medal, and then was asked to be an assistant coach one year, and so to kind of go through that process and be able to have a team that I get to be the head coach of it kind of came full circle. Again, it was that giving back of my knowledge, my experiences to people that you know, hadn't even really picked up a basketball when I was playing. So after I had that experience as a player, I remember saying to my mom, I have to do this again, I have to be back here and I'm going to be a coach in it. So I'm very, very proud to have coached that that team and you know, although we didn't see the success in terms of standing on a podium

***Code: Goals***

**P2:** I don't know if you can see behind me but all of those like nets that are cut out, all those medals, all of those awards, it is surreal. It's surreal that I've had all those experiences and seen so much of the world because I don't think about those on an everyday basis. The big reason is still to see kids achieve their dreams

**P3:** Oh, man. Pretty hard to say. If I had to do a top three, it would be I had a name of young boys team that I led to a championship. I'm one of the few females who coach men's basketball, but it was more about it was more about the kids at that age and then believing in themselves

**P3:** Second, when I was a prep school coach, it was it was seeing tears of joy from the players that I helped received scholarships. I remember a call also when one of our girls got the SAT score that she needed to get into, like her Ivy League school. So, I hold that very dearly

**P4:** Um, I think my second year at name of university was full of like, super high and low moments. My first semester, in that year, we went 10 and 2 and that was a really cool feeling. Then the second semester returned around one, six and six, so that was not as cool. I think that year, I was named Coach of the Year for my division, and just the way the athletes' like reacted and how amazing they were, and they were like, you deserve it, we knew you're going to be Coach of the Year. Then we won a playoff game that I don't know that we had any right to win. So yeah, I think that just was like a culmination of so many things. And like the recruiting that we had to do to get there and the changes in the program, and it was a cool switch to see, in two years, go from a program that was not making playoffs to like, oh, like we won a playoff game. Like, I talk to other coaches. And they're like, yeah, I waited 10 years to do that. So, I am really grateful that we managed to accomplish that

**P5:** It's kind of come to the last couple years where my first group of athletes' now is they're into the second phase of postsecondary life and there, you know, they're having families and they are there. changing jobs, or there's just been challenges or changes in their life that they've overcome

**P5:** And I think as when we're involved in sport, we put a lot of value into, the win loss stuff. But to kind of feel that it did, we did have an impact that way, like that has been, it's been pretty rewarding

**P6:** Oh, man, that's a great question. Um, I will still probably say so in 2013, I was the head coach for name of provincial team. And we were at Canada games, and going into the tournament, we were seated seventh, because of course, as you know, it's from the previous year. So we were in a pool with name of other provinces, who had been ranked two and three. So of course, everyone thought that we were going to, you know, lose to them. And actually, on the first day, we had to play both of those teams. You know, again, it's short end of the stick in terms of scheduling. And, and so our first game was at like, one o'clock against name of provincial team. So in their, you know, home, home gym, and it was the one women's basketball game that was selected to be televised live on TSN. And, you know, spoiler alert, we won. And, and, and then that night at 8:30pm, we then also beat name of provincial team and so I think it was just like, you know, coming into a tournament, you know, and you're the underdog and then being able to, you know, to see the look on the girls faces when we you know, after we had the first one and then that confidence and then taking that into the next game. Yeah, it was it was tons of fun. I won't talk about how we then lost in the bronze medal game to name of provincial team and didn't get a medal but day one was great

**P7:** Oh my goodness. I wouldn't say probably last year. We last year was our first season at name of a highschool. It was our first season. So I got to kind of build the program, which was amazing

**P8:** That was a very good memory, simply because it had never been done before. And I think that's just to see the athletes' rejoice in the sense that we've done something that no one else has been able to do. And just the level of buy in that came after that and just the look of confidence in their eyes and just the relief that we could feel that okay

**P8:** What we were doing was making sense we were moving in the right direction, even though every step was kind of very brand new. So that that probably is one of my memories

**P10:** And we were we did well, I thought we could have done better against the US. But that's like the new goal like to beat the name of country because if you beat us you in gold, essentially

**P12:** And yeah, being able to be in different cultures with that. I guess name written across your chest is a pretty cool experience

**P13:** Ooohh I don't know if there's one actually, you know, it's really the whole process of helping student athletes'. Athletes' achieve their dreams and

