



LET'S TALK ABOUT YOU:

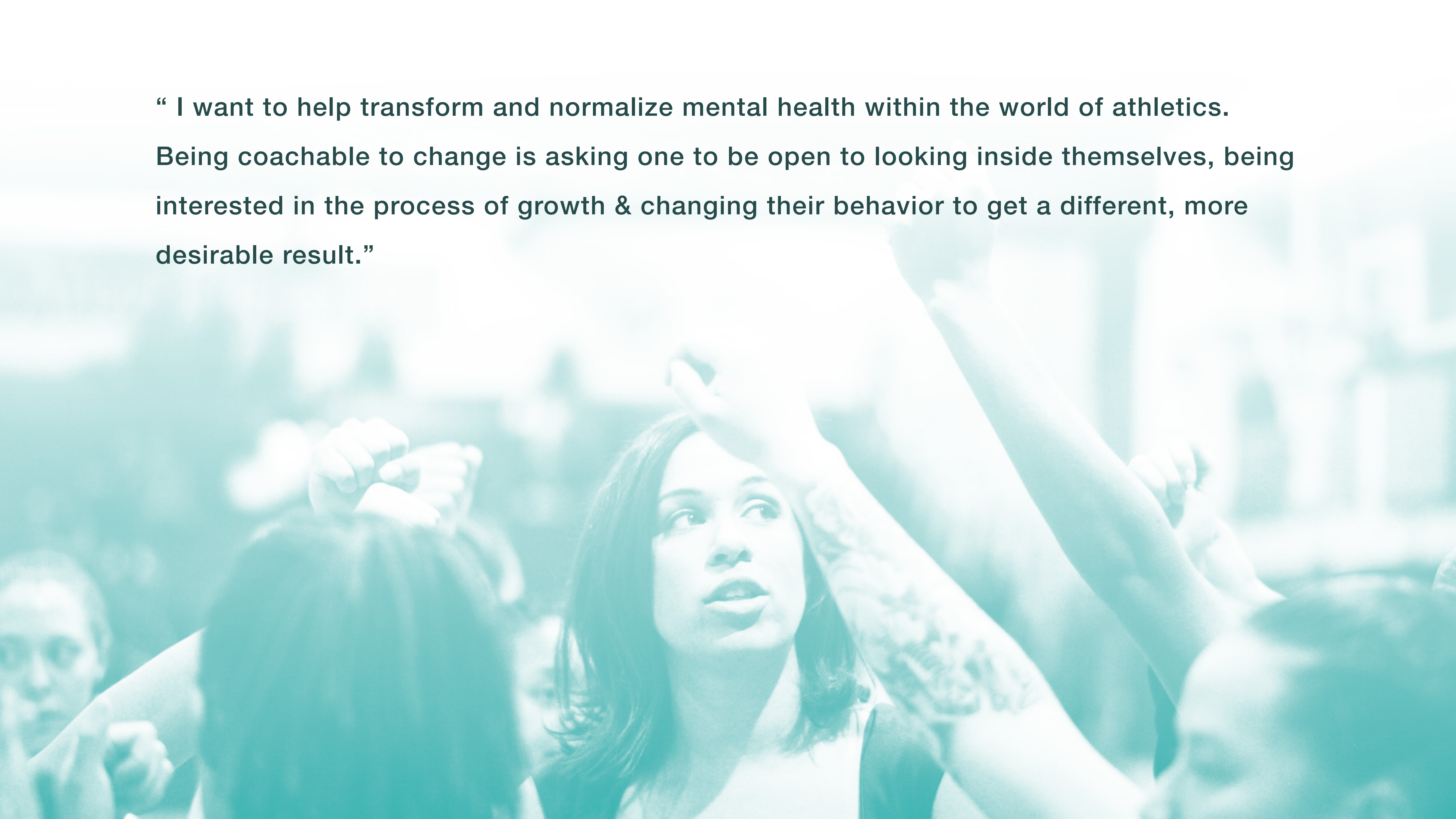
**A Conversation Around Coaches Mental
Health and Emotional Well-Being**

PRESENTED BY MEGAN HANKINS-MALDONADO, LMFT



“ I want to help transform and normalize mental health within the world of athletics.

Being coachable to change is asking one to be open to looking inside themselves, being interested in the process of growth & changing their behavior to get a different, more desirable result.”



WHO AM I?

