

**SPORT & EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE
PORTFOLIO**

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University for the degree of PhD

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Abstract

This portfolio provides an insight into the development of a trainee sport psychology practitioner through the professional doctorate in sport and exercise psychology at Liverpool John Moores University. The portfolio provides evidence, through a combination of consultancy, research, and reflective practice, of how the trainee sport psychology practitioner successfully meets the competencies (professional standards, consultancy, research, and dissemination) of the British Psychological Society's Stage 2 training pathway.

The practice log provides a summative view of the many hours spent by the author learning, implementing and evaluating knowledge and skills of sport psychology. The three consultancy case studies and one teaching case study provide a more in-depth, critical and reflective insight into the authors applied practice. These experiences contributed to the authors development of a coherent and congruent philosophy of practice, which can be confidently delivered with athletes, coaches, and other key stakeholders across sports, cultures, and contexts. Throughout these applied experiences, the trainee practitioner was also able to demonstrate diversity in their training by working with multiple sports (rugby union, tennis, football, cricket, golf, snooker, and show jumping). The reflective practice diary highlights the critical moments experienced by the trainee practitioner throughout this journey, which support the development of a coherent personal and professional identity.

The two empirical papers and systematic review attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice by exploring topics such as: the characteristics of effective sport psychologists, why sport psychologists adopt psychological models into their practice, and how practitioners story their experiences of applied consultancy. Research, combined with opportunities to disseminate findings in professional forums and academic conferences,

allowed the author to understand how his values and beliefs transfer across his training, consultancy, and continuing thirst for knowledge.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Acknowledgement

To every person who helped me on this journey – *thank you.*

Practice Log of Training

Ethical and Professional Standards Activity Log (Key Role 1)					
Date(s)	Client Details	Location	Nature of the activity	Contact Hours	Placement Host details
1/6/17	N/A	LJMU	Enrollment and Day 1 PhD Taught Content: Induction and Plan of Training.	6	LJMU
5-7/6/17	N/A	Northampton	Insights Discovery Practitioner course.	27	RFU / ChMx
8/6/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 2 PhD Taught Content: Plan of Training continued and work-based placement	6	LJMU
13/6/17	N/A	Chapel en le Frith	Chimp Management (ChMx) Company Training day. Topics included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depression – definitions, symptoms, and referrals - Change - Live Case: Drug addiction 	6	ChMx
15/6/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 3 PhD Taught Content: Reflection + Ethics. Reflection in log.	6	LJMU
16/6/17	N/A	Alderley Edge	ChMx Sport Directorate Day. Case share and scenarios.	8	ChMx
19/6/17	N/A	WFH	Plan of Training write up.	4	
21/6/17	N/A	Loughborough	Clean Sport at the Front Line. UKAD Conference.	7	
22/6/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 4 PhD Taught Content: Systematic reviews + Academic Writing.	6	LJMU
28/6/17	N/A	WFH	Plan of Training final write up.	5	LJMU
6/7/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 5 PhD Taught Content: Consultancy Process + Philosophy of Practice. Also – 1hr supervision with ME around my research ideas.	7	LJMU
10/8/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 6 PhD Taught Content: Intake, Needs Analysis, Case Formulation and choosing an intervention in consultancy.	6	LJMU
NB: I dislocated my shoulder on 11/08/17. I had surgery soon after but remained in a sling and incapacitated for 7 weeks.					
14/8/17	N/A		Email from RFU Coach: <i>“How do you see this working re sharing info?”</i> This led me to want to investigate the options which would best suit this style of consultancy where there are multiple stakeholders. I researched the area and took specific learnings from the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coaching Relationships: the relational coaching field book (De Hann 	4.5	RFU / ChMx

			<p>& Sills, 2012). Chapter 7, The Coaching Contract.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P. Jenkins. (1999). Client or patient? Contrasts between medical and counselling models of confidentiality, <i>Counselling Psychology Quarterly</i>, 12:2, 169-181. - NHS: Code of Conduct (2017) (confidentiality research) 		
15/8/17	N/A	Skype	Sarah Broadhead Line Management Call. Discussed: Am I ok after my shoulder surgery? How am I finding the RFU role? Are the RFU happy with my delivery? It was agreed that we would review the RFUs perception of me after I give and took feedback from my 1 st month in role at the next PMT (scheduled for 5/9/17).	1	ChMx
23/8/17	N/A	Self-directed	<p>Self-Directed Reading:</p> <p>General: Sport & Exercise Psychology Review: Volume 12 No. 2 September 2016. Special Issue: Professional Training in Sport and Exercise Psychology</p> <p>Mindfulness Acceptance Commitment (MAC) Therapy research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gardner + Moore (2012): MAC in sport - Thienot et al (2014): MAC Inventory for sport - Gardner + Moore (2017): MAC in sport recent opinions </p>	7.5	N/A
4/9/17	N/A	Self-directed	Anxiety scale research and reading (SAS-2 + SIAS).	1	N/A
12/9/17	N/A	Chapel en le Frith	<p>ChMx Company Training Day. Topics and key learning including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr S.Caddy - Consultation skills - Prof P.Peters - Case scenarios: mediation, principles of high performing teams, confidence levels, forgetful/disorganised case, unforgiving anger (forensic thinking). 	8	ChMx
14/9/17	N/A	LJMU	<p>Day 7 PhD Taught Content: Mock Case Study approaches: Present an intervention to a group of coaches which you intend to deliver in their sport. Interventions included: Mindfulness, REBT, Metaphors, Life/Personal Development, and (my own) Integrated.</p> <p>Also – 1hr supervision with ME.</p>	10 (inc. prep)	LJMU