**P13:** You know, seeing them grow as athletes' and as individuals and, you know, seeing them maybe accomplish some things that maybe they never thought would be possible for them being part of that journey. That's super rewarding. And so I've really loved that part about coaching for sure

**Code: Reflection**

**P1:** I think there's a lot of memories, like most recent for me, I think, when I was making the transition to the university name as their head coach and saying goodbye to my previous team. We spent maybe about an hour and a half of just like rehashing old memories. So Just to kind of look at in my short career as an assistant at university name, and to see the impact has been a fond memory of mine. And I know that is why I do what I do and what I am doing on a daily basis, it's just to have it all hit you at once was refreshing

**P8:** I revisit them probably at specific times of the year, like when I'm doing when I'm getting ready for senior speeches, you know, you kind of start thinking back, you know, through that athletes' career in your program

**P8:** If you're trying to find a picture for certain events, I think pictures to meet trigger a lot of a lot of memories. But I just find that there's so much in today that you're getting ready for and so much for tomorrow, that you're getting ready for that sitting back and kind of looking back at things doesn't happen unless someone initiates it. So whether you're talking to a former athlete, or an alumnus, or a parent that used to be a part of your program. But I also often revisit it when it comes to recruiting as well, when I when I'm looking at or meeting an athlete for the first time, I usually try to find someone who's had a similar situation as theirs. And so often, I'll go back and say, you know, we've had someone from your high school come to our program, you know, we've had someone in your similar position, or someone from a similar family background, to just to provide context. So I find that it does come up often, but it usually needs a catalyst of some kind

**P14:** Not too much. Sometimes, if I'm working with an athlete that I have been involved with, or know they've been involved with a past success, I'll be more likely to bring it up for them. I yeah. So I don't think it's a constant reflection on it

**Code: Travel**

**P7:** We went out to name of province for a tournament at name of another school. And we won that tournament. But the point wasn't winning the tournament. It was the actual experience of like the East Coast that I was able to like give the girls so you know, name of city, the University tours the people. And I think the coolest part of that whole tournament was my girls became really good friends with the athletes' on the name of school team. And they, they still to this day, communicate through social media. And they just became like really good friends in like a really short amount of time. So it was just a really cool experience for me to see. And watch that happen and kind of give that to the girls. So that was probably that's probably a pretty recent one and a pretty cool one too

**P12:** And also being able to see how the world welcomes and receives Canadian. So when you're traveling in a big group, and you're everyone's wearing Canada, it's clear that you're from Canada, and it just gives you an appreciation as to how we're welcomed across the world

**P12:** Long pause Probably my time coaching our national team, and being able to travel the world and almost see it through the eyes of 16/17/18 year olds and them being able to experience new parts of the world for the first time and just seeing their awe and appreciation for that experience

**Sub Theme: Why Coach**

**Code: Family Encouragement**

**P8:** Um, I started coaching my youngest sister, and it was apparent that thought I would be a good older mentor for some younger athletes'. It was a dad. And so he also wanted to have a female role model. And so I started coaching, I would say fairly early in my university career while I was still player, and it was, you know, little kids leagues, or whatever it was like it was seven, eight year olds

**P9:** I don't want anything to do with it after I had graduated. And then actually, my parents encouraged me and said, I know basketball has been a part of your life for so, so long, that maybe it's just you need to move back from name of city and move to name of city and just coach

**P10:** Just to kind of be there with her and I loved it

**Code: Giving Back**

**P7:** so the whole giving back feeling was what then has kept me in it

**P9:** It was coach one team a week, it was a name of kids team. And it was on Tuesday night, practices for an hour and a half and then a Saturday game. And that was enough for me at the time. And then, you know, started reflecting on a sport that's given so much to me in terms of friendships, traveling, education, all of those things. It made sense to me, especially after that year of coaching the name of young team that I felt like there was a little bit of a responsibility to give back to the sport that gave so much of me like keeping my knowledge and my experience to myself I felt would be like, I guess doing a disservice to name of province, that gave me so much

**P10:** I was like this feels really good teaching, getting to see if these athletes' are getting better as you teach, and really giving back. So I think that's really the reason I started coaching because that really flipped a switch for me, I think

**P11:** This is probably going to be a different answer than a lot of people. I, I always planned on, I always wanted to coach I just think that like coaching and leadership and giving back is interesting

