

How to “Move On” and “Keep Moving”: Preparing Student-Athletes for Life after College Sports

Erin Reifsteck, Ph.D.



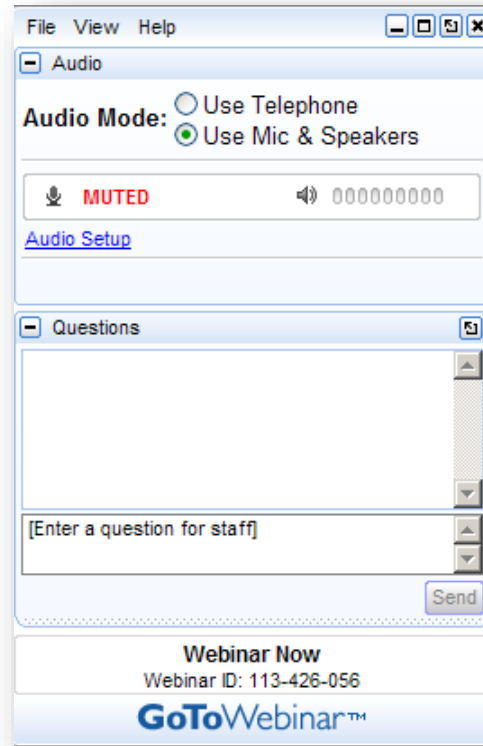
Dr. Erin Reifsteck is a post-doctoral research fellow with IPAHW. She received her Ph.D. and M.S. in Kinesiology (Sport and Exercise Psychology concentration) with a doctoral minor in Educational Research Methodology from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG).



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Important Webinar Feature



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Outline

- Background and framework
- Identity, motivation, and physical activity in former college student-athletes
- Translating research into practice: *Moving On!*
- Recommendations for professionals working with student-athletes



Introduction

“...and just about all of us will go pro in something other than sports.”

- Retirement from competitive sports after college is inevitable for most student-athletes.
 - PA and health not emphasized in most research and programs
 - Athlete population may have unique health concerns (Kwiatkowski & Spangenburg, 2008)
 - Self-identity can play a key role in the transition to life after competitive sports (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994)



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Identity Theory

- Identity functions to self-regulate behavior
 - Engage in behavior that is consistent with & validates identity
 - Saliency influences likelihood of behavior
- The role of athletic identity and exercise identity in physical activity participation



Exercise Identity

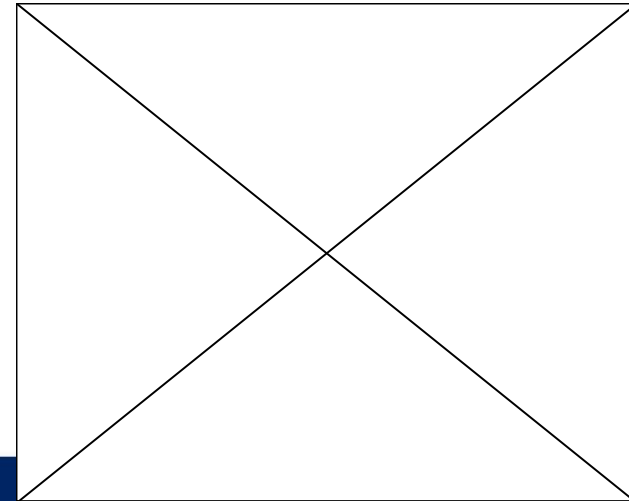


- Exercise Identity
 - Predicts exercise behavior
 - Higher self-efficacy for exercise
- When EI becomes primary, valued component of self-concept it is important to directing future exercise behavior.
- Identity ↔ Behavior = reciprocal relationship
 - Fostering exercise identity in exercise interventions