WB: 18/9/17	N/A	Self-directed	Self-directed reading: ACT research and reading - Ruiz (2010) - ACT empirical evidence review - Hayes et al - ACT Therapy Handbook (ongoing)	5	N/A
21/9/17	N/A	Call	Sarah Broadhead Line Management Call. Discussed: recovering well from shoulder surgery. Enjoying getting out around the clubs and meeting some stakeholders. RFU were happy with my first few months (as per feedback at the PMT), and I am happy with my recent chemistry meetings and clear that building relationships remains my biggest area of focus for the next few months.	1	RFU / ChMx
23/9/17	N/A	WFH	RFU 'EliteHub' review. Notes on file under RFU. Key reflections were that Sports Clinical Intake Protocol (SCIP) type data had no home (or framework). I will offer to create this, if there is interest? To further my knowledge in this area I read: - Taylor + Schnieder (1992) SCIP, - Wright & Keegan (2007) – BASES Consultation guidelines, and - Andersen, M.B. (2000). Beginnings: Intakes and the initiation of relationships. In: M.B. Andersen, (Ed.), Doing sport psychology, pp.3–16. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.	4	RFU / ChMx
28/9/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 8 PhD Taught Content: Case sharing. I bought the case of JS I was set to meet the next day. Reflection in log.	6	LJMU
3/10/17	N/A	Self-directed	Self-directed reading: Simpson (2016) - 'Elevator pitch'	1	N/A
6/10/17	N/A	Skype	Tim Buckle (ex-Olympic Cycling Coach) – Peer reflection and idea sharing.	2	N/A
18/10/17	N/A	Staff. University	Performance Psychology Conference.	8	RFU / ChMx
2/11/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 9 PhD Taught Content: Practitioner Growth + Programme Requirements. Session notes on file.	6	LJMU
14/11/17	N/A	Chapel en le Frith	ChMx Company Training Day. Topics and key learning including: - Media Training - Classifying Clients (examples inc. cognitive vs behavioural through the Police Now offenders programme)	8	ChMx

			- Line Management with Sarah Broadhead		
23/11/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 10 PhD Taught Content: Welfare, Wellbeing + Lifestyle.	6	LJMU
5/12/17	N/A	Chapel en le Frith	ChMx Company Appraisals / Scenario Testing. Appraisal scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process for mediation. - Principles for forming a high performing team - Working on confidence levels in relation to a performance situation. - A client self-reporting to be “always forgetful and disorganised” who might lose their job because of this. - How to work with unrelenting anger. Passed with very positive feedback from the assessors.	8	ChMx
7/12/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 11 PhD Taught Content: Moira Lafferty – Professional Practice experiences. Including, intakes and assessments, the use of film clips and metaphorical song, Q+A. I also subsequently contacted Moira to explore further experiences with her.	6	LJMU
17/1/18	N/A	Skype	Supervision with ME.	1	LJMU
25/1/18	N/A	London	Premiership Directors of Rugby - CPD day (inc. Arsenal FC visit and Arsene Wenger closed door meeting).	8	ChMx / RFU
29/1/18	N/A	London	CPD: ‘Creating a High Performance Environment’. Evening workshop presented by Leading Edge and Olympic Performance Director.	4	Self / RFU
17/2/18	N/A	Worcester	Mentoring day with Steve Bull. Insights into his consulting experiences, methods of working, and practice considerations.	6	Self
26/2/18	N/A	Bristol	‘Courageous Conversations’ training event. Organised by the RFU (Russell Earnshaw) and delivered by Dr Katya Langmuur of MindGym.	3	RFU / ChMx
13/5/18	N/A	Chapel en le Frith	ChMx Company Training Day. Topics and Scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moving someone from Chimp to Human in a session - Effective communication - Applied neuroscience (IOWA gambling experiment) - Helping a parent whose Child starts swearing - May conference. My slot: Cultures for Performance 	8	ChMx
14/5/18	N/A	WFH	Digitalising or shredding all case related paperwork in compliance to the	4	Self