**Code: Goals**

**P3:** And again, through my journey in sport, it was always for coaches that really exhibited those kind of traits and qualities. So I knew, even when I was a player, like I had always said, I would love to coach and I'm fortunate enough to be able to do it now. I started coaching when I was back in high school soccer Coaching Boys Basketball. As a senior in high school steadily throughout, I've been able to work with kids, youth, children and national team athletes'

**P7:** The reason why I stayed into it was just because I loved teaching the girls. I don't coach I've never really coached boys, but so I've just loved coaching girls, and seeing them grow, evolve, learn, explore, become better, understand themselves kind of through the game of basketball

**P8:** And I found it very just satisfying learning how to teach someone how to do a skill that I found fairly easy in some ways, like even teaching someone how to do a layup for the first time and just seeing their excitement when they were able to accomplish something. So yeah, that's how I started coaching

**P13:** It was a way to you know, be involved on a different level to help younger athletes', you know, achieve some of their goals and dreams and help them progress in the just in their, in their sport

**Code: Injury**

**P10:** Um, I think, well, I know it's mainly because I came back one year I was playing I played overseas for 10 years, and I came back when one year while I was injured

**P11:** And I think that that's what probably a lot of coaches do. I started coaching earlier than I thought though, I was playing at name of university, and I tore my ACL twice, back to back. And the second time, I still got surgery and rehabbed it, and attempted to play again the year after that. But while I was injured, my coach at the time she actually delegated a lot of tasks to me, like in terms of coaching, so I would help her with film and scout. And I would just help her with like little things in practice, like basically coaching because we didn't have a full staff or anything. And it made me just want to coach sooner

**P13:** I guess. And later on, it became a profession and yeah, something that I again, wanted to stay involved in the sport. I had a kind of a career ending injury. So kind of one thing led to the next and had the opportunity to coach as a profession

**P14:** Um, I always had been coaching camp or something like that. And then I started considering coaching as a career after I was injured, or my playing career. So I didn't use up all my eligibility. I kind of stepped away from sport to deal with an injury that took about four years to deal with. And then sort of as I was becoming more physically active again, because it was something that had limited my activity

**Code: Love of the Game**

**P1:** I actually never wanted to coach. You know, I played basketball my whole life. And I remember as early as high school having consecutive knee injuries, so I was out for a considerable amount of time. And I remember my club coach saying you could be a coach one day, and I was like, nah, I just want to play. And then fast forward to college and seeing my university coaches and what; they went through on a day to day, I was just like, it was the NCAA. So, you know, it's elevated competition. My coaches are on the road all the time for recruiting, we're on the road all the time for competition. And I was just like, that's not the lifestyle for me. But fast forward to grad school and I was in school to be a physio wanted to pursue physical therapy. And I wasn't happy. And the first time I was removed from basketball. And so I wanted to get reconnected with the community. That way, it just so happened that my university coach had a position available, and I had served as a graduate assistant for her during my time there, and she's like, I have a spot for you if you want it. And so that kind of started by insurgents, but I guess what kept me in basketball was just the love of the game and the people and the places I get to go and people I get to meet. So that's the short version I'll say, of why I started coaching and why I continue to coach

**P6:** No. And that's what I think is funny, and I say, even when I played, like, in the university league, a lot of the head coaches were actually women. So it's not like there wasn't representation in terms of me being able to see people that do it. I just never really thought of it as being like an opportunity or something that I for sure wanted to do. Until when I was a high school teacher and high school coach. Like I then I was coaching girls, I was coaching boys at the at a name of private school. And then I got into because I coached up at name of sport camp, I met somebody. And so then that led to me actually coaching a name of provincial team training program. I don't know if you remember provincial team training programs, but you used to have to play on one, a regional team. So there were six regional teams, and you had to play on one of those in order to make a provincial team. So basically, the provincial team program would train for kind of like April, May, June, and then we would have the July long weekend, we would have a big tournament, the provincial team coaches would come and watch. And at the end of the tournament, they would select 15/16 girls to be on their team. And then they would train for only really a month and then go to Nationals kind of thing, right so once I kind of got a taste, I would say of coaching elite level athletes' like that led to I started coaching with national team, I started coaching name of provincial team. And I think just getting the taste of the of working with elite level athletes' and knowing that I was more passionate about basketball than I was about science and math, which is what I taught that that's what led me to then wanting to pursue it. Like at a professional level