My name is Megan Hankins-Maldonado and I am a licensed therapist and emotional support coach to athletes, coaches and staff. I help overwhelmed, emotionally stressed, burned out coaches/athletes/staff reclaim their life and their joy for the work they do and the sports they play. I completely acknowledge the stress and responsibility that come with the job of being in athletics at the university level and want to help strengthen skills that are not focused on in the gym/field/office.





MY EXPERIENCE

- 3 years Junior College Assistant
 - 2 years Volunteer Assistant Video Coordinator D1
 - 1 year Volunteer Assistant Coach D2
 - 2 years Head Coach High School
 - 2 years Head Coach Junior College
 - 5 years Assistant Coach D2
-
- 2 years Intern: Children's Coordinator for Women & Children's Homeless/DV Shelter
 - 4 years Intern: Emotionally Disturbed High School Students
 - 3 years Intern/licensed: Emotionally Disturbed High School/ Middle School Students
 - 2 years licensed: Private Practice *(left to be a coach full time)*

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) they define mental health as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

“There is no health without mental health”

Everyone has/will experience mental health issues. The level of that experience is different from person to person. There are 3 main factors that can contribute to one's mental health issues:

- **Biological Factors: Brain Chemistry, Genes**
- **Environmental: Exposure to Trauma & Abuse**
- **Family History: Generational Mental Health Problems**

MYTHS AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

Myth 1: Mental health issues won't affect me!

It was reported in 2020:

- One in five American adults experienced a mental health issue
- One in 6 young people experienced a major depressive episode
- One in 20 Americans lived with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States. It was the 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 10-24. It accounted for the loss of more than 45,979 American lives in 2020, nearly double the number of lives lost to homicide.

MYTHS AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

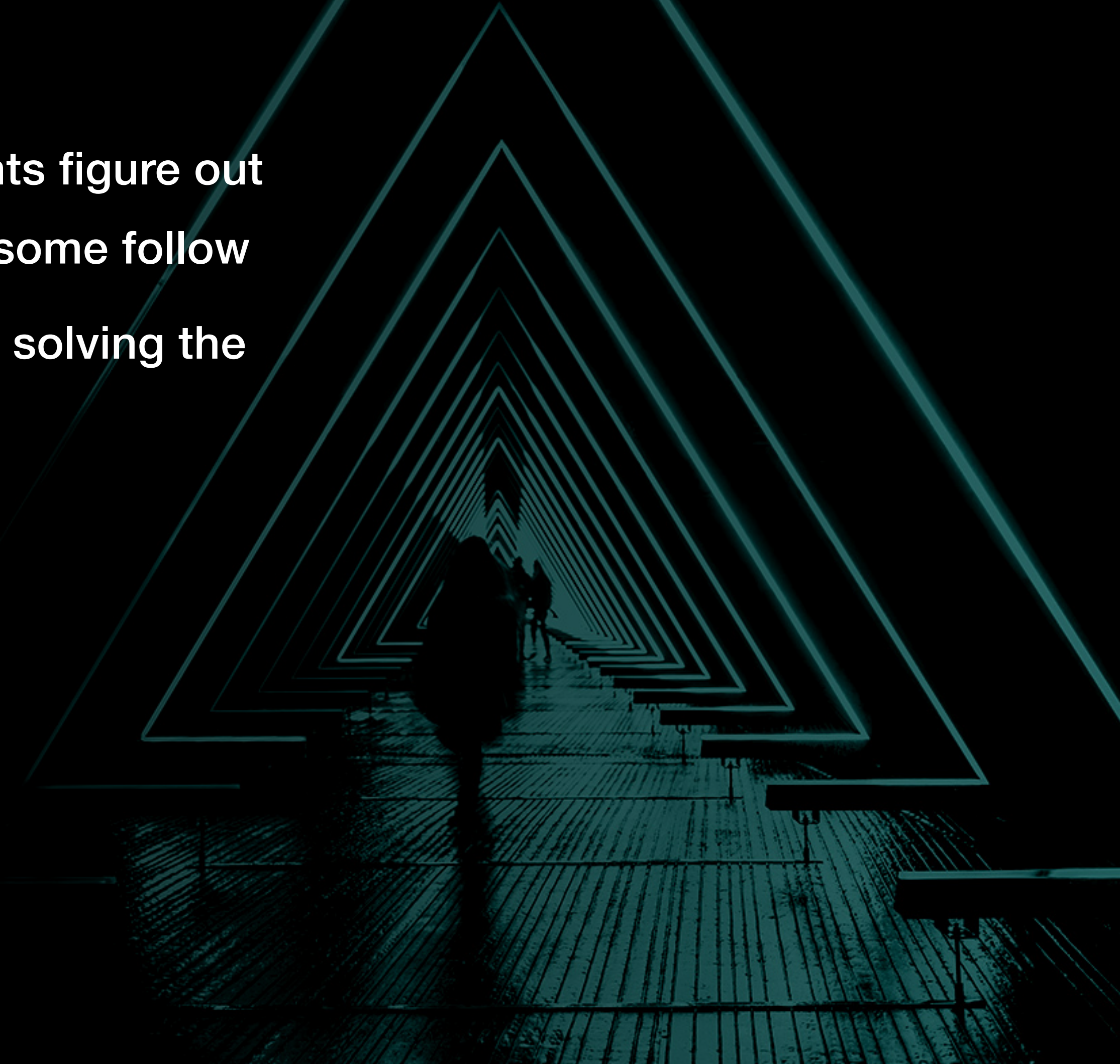
Myth 2: People with Mental Health Issues are weak/lazy and they can snap out of it!