			GDPR protocols.		
22/5/17	N/A	LJMU	Day 12 PhD Taught Content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision Meeting with ME. - Research Group Meeting - Martin Littlewood taught session. 	6	LJMU
10/4/18	N/A	Skype	Supervision with ME.	1	LJMU
19/4/18	N/A	LJMU	Day 13 PhD Taught Content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BPS Project presentations - Dr Pete Lindsay Session 	6	LJMU
May 2018	N/A	N/A	Case Study 1 report: background reading, writing, submission, and feedback.	25	LJMU
22/5/18	N/A	Leeds	ChMx Company Training Day. Topics and Scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundations of emotional stability - Applied Neuroscience: Intuition - Mental health in the workplace 	8	ChMx
30/5/18	N/A	Skype	ChMx Annual Appraisal with Dr Sarah Caddy.	4	ChMx
26/6/18	N/A	WFH	Self-Directed Study (reading): Anderson (2000) Chapter 9 - Support athletes through loss.	1	N/A
27/7/18	N/A	London	BPS DSEP: Mental Health CPD Day Event	8	Self
August 2018	N/A	N/A	Case Study 2 report: background reading, writing, submission, and feedback.	25	LJMU
1/8/18	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training: Scenario Role Play Day. Scenarios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you help someone experiencing panic attacks? - Consistency in sport - How do you assess and help someone with low self-esteem? - What helps bring about effective communication? What is the critical component? - Explain the neuroscience behind the IOWA gambling experiment. How do we explain this with the Chimp model? 	8	ChMx
14/8/18	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training + Scenario Day. Topics and scenarios included:	8	ChMx

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applied Neuroscience: Explain the impact of insecure attachment on the brain and its implications. How might you contain and work with the damage? Any advantages of the damage? - How to work with judgement, not judgementally. - UAR – its power and application - How do you work with a team who say they have a lazy person? - Divorce / Separation 		
24/8/18	N/A	Buxton	<p>Supervision – Professor Steve Peters + Stephanie Fairhurst.</p> <p>Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering a programme targeting the development of the person and/or performance (RFU + Fortress focus) - Supervision around working with extremely rational/logical and/or intellectual thinkers 	5	ChMx
4/9/18	N/A	Phone	<p>Supervision Call – Dr Anna Waters.</p> <p>Check-in on PhD, RFU, Fortress, WCCC, and AOB.</p>	0.5	ChMx
5+6/9/10	N/A	Hathersage	<p>Spotlight Practitioner Training + Accreditation.</p> <p>Led by Mark Bawden and Pete Lindsay.</p>	18	RFU
10/9/18	N/A	Leamington Spa	<p>Peer Learning session. Focus: Designing a National Framework of psychology provision to an NGB. With Tim Buckle and Leonie Lightfoot.</p>	6	ChMx
27/9/18	N/A	LJMU	<p>Day 14 PhD Taught Content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BPS SLR findings presentation to BPS group and Prof Doc cohort - Exploring 1 reflection with a working group 	6	LJMU
1/10/18	N/A	Worcester (WFH)	<p>Designing a delivery programme for youth populations, with Tim Buckle (ChMx Mentor and ex-Team GB Cyclist and British Cycling youth development coach of 12 years).</p>	7	ChMx
3/10/18	N/A	Worcester (David Lloyd)	<p>Designing a delivery programme for youth and adult populations, with Leonie Lightfoot (ChMx Mentor and GB Equestrian Olympic and Podium Potential Psych).</p>	4	ChMx
20/10/18	N/A	Wortley Hall, Sheffield	<p>Conference: Interpersonal Skill Development. Professor Steve Peters and Dr Anna Waters.</p>	8	ChMx

23/10/18	N/A	Meadowhall, Sheffield	ChMx Company Training + Case Formulations. Topics included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on new note taking software and systems to keep up with GDPR and professional standards. - Case Formulations. Examples included: weight loss/management and self-esteem; Indecision and Decision Making; Performance Anxiety and Confidence 	7	ChMx
5+6/11/18	N/A	LJMU	3i's Teacher Training Course (for HEA Accreditation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small group teaching - Large group teaching - Assessment protocols 	12	LJMU
7+8/11/18	N/A	Gloucester College	Mental Health First Aid (Youth) – Full 2 Day Course.	17	Self
13/11/18	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training + Scenario Day. Topics and scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Differences: brain and behaviour. - Group exercise: program planning (what would you do over 4 x 2hr workshops, with a performance outcome focus?). Idea and resource development. 	8	ChMx
14+15/11/18	N/A	Stoke on Trent	Mental Health First Aid (Adults) – Full 2 Day Course.	16	Self
2-4/12/18	N/A	Belfast	DSEP Annual Conference: attendance and presenting. Examples sessions attended: Mental Health in Sport (various); Brain Hemmings Applied Lessons; Paul Wylleman 'Team Holland' Keynote.	16 (inc. prep and reflect.)	LJMU
6/12/18	N/A	Buxton	Supervision – Professor Steve Peters. Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision – Fortress 1:1s - Review and planning - Masterclasses - Review and planning - Programme 	6	ChMx