**P10:** It wasn't a plan; it was not a plan. I think once I got into coaching, my dreams and aspirations got bigger

**P13:** There's always something more that you can be doing. So as long as you enjoy it, and as long as again, it's, it's not interfering in other parts of your life that. Yeah, it's To me, it's just super enjoyable. And it's fun, and it's rewarding

**Code: Next Thing on my Path**

**P4:** I think it just was this very linear path from like, playing to like, what's next in basketball? And you're a little fortunate that refereeing didn't feel like the next thing. Coaching felt like it so I didn't have to, like stumble into that and then move on. But to be frank like my dad always talked about when I was done playing that I would coach and then, you know, I think that just manifested into that being what it is, and I didn't see it as like a career path at all. I really saw it as like, I'll coach I'll teach high school and maybe when I'm like I dunno 50 or older and on my way out of teaching, I'll be able to land a coaching job. And that'll be the next thing that I get to do

**P5:** I always knew I was gonna coach in the sense that I had really good coaches growing up. In the sense that they put a lot of time in and, and they were great people. I didn't think I would ever coach at this level, in the sense of it being my job, mostly because, as you know, sport in Canada doesn't have this or have a ton of professional jobs. I still don't think it's regarded as a profession sometimes. So, yeah, it was never like a life goal in the sense, but I was just really lucky to get to stay involved in the sport. And then I love basketball. And then from there, it was just opportunity after opportunity kind of presented itself and kind of jumped in

**P6:** Which then led me first to teaching. But of course, in my opinion, I got that teaching job because of my qualifications to be able to also coach the basketball teams at that school. I mean, there's no secret that I love basketball. So I think kind of getting into coaching, once my playing career ended, was a bit of a natural, maybe transition to kind of fill that void of having, like, after having played my whole life, and then that ending so yeah

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**P7:** I initially started coaching because it was it kept me in the game. So when I finished playing University basketball, it just seemed like a natural like, oh not, I still love the game, I still want to be involved. Eligibility says I'm not allowed to play anymore. So I still so I'll just get into coaching that was kind of just the easy transition. So that's why I got into it

**P9:** I started coaching, because I knew that I was slowly going to retire as an athlete

**P10:** and I was off for a half of the season basically. And it was going into the Olympics. And my sister was coaching a team like a name of league team or name of league actually. And I was like she's like I'll just come out to practices because I wasn't able to do anything I can. I was fine. I was just had to be off of my shin no working out for six weeks. It was just so not me like I can't do nothing for six weeks. So I'm being involved with the game would have been cool

**P10:** But the other pieces that was the same thing for basketball, I didn't plan on getting a scholarship to go to the states for years, I didn't plan on going to the Olympics or playing on the national just happened. So, a lot of my life has been that way. Much different than some coaches. But um, that's just how it's been for me

**P12:** Yeah, I think so, I played university sport and I obviously played sport all my life leading into playing university basketball, and it was at the end of my university career when I was given the captain position of our team and kinda took on that that leadership role that I really started to enjoy, appreciate and want to do more or be in more of that leadership position. I had conversations with my coach at the time about, you know, coaching after but my playing career was finished. And that kind of started to pave the way for what I'm doing now. So I think it was really positive experiences when I was playing. That made me want to continue to give back to the sport, I guess

**P13:** Great question. I guess early on before it was my profession, it was a way to stay involved in the sport

**Code: Relationships**

**P2:** about connection and identity

**P2:** And I know, I'm having an impact, and that's what probably keeps me in it. And going into these genuine relationships and knowing that this is helping people, that's a pretty addictive part of it, I guess

**P2:** I developed my why after I started, I started because it seemed to be totally honest, I always thought I would I was interested in it. I always want to be a teacher. I liked the idea of working with people trying to help them for sure. But early on, when I got seriously into it, it was more about social connection



**P3:** I started coaching. Because the most inspirational people that I've met as a player, were coaches, like my very first coach was my high school principal