When diagnosed with a Mental Health Disorder, it is not a death sentence. It helps identify what is going on inside of someone so they can be treated properly. It is also something that takes time to work through and CAN improve with the right help (i.e. therapy, support groups, medication if needed). When receiving the right treatment, many people dealing with mental health issues can be very productive at work.

MYTHS AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

Myth 3: All Therapists psycho-analyze you and want to dig in your past!

There are many models used by therapists to help their clients figure out solutions for their problems. Some may ask about the past, some follow the lead of the client, give “homework”, or are only interested in solving the current problem and won’t ask about the past.





WHAT DO YOU SEE?



HOW ABOUT THEM?

THE RESEARCH

Very little research has been done over the years to know how coaches' mental health and their job correlate. A study done in 2021 published in the International Sport Coaching Journal, did a study called Mental Health in Elite-Level Coaches: Prevalence Rates and Associated Impact of Coaches Stressors and Psychological Resilience. They stated that there are 3 main stressors that impact coaches: “performance (e.g., injuries to their athletes, poor playing performance), organizational (e.g., job insecurity, conflicts between playing and other support staff), and personal (e.g., lack of social time, feelings of isolation)...Not managing these stressors can lead to common mental disorders (CMD) amongst coaches, in the form of poor sleep, anger towards those around them, or depression amongst other things”.

Source: Sports Med. 2020 Sep;50(9):1683-1694. doi: 10.1007/s40279-020-01266-z

TrueSport expert Kevin Chapman, PhD talked about mental health for coaches in an article written for USA Volleyball “In my experience with coaches, I’ve found that there’s even more of a stigma with coaches seeking mental health treatment compared to athletes...I’ve also seen how incredibly impactful this is, because depending on the sport, a coach’s mental health might be critical to overall success, wellness, and safety on the team. For instance, if you’re going through a tough time, you might struggle to stay on top of tactics in a fast-paced basketball or football game, or potentially even miss warning signs of injury for your athletes”

Source: Sports Med. 2020 Sep;50(9):1683-1694. doi: 10.1007/s40279-020-01266-z

“You can’t be good at your craft in any capacity if your mental health is not taken care of. You can’t competently do your job.”

-Kevin Chapman

Defense Mechanisms: Ways of Dealing with Difficult Feelings When Dealing With Stress

Defense Mechanisms is the mind's way of protecting itself from dealing with feelings that are unwanted.

According to Freud he believed “When certain events, feelings, or yearnings cause an individual anxiety, the individual wish is to reduce that anxiety. To do that, the individual's unconscious mind uses ego defense mechanisms, unconscious protective behaviors that aim to reduce anxiety.”

Examples of Defense Mechanisms

Denial: Refusal of dealing with the negative feeling/behavior

Projection: Taking what we deem unacceptable in ourselves and attributing them in others

Displacement: Taking out your feelings on someone else

Regression: Returns to earlier coping strategies

Sublimation: Diverting negative desires into acceptable channels

Rationalization: Using excuses to justify your mistake

How Do You Use These?

TAKEAWAYS

- Gain understanding of what mental health is/isn't
- Develop new perspectives on what gets in the way of seeking mental health.
- Reflect on ways you can make your mental health a priority.



CONTACT INFO

Megan Hankins-Maldonado,

MA, LMFT #80840

☎ 1.650.268.4382

✉ megan@meganhankins.com

📷 @TheR.E.C.Center