			- AOB		
12/12/18	N/A	Sheffield	Mental Health and Personal Wellbeing Conference Example Sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stress Management + Emotional Wellbeing - Decision Making - Procrastination - Committing to Change 	8	ChMx
8/1/19	N/A	Skype (from U20s Camp)	ChMx Company Training Day. Topics and scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-confidence and feedback: as a practitioner - The developing mind: habit formation and habit change. Working examples: procrastination, decision making. 	6	ChMx
8/2/19	N/A	Worcester	Collaborative knowledge share and planning with Tim Buckle for the ChMx Annual Conference. Topic: Unconscious Basis of High Performing Teams	5	ChMx
12/2/19	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training + Scenario Day. Topics and scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 'murder case': avoiding emotional thinking as a practitioner - Gender identity + Sexuality - May Conference: session structure + idea pooling 	8	ChMx
19/2/19	N/A	Buxton	Team Fortress peer-supervision + review day. Topics included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client reviews (assessment, approach, status) - Challenging cases - What is going well? Stop, Start, Maintain? 	8	ChMx
22/2/19	N/A	Colwyn Bay, Wales	U20s Six Nations: Wales vs England. Practice placement observation by Dr Martin Eubank.	4	RFU / ChMx
12/3/19	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training + Scenario Day. Topics and scenarios included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AW: Programming the Computer 	8	ChMx

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SP: Neuroscience in action - Critical and clinical thinking - May conference: idea presentation and feedback 		
22/3/19	N/A	Manchester	<p>ChMx North Group Peer-led CPD. Topics and scenarios included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master Class 4- Stress Management: content and approaches - Good practice: note taking - Personal development disclosures 	8	ChMx
28/3/19	N/A	LJMU	<p>Day 15 PhD Taught Content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivational Interviewing: Dr Jeff Breckon 	6	LJMU
29/3/19	N/A	Call	<p>Supervision with Dr Anna Waters. Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always starting with the client's session objectives - Approach to closing a final session 	1	RFU / ChMx
14/5/19	N/A	Buxton	<p>ChMx Company Training + Scenario Day. Topics and scenarios included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transference - Good practice: consulting in different cultures (e.g. Bahrain) 	8	ChMx
20/5/19	N/A	Call	<p>Supervision with Dr Anna Waters. Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How best to close the RFU contract e.g. with the U18s, U20s and staff - Balance of PhD writing and applied delivery - Company team days and appraisals input 	1	RFU / ChMx
May + June 2019	N/A	N/A	<p>Self-directed reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional philosophy is SPSD (Pocwardowski and colleagues, 1998, 2004, 2017). - Counselling skills and approaches in SPSD (Longstaff & Gervis, 2016) - Bereavement (Bonanno, 2009) - Work-life balance as an ASP (Waumsley et al., 2010) - The difference between feelings and emotions (Domasio, 2017) 		

May + June 2019	N/A	N/A	Writing a reflective account of a consultancy case study. Focus: supporting an athlete through a bereavement	25hrs	LJMU
13/6/19	N/A	Call	Supervision with Prof Steve Peters. Discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approach and reflections from work with snooker player - Development points 	1	ChMx
20/6/19	N/A	Call	Supervision with Dr Anna Waters. Discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ChMx Annual Appraisal structure and content - Discussion of Snooker case, inc. my reflections - Offered the lead role on Project Fortress, which I accepted. 	1	ChMx
24/6/19	N/A	Skype	Peer learning session with Adam Wright. Discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applied neuroscience (Hippocampal Formation and memory formation, with implications) - Autism spectrum disorders - Silent Guides Chapter 1 nuances. Namely, what secure attachment in children is and affords, and sources of security in adults. 	1.5	ChMx
27/6/19	N/A	LJMU	Day 16 PhD Taught Content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working in Elite / Professional Sport: Dr Mark Nesti - Followed by peer discussion and reflections 	4.5	LJMU
9/7/19	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Company Training Topics and Case Studies included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Silent Guides Chapter 2 nuances - Applied neuroscience (hippocampal formation continued) - Case studies (managing tragedy / no win situation) - Preparation for the December Conference (Imposter Syndrome) 	8	ChMx
23-24/7/19	N/A	Buxton	ChMx Annual Formal Appraisal Agenda included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCQ Test - Scenario Testing - Presentation (of core components of delivery) - Formal Interview 	10 inc. 3 for post appraisal reflectio	ChMx

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submission of CPD log - Production of CPD plan for next 12 months 	n and planning	
Close of Professional Standards Activity Log					