**P3:** And unbeknownst to me, he was trying to keep kids in our area out of trouble. Because it wasn't the greatest area we're living in. And so those are kind of my beginnings. I had another coach when I was younger, that was, I guess, you can kind of say my in local parenthesis like he was, my mom just worked all the time, I was a single mom. And so again, he just did that father figure role that I didn't have at home. I guess subconsciously, I was always like, oh, my goodness, like being a coach is amazing, because you can impact young people and other people. And then I feel like just personality wise, I consider myself like a servant leader, and doing stuff for others

**P4:** I think like, for me when I need to feel like that reinvigoration. I just remember the kids and how much those people like support me

*Code: Right Place Right Time*

**P5:** Um, quick answer right place right time

**P5:** So yeah, I've been pretty lucky. Like, I get that question a lot. And my common answer is right place right time

**P14:** An opportunity came up to do some school and start coaching. So that is what kind of got me started as a potential career choice

**Sub Theme: Broader Burnout Considerations**

*Code: Female*

**P14:** So they'll make one event that's just females talking. Right? So they don't put them alongside men. And then the title is something like woman coaching or female coaching. And you know, you could be talking about the exact same things your male counterparts were. So it often comes with this label that it's there, and it's important. But if it's not the point of emphasis or the intention of the session, then drawing attention to it does nothing but a negative in my opinion

*Code: Normalize It*

**P7:** That's really cool. Yeah, I hope that takes off for you. Because I think it's super important. And now there's, there's so much talk about like mental health and all that kind of stuff. And at the end of the day, like the burnout is a big chunk of mental health. Right. And like, it really is. So I think, I think that's super cool. I love those ideas

*Code: Self Care*

**P8:** Um, I would just say that I think that our organizations have to do a better job of recognizing self care habits of coaches

**P5:** I would say I would say it's discussions that I had, with, we had a sport psych work with our team for a little bit before it became internal. We now have an internal sports psych team and I've spoken pretty openly about it and the sense of, I'm the only person at the point in my career where I have to start thinking about these red flags and at our school. And I don't really know how to do that. I don't I don't have that skill set. And we should be as much as yes, we all are services are for the athletes'. We should be trying to keep coaches healthy a little bit here

*Code: Support*

**P14:** I don't think there's specific funding or resources allocated to mental health or well being of coaches are administrators in sport

**Sub Theme: Potential Burnout Research Areas**

*Code: Athletes' Transition*

**P2:** I mean, they're, you know, where there is a lot of research and I think you could, I'm sure you already are, but you know how they're just starting to figure it out we need more and more resources to athletes', high performance athletes' that are transitioning out

*Code: Burnout Levels*

**P5:** So, we rely a lot on grassroots coaching. And regardless of how long I've been in my job, I get asked a lot about that stuff. And, and oftentimes I'm like, hey, like, I've coached way less than half of these high school coaches, like, go ask them. But I think that we're seeing a ton of burnout and a ton of what's it? What's it called? One like drop out of coaches?

*Code: Gender*

**P5:** I'll go and coach my kid when it's their time. That's it. And we're losing, we've lost. I mean, we're small province as you can relate to. We've lost five really good female coaches in the last two years.

Because of stuff like that. So, the burnout piece would be really intriguing to see what the uptake was, with male coaches versus female coaches

***Code: Self Awareness***

**P5:** The only other thing too, that I would be, just to note, like, I'm super intrigued to see what burnout is gonna look like for coaches after this year, because I think a lot of us are gonna assume that, you know, we got to hit the ground running, we're good to go. And we haven't really processed the fact that one, we haven't done our actual jobs for their intended original purpose, which is like I just coaching basketball. And well, it'll probably be almost two years, maybe a year and a half. And so I'm super intrigued to see what that looks like. I think it's gonna be one of those things where we just totally forget to even check in, where it's like, just focus on the athletes' get them back to a point where like, oh, by the way, you've been on you're even on the road for the third weekend of four in the first time in two years, and you don't know why you can't sleep

***Code: Sociocultural***

**P3:** We also just established a black student athlete Mental Health Fund, with the aim of trying to connect racialized students with racialized sport practitioners and mental health and wellness. And I'd be curious to see how, how coaches of color, male and female who coach girls, how their experience is. because what I would, what I would guesstimate is that there are a lot of things there, that would be very telling to PSOs NSOs, or their organizations like U Sport and national sport organizations. So I think I think if there was any way to shed a light on how intersectionality for people of color factor into this, I think that would be very telling, in terms of that race, space battle