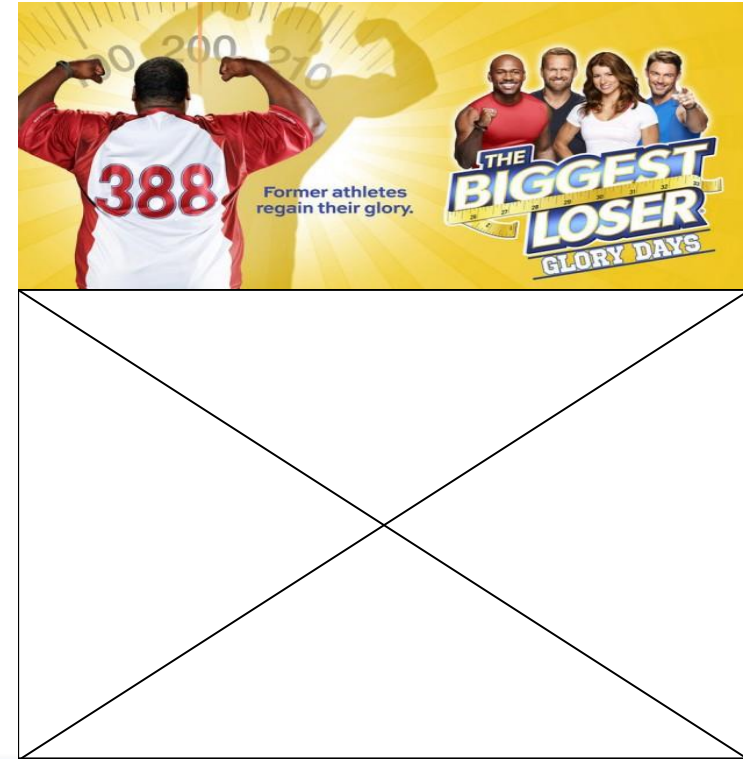
Athletic Identity

- Definition: the extent to which one identifies with the athletic role
 - **schema**-framework for interpreting information; inspires behaviors consistent with athletic identity
 - **social role**- partly determined by other people's perceptions of you
 - affected by perceived **commitment** and perceived **ability**



Identity and PA in Former Athletes

- Identity, Physical Activity, and Sport Transitions
 - Identity Crisis → AI decreases after retirement
 - PA decreases- and may have important health implications
- Former student-athletes no more active than non-athlete alumni
- Is **AI** (*competitive, sport-specific*) really related to lifetime PA?



Why are Former Athletes Less Active?

- Most former student-athletes are less active now compared to college. **Why?**



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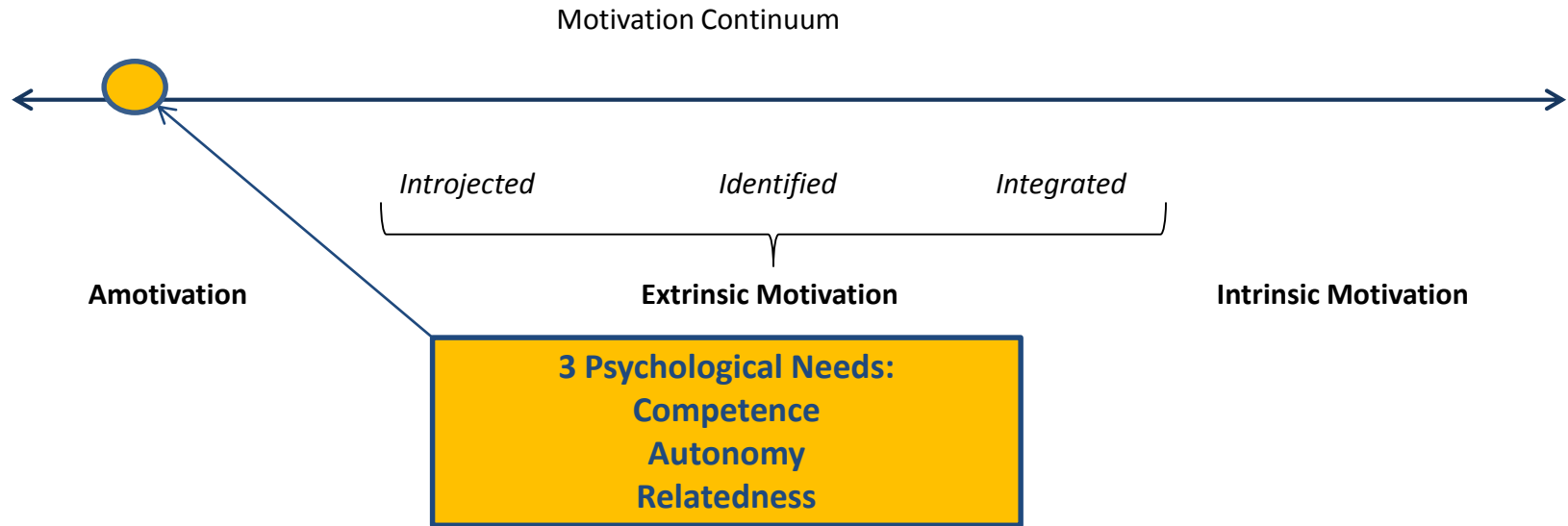
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Self-Determination Theory

- Deci & Ryan (1985)
 - Theory of motivation
 - Application to PA
- Not just **amount** of motivation; **Type** is important, too
- 2 main types: extrinsic vs. intrinsic



Moving up the Continuum



****Well supported in the literature**, e.g., Barbeau, Sweet, & Fortier, 2009; Edmunds, Ntoumani, & Duda, 2006; Markland & Tobin, 2004; McLachlan et al., 2011; Mullen, Markland, & Indegle, 1997; Thorgersen-Ntoumani & Ntoumanis, 2006; Winninger, 2007



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Reward Structures

Positive reinforcement: reward people for behavior to keep them motivated...