Consultancy Activity Log (Key Role 2)					
Date(s)	Client Details	Location	Nature of the activity	Contact Hours	Placement Host details
26/6/17	RFU / ChMx	Leamington spa	Pathway Management Team (PMT) 'Away Day'. A chance for me to meet the management team I would be working with if I joined the RFU staff.	8hrs	RFU / ChMx
28/6/17	1:1 Tennis Player	Birmingham	1:1 Consultancy with a Tennis Player (MF): needs assessment and case formulation.	1.5	ChMx
7/7/17	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	Establishing relationships and assessing and planning a request for consultancy with Mark Bennett and Dean Ryan (RFU). Discussions included: Informing MB of the audit I had conducted for the RFU up to that point, what psych roll-out could include across the Union and men's pathway, what the contract might look like, next steps. MBs Insights Discovery feedback session.	4hrs 1hr	RFU / ChMx
NB: during the period of 10 th -24 th July the contract between Chimp Management and the RFU was drawn up. I took AL during this period and returned as a 0.8 contractor to the RFU on Tuesday 25 th July 2017.					
WB: 24/7/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Familiarising myself with frameworks, case files, and user systems available through the RFU online portals (EduFi, EliteHub, RugbySquad).	40hrs	RFU / ChMx
27/7/17	ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with a Sport Science Professional: Assessment of request and initial needs assessment. Case formulation thereafter.	1.5	ChMx
31/7/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Agenda: NPP Selection and Discussion, Monthly Reporting, Mentoring, Elite Hub.	8hrs	RFU / ChMx
WB: 31/7/17	RFU / ChMx	Various – Nationally	Relationship building with: National Coaches (JF, SB, RE, PW, DB), RFU Head of Medical (SK), Analysts (SC, KB),	15hrs	RFU / ChMx
WB: 31/7/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Developing frameworks for: athlete case files, IDPs, and, monthly reporting.	8hrs	RFU / ChMx

WB: 7/8/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	NPP Player and Academy Manager Introductory efforts (Email and then light touch calls or arranging a club visit). 'Case File' framework finalising	8hrs	
8/7/17	ChMx	Skype	1:1 consultancy with sport science professional (DB).	1.25	ChMx
NB: I dislocated my shoulder on 11/08/17. I had surgery soon after but remained in a sling and incapacitated for 7 weeks.					
WB: 14/8/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Introductory calls with NPP Players and Academy Managers. Endeavoured to understand their world a little bit, what's going on for them, what's important to them, what is their perception/experience of psychology in/out of sport, etc.	10hrs	RFU / ChMx
14/8/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH (Skype)	As a result of the introductory calls, one of the NPP athletes (AC) asked if I could support him with anxiety he was experiencing around returning to play after 8 months out and string of injuries before that. This led to a need's analysis and subsequent case formulation.	1.5hrs	RFU / ChMx
WB: 21/8/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Introductory calls with NPP Players and Academy Managers.	8hrs	RFU / ChMx
23/8/17	ChMx	Worcester	1:1 Consultancy with female tennis player (MF).	1.5	ChMx
24/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with male rugby player (AC).	1	RFU / ChMx
24/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Worcester + Twickenham	Introductory meetings with PMT Staff: inc, GL and DB. Clarifying if and where our roles dovetail and any way we can better support one another and those we will work with.	4	RFU / ChMx
25/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Coventry	Club Visit, Wasps. Academy Manager = John Pendlebury.	5	RFU / ChMx
WB: 28/8/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Introductory calls with NPP Players and Academy Managers.	4	RFU / ChMx
30/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	Club Visit, Worcester. Academy Manager = Chim Gale.	5	RFU / ChMx
30/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	1:1 consultancy: JM – Rugby Union, National Performance Programme (NPP), Intake and needs assessment.	1.5	RFU / ChMx

31/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	NPP Camp planning. GW - Leading Edge. Discussed the idea for and potential opportunities within the Oct NPP Camp.	2	RFU / ChMx
31/8/17	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	1:1 Consultancy, TH - Rugby Union, NPP. Introductory meeting and needs assessment.	1	RFU / ChMx
1/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with AC (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
4/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	Professional Rugby Department Meeting. In this I did a 10minute Q+A on modern opinion and research in regard to Psychology + Talent ID.	4 (inc. prep)	RFU / ChMx
5/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly update/report. Feedback was very positive from DR. He wants me to just keep building understanding and relationships.	8 (inc. prep)	RFU / ChMx
6/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Hazelwood	Club Visit, London Irish. Academy Manager = Paddy O'Grady. Also met NPP Players and Mike Roberts (Psych).	4.5	RFU / ChMx
6/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with AC (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
7/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Maidenhead	Academy Managers (AM) Forum + Meal. Understanding the landscape of the 14 AMs, their contexts, challenges, needs and interests.	10	RFU / ChMx
13/9/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	RFU Behavioural Framework Review.	1.5	RFU / ChMx
14/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with JM (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
15/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with AC (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
18/9/17	RFU / ChMx	North Bristol RFC	England U18 Camp – South. - Informal delivery (group discussions, side-line conversations, etc). - Discussed psychology tie-in with the medical team. Agreeing working practice, responsibilities, etc. - Case by Case debrief in the PM with the coaches.	9	RFU / ChMx
20/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Leicester	Club Visit, Leicester Tigers. AM = Dave Wilks. Met S+C coach too.	5	RFU / ChMx

20/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Call	1:1 Consultancy with JM (NPP). - Game reviewing - Balanced game reviewing (Feelings & Impressions, Evidence, Plan/Actions) - Sources of feedback, input, recognition (praise)?	1	RFU / ChMx
22/9/17	ChMx	Skype	1:1 consultancy with sport science professional (DB).	1	ChMx
25/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Leeds Weetwood RFC	England U18 Camp – North. - Environment, coach and player observations. - Informal delivery (side-lines) - Regional Coach Q+A session (by me for them)	8	RFU / ChMx
26/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update. Report on file. Discussed challenges around engaging with some AMs, also explored the progression of the potential mentoring scheme. Received positive feedback from Club regarding my engagement with AC.	8 (inc. prep)	RFU / ChMx
27/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Bath	AM: Club Visit, Bath Rugby. AM = Andy Rock. PM: Coaches meeting @ PGIR Head Office: NPP + Pathway Players Review	7.5	RFU / ChMx
29/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy with JM (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
29/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	1:1 Consultancy with JS – Rugby Union. Consultancy Case Study 3.	1	RFU / ChMx
2/10/17	ChMx	Newlyn	Supervision/Line Management Meeting – Prof Steve Peters.	4 (inc. prep)	ChMx
3/10/17	RFU / ChMx	Sale	Club Visit, Sale Sharks. AM = Brendan Thomas.	5	RFU / ChMx
4/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Northampton	AM: Club Visit, Northampton Saints. AM = Simon Sinclair PM: John Millington (RPA) – Call to explore our roles and opportunities.	5 1	RFU / ChMx
8-10/10/17	RFU / ChMx	Northampton	NPP Camp: Northampton. Community based experiential learning project.	42	RFU / ChMx
13/10/17	ChMx	Worcester	1:1 consultancy with sport science professional (DB).	1.25	ChMx

WB:16/10/17	RFU / ChMx	General	NPP Player Calls, Coach calls, NPP 'Story' advisory call, U18 Camp Prep, Service Provision Meeting (MB @ Worcester),	20	RFU / ChMx
17/9/17	RFU / ChMx	Exeter	Club Visit, Exeter Chiefs. AM = Rob Gibson. Ricky Pellow long 'informal' coach education session.	7	RFU / ChMx
23-26/10/17	RFU / ChMx	Leeds	England U18 Camp. Introductory, Parent, Psychological Skill Development, Imagery, and Self + Team awareness sessions.	50	RFU / ChMx
31/10/17	RFU / ChMx	Cheltenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update. Report on file. Afternoon was a PMT functioning session facilitated by Leading Edge.	8	RFU / ChMx
1/11/17	Self	London	"Lessons for Business from Elite Sport". Think Tank: RA, JDA, JB, + MA. Hosted by Management Futures. Session prep notes and output on file.	8	N/A
3/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Skype	Chemistry call: David Alcock (Psychologist, Bristol RFC).	1	RFU / ChMx
WB: 6/11/17	RFU / ChMx	General	NPP Player Calls, Coach calls, Wellington Festival discussions, etc.	20	RFU / ChMx
6-7/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Pennyhill Park	England Seniors Camp.	16	RFU / ChMx
9/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Leamington Spa	NPP Debrief and Planning Session. Hosted by Leading Edge.	9	RFU / ChMx
16/11/17	ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy, female tennis player (MF).	1	ChMx
16/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Leamington Spa	NPP Planning Session, reviewing my 4-box framework model. Hosted by Leading Edge.	8	RFU / ChMx
20/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Bristol RGS	England U18 Camp – South. - Top 10 Behavioural Assessment feedback presentations - Informal delivery (1:1 conversation with Top 10, Coaches and Richard Hill). - Met Dave Alcock. Relationship build and discussion of working practices between Bristol and England Pathway (specific focus on NPP).	9	RFU / ChMx
24/11/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	AM – Dr Trevor Gedeon, regarding interests in exploring mental health training for Sport Psychologists.	3	RFU / ChMx

			PM – Skype, with an MSc Sport Psychology graduate (MD), regarding his interest to work with the RFU in an applied capacity.		
27/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Leeds	England U18 Camp – North. - Top 10 Behavioural Assessment feedback presentations - Informal delivery (1:1 conversations with Top 10, Coaches and Dean Ryan). - Met Hannah Brooks (EIS, GB Triathlon). She was interested how psychology was run across a non-centralised pathway with multiple independent stakeholders (i.e. academies, parents, agents, etc).	9	RFU / ChMx
30/11/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	Pathway Psychology Strategy Meeting. RA + MB + DB. Discussed the current landscape relating to psychology across the RFU Pathway. I explained the current elite pathway provision (as outlined in my pathway pyramid diagram), and MB + DB agreed that an audit of clubs ‘psychological services’ would be the next step for us to understand where psychology provision within the RFU men’s pathway could be best supported and developed moving forward.	3	RFU / ChMx
6/12/17	RFU / ChMx	Call	Line Management Call with Mark Bennett. This call was significant in as much as it was the first time Mark officially recognised my ‘Delivery Pyramid’ as my working responsibility. This was tied into him asking me to now work towards having a schedule of dates (and costings) for my provision to the U18s, U20s and NPP in relation to camp and competition delivery. I completed that document for sign off and it is on file.	1	RFU / ChMx
14/12/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	Professional Rugby Department Meeting. Strategic planning and problem solving/creative thinking across the organisation.	3	RFU / ChMx
18/12/17	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	AM – Meeting: Dynamics of behaviour change in elite athletes. David Dunne (nutrition focus) and MB. PM - 1:1 Skype consultancy with JM (NPP).		RFU / ChMx
Festive Break: 20 th – 27 th December 2018					