BUT



Key point:

-**External** rewards can undermine **intrinsic** motivation!

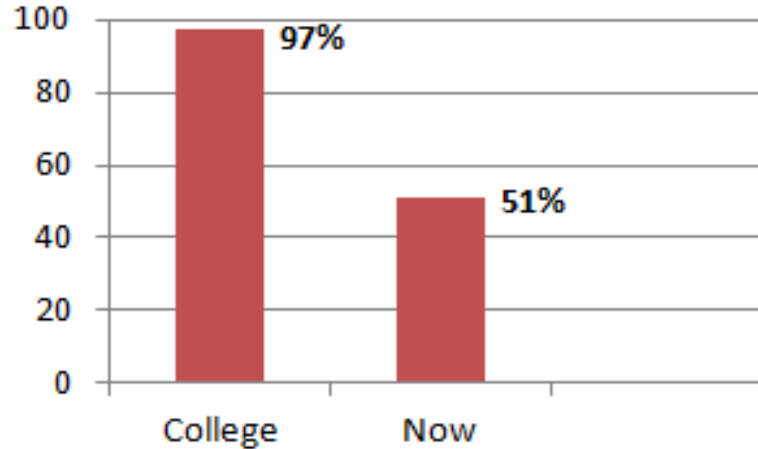


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Identity, SDT, and Former Athletes

- Drop in athletic identity after retirement



- A broader exercise-based identity more strongly related to PA
 - Do athletes transition from AI to EI?

Identity, Motivation, and Former Athletes

Selected Participant Quotes

Motivation

- I have been lazy and lost my enthusiasm to workout.
- Since I am no longer competing and am not on a team I do not have to make the commitment to work out every day.
- I am not working towards a set goal. I am not competing. I do not HAVE to exercise every single day.
- We used to run to win races; Running to stay in shape isn't as great a motivator.

Autonomy

- (My activity) has changed because I no longer have someone forcing me to be in a certain physical shape
- If you want to take a day, week, or month (off) you can. You don't have your coach, teammates, trainers pushing you to get in there every moment you are required to do so.

Relatedness

- I am not around people who exercise anymore now like there was when I was in college.
- I don't have that team environment ... It's hard to go out and run hard when you don't have 6-7 guys doing it with you.

Competence

- Everyone expects you to be able to do the things you did in college and have the same amount of athletic ability as you did in college.
- I feel very uncomfortable if I am not as quick the people I compete against.



Back to the “Why”: Motivation a Key Link?

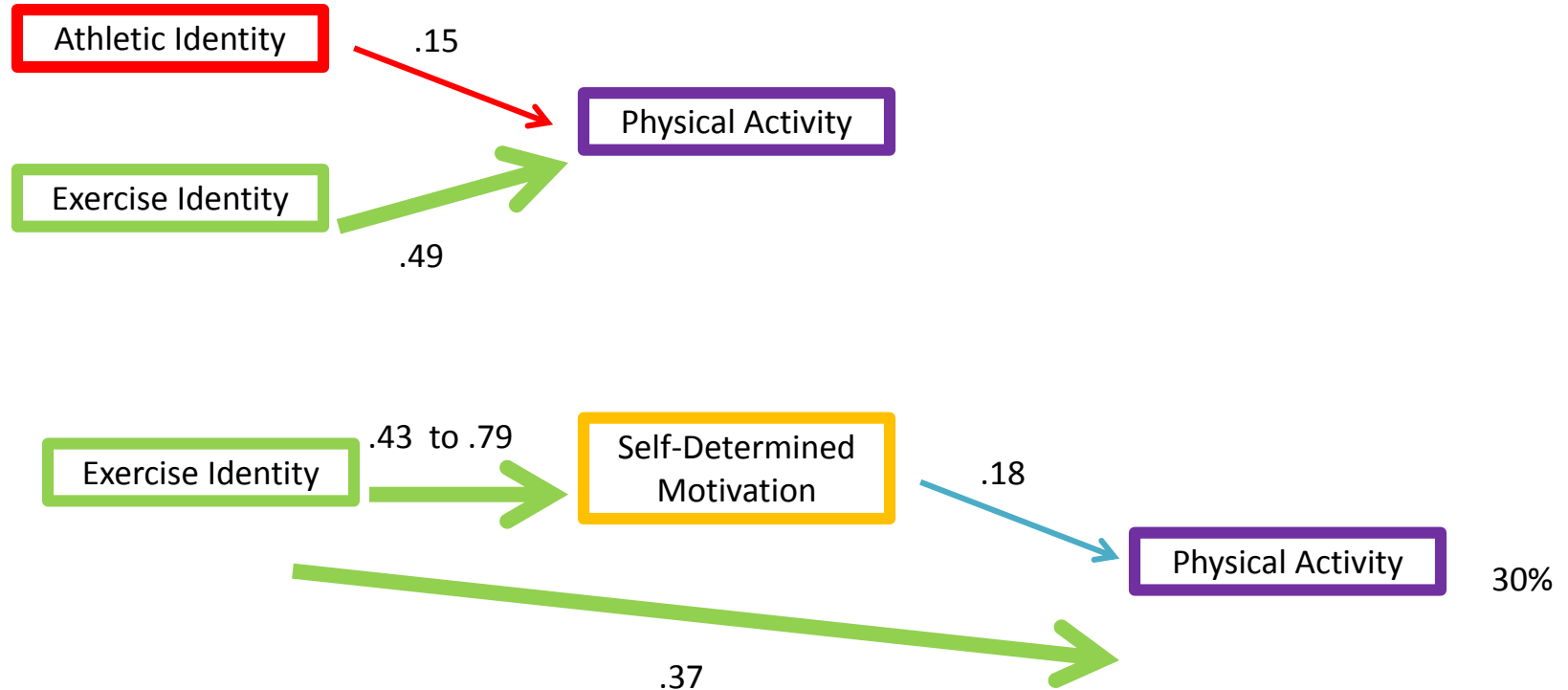
● Lack of motivation to remain active:

- *“We used to run to win races. Running to stay in shape isn’t as great a motivator.”*
- External rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation
 - Rewards disappear → motivation dissipates
 - Transition from competitive sport to recreational exercise → less intrinsically motivating (Ryan, Williams, & Deci, 2009)

● Motivation as a link b/w identity & behavior?



Summary of Findings with Former Student-Athletes



Physical Activity & Health Concerns

- NCAA's SCORE Study
 - Close to **3 out of 4** former student-athletes report experiencing difficulty with retiring from competitive sport
 - More than **1/3rd** say that they only participate in vigorous exercise sometimes, seldom, or never
- My Research
 - **Most** student-athletes become less active after college
 - More importantly, almost **1 in 5** are not active enough to gain substantial health benefits

● **What can we do?**

Applying Research to Practice

- PA transition program using identity/motivation framework to help student-athletes maintain physical activity after college.
- The goals of the program are to:
 - *help student-athletes transition from a **sport-specific** identity (e.g., I am a basketball player) to a **broad**er, active-based identity (e.g., I am a physically active person)*
 - *strengthen self-determined motivation for physical activity by enhancing **competence** in a wider range of activities, promoting **choice** of activities, and fostering a **connection** with peers through physical activity participation*

Outline of PA Transition Program

- 4x60 min. sessions consisting of discussion activities and PA
 - Session 1: Introduction and Overview
 - Session 2: Identity
 - Session 3: Goal-Setting and Action Plans
 - Session 4: Planning Ahead



<u>Component</u>	<u>Objectives</u>
Identity	Transition from a narrow, sport-specific identity (i.e., athletic identity) to a broader active-based identity (i.e., exercise identity).
Self-Determined Motivation: Competence	Develop competence in a wider range of lifetime physical activities and build self-efficacy for maintaining physical activity after college.
Self-Determined Motivation: Autonomy	Encourage choice in activities to promote personal agency in developing a physically active lifestyle.
Self-Determined Motivation: Relatedness	Encourage social support and create connections to others through physical activity participation in order to increase self-determined motivation.
Increase Knowledge about PA Guidelines	Increase knowledge about physical activity guidelines and benefits to promote greater intentions to participate in long-term physical activity.
Goal Setting and PA Promotion Strategies	Adopt effective goal setting practices; Create action plans that identify potential barriers to maintaining physical activity and behavioral strategies to overcome barriers.



Recommended Strategies

- Offer educational workshops
- Provide cross-training opportunities in the off-season
- Promote autonomy within sport
 - Give multiple options; Allow choice
- Prepare student-athletes for the transition

FITT for Health vs. FITT for Sports

	FITT for Health	FITT for Sports
Frequency How many days per week must you exercise/train?	3-5 (cardio) 2 (strength)	5-7 (cardio) 3-5 (strength)
Intensity How hard must you work?	Your choice: moderate or vigorous	Vigorous
Time How long must you exercise/train in a week?	2.5 hours (if moderate) 1 hour 15 minutes (if vigorous) OR—Walk 10,000 steps each day *More time = greater health benefits	8- 20 hours
Type What type of movements will lead to benefits?	ANY movement that is continuous and uses large muscle groups	Sport-specific movements: Running, Plyometrics, Power lifting, Agility drills, etc



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Questions?

Contact Info:

Erin Reifsteck

ejreifst@uncg.edu



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