WB: 25/12/17	RFU / ChMx	WFH	Introductory texts and calls with the U20s 'Leadership Group'.	4	RFU / ChMx
4/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Knutsford	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update. Report on file. Facilitated by Leading Edge. Explored pathway purpose, principles and delivery.	8	RFU / ChMx
5/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	ChMx-RFU 3-month service review. Sarah Broadhead, Dean Ryan, Mark Bennett and Robbie Anderson present.	3	RFU / ChMx
7-10/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp. Training attendance. Leadership group meetings. 'Team Building' slot. Reflection on record.	30	RFU / ChMx
11/1/18	ChMx	Phone	1:1 consultancy: sports science professional (DB).	1	ChMx
12/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Skype	Wellington Festival Planning - Psychology Session. Skype with Chris Gooder.	2	RFU / ChMx
14-16/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Guildford	NPP Camp: Guildford. Focus: Understanding self.	20	RFU / ChMx
17/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Call	1:1 Consultancy: JM (NPP).	1	RFU / ChMx
22/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Sale	Sale Club Visit. NPP Players and Academy Coaches.	5	RFU / ChMx
24/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Coventry & St Albans	Wasps & Saracens Club Visits. NPP players and Academy Managers.	9	RFU / ChMx
26/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Hazelwood Park	London Irish Club Visit. NPP Players and Club Psychologist.	5	RFU / ChMx
29/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Solihull	RFU Pathway Meeting: Secure Attachment and Healthy Environments. Russell Earnshaw + Dr Suzanne Brown.	2	RFU / ChMx
31/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update.	8	RFU / ChMx
1/2/18	Self	Call	Mike McCreary call. Peer discussion around how to support a young team of athletes when on tour.	1	Self
1-3/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Italy	U20s Six Nations: Italy vs England.	36	RFU / ChMx

7-10/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Newcastle	U20s Six Nations: England vs Wales.	36	RFU / ChMx
12/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	NPP Club Visit (Worcester Warriors). Academy Manager and NPP player meetings.	5	RFU / ChMx
15/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	NPP January Camp Review.		RFU / ChMx
16/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	AM: Rugby Players Association collaboration meeting. PM: NPP Club Visit (Bristol RFC). Academy Manager and NPP player meeting.	8	RFU / ChMx
21/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	Meeting with Mark Bennett to discuss the notion of an RFU National Psychology Framework.	3	RFU / ChMx
21-24/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Edinburgh	U20s Six Nations: Scotland vs England. 23/2: Head of Women's Rugby psychology provision discussion	36	RFU / ChMx
24-26/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	U18s Development Camp. Psychology sessions delivered on: (1) Introduction to psychology (U17s), (2) Intro to the brain in action (U18s). On-field player and coach development.	16	RFU / ChMx
26/2/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	Athlete Development Meeting: England Rugby National Performance Programme.	4	RFU / ChMx
27/1/18	RFU / ChMx	Newcastle	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update.	8	RFU / ChMx
6/3/18	WCCC / ChMx	N/A	Call from David Young (ECB Head of Psychology). Discussed mutual roles. Developed a relationship and assessed request for consultancy (Worcester County Cricket Club, WCCC).	1	WCCC / ChMx
7-10/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Beziers, France	U20s Six Nations: France vs England.	36	RFU / ChMx
12/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Warwick	NPP 'Leadership with Horses' scoping trip. Assessing suitability as a learning and development approach.	4	RFU / ChMx
16/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Ricoh Arena, Coventry	AM: NPP Presentation and Corporate Q&A. PM: U20s Six Nations: England vs Ireland.	9	RFU / ChMx

20/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Shrewsbury	Psychology Research Review Meeting: RFU (RA + MB) and Bangor University (RR). Project Overview and action planning.	3	RFU / ChMx
21/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	NPP Athlete Development Meeting (ADM).	4	RFU / ChMx
23-25/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol + Pontypridd	U18 Training camp and Wales fixture.	24	RFU / ChMx
26/3/18	ChMx	Skype	Professional Footballer. Intake interview and needs analysis.	1	ChMx
WB: 26/3/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Visit to WCCC to meet Director of Cricket, Head Coach and Head of Sport Science and Medical to assess request for consultancy.	4	ChMx
26/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 consultancy: ACo (NPP). Insights debrief and relationship build.	1	RFU / ChMx
27/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update.	8	RFU / ChMx
28/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Phone	AM: NPP Player (JM) 1:1 consultancy. Selection dilemma. PM: NPP Player (AC) 1:1 consultancy. JWC prep.	1	RFU / ChMx
30-31/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Swansea	U18 England vs Scotland. NPP player meetings, including School Masters.	8	RFU / ChMx
2/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Wellington	RFU Academies Festival. Delivery session to Academy Teams: performing under pressure.	9	RFU / ChMx
6-8/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Swansea	U18 England vs Wales. Included co-leading the post-game review with a lens on in-game emotional shifts / momentum.	18	RFU / ChMx
9/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Leamington Spa	AM: April NPP Camp Final briefing with Leading Edge (2hrs) PM: Wasps A vs Worcester A. Relationship building.	6	RFU / ChMx
11/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Leicester	NPP Club Visit, Leicester Tigers.	5	RFU / ChMx
15-17/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Cheltenham	NPP Camp: 'Big Brother House'. Experiential learning project (understanding others).	30	RFU / ChMx
18/4/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club consultancy at WCCC. - Coach meetings - Player meetings	6	RFU / ChMx

8/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	1:1 Consultancy: Rugby Union Player (JS). Consultancy Case Study 3.	1	RFU / ChMx
24/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	AM: Athlete Development Meeting: England Rugby National Performance Programme. PM: 1:1 Consultancy : BL (NPP)	6	RFU / ChMx
25/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update.	8	RFU / ChMx
26/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	Professional Rugby Department Meeting	4	RFU / ChMx
27/4/18	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 Consultancy: Female Tennis Player (MF).	1	ChMx
28/4/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club Consultancy: WCCC vs Notts. Relationship building (playing and coaching staff), observations, contracting with CEO.	5	ChMx
2/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	Psychology Research Review Meeting: RFU (RA + MB) and Bangor University (RR, LH, AT). Project findings (to date) and request for continuation on Bangor's behalf. Action planning.	3	RFU / ChMx
6-8/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Prep Camp. "Influencers" group JWC prep.	24	RFU / ChMx
8-9/5/18	ChMx	Sheffield	Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing Conference. Presented a session titled: Creating Cultures for High Performance. Slides and feedback on file.	9 (prep + delivery)	ChMx
11/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Sixways Stadium	England U20s vs South Africa U20s. Match support and Academy Manager liaising.	24	RFU / ChMx
16/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	Athlete Development Meeting: England Rugby National Performance Programme.	8	RFU / ChMx
23-25/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Prep Camp. NPP player tournament goal setting. Individualised 'onboarding' for NPP Player (MS).	24	RFU / ChMx
30/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 consultancy: AC (NPP) - pre JWC fixture.	1	RFU / ChMx
3/6/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club consultancy: WCCC vs Northampton. Game attendance and brief-intervention(s).	6	WCCC / ChMx

4-17/6/18	RFU / ChMx	Beziers, France	U20s World Championships, France. Attending resident psychologist for the England team throughout the competition. Reflection on file.	2 weeks	RFU / ChMx
22/6/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Season and JWC Review.	8	RFU / ChMx
28/6/18	RFU / ChMx	Cheltenham	Contract Review with Head of International Player Development.	2.5	RFU / ChMx
3/6/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	NPP Annual Review. RFU, ChMx and Leading Edge. Action points: look at ways to validate our work to external parties “looking in”.	8	RFU / ChMx
30/7/18	RFU / ChMx	St Albans	1:1 consultancy: AC (NPP).	4 (with supervision)	RFU / ChMx
31/7/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	AM: PMT Meeting. Year planning. PM: All-Pathway Meeting.	8	RFU / ChMx
3/8/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club Consultancy: WCCC vs Durham. Game attendance and brief-intervention(s). New player onboarding and captain injury.	6	WCCC / ChMx
13/8/18	Fortress / ChMx	WFH	Project Fortress: Needs Analysis calls – 3 x 30mins + note taking.	2	Fortress / ChMx
15/8/18	RFU / ChMx	Keithley	England Rugby Academies Festival (North). Academy Manager and SS&M liaising.	8	RFU / ChMx
16/8/18	Fortress / ChMx	London	Project Fortress: Observations of the daily environment and culture. 4 x 30 min 1:1 needs analysis meeting. Review meeting with Project Leads.	7	Fortress / ChMx
17/8/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club Consultancy: WCCC Coach + Psych: Athlete Development Meeting / Needs analysis.	2	WCCC / ChMx
20/8/18	Fortress / ChMx	WFH	Project Fortress: Thematic Analysis of Interview Data from needs analysis phase.		Fortress / ChMx
21-22/8/18	RFU / ChMx	WFH + Twickenham	RFU Psychology Department Proposal (Assessing a request and submitting/delivering a proposal for consultancy)	6	RFU / ChMx

23/8/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	Athlete Development Meeting: England Rugby National Performance Programme.	6	RFU / ChMx
28/8/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Monthly update/report. Discussed the integration of the U18 + U20 age groups into a 'whole pathway' provision and delivery programme. Requested to consider how all departments (inc. psychology) could be better in this regard. Also asked to consider what Psychology CPD for the wider game might look like if led/facilitated by me.	8	RFU / ChMx
31/8/18	ChMx	Anonymised	1:1 consultancy: assessing a request for consultancy. Football Coach (OM).	2	Football / ChMx
3/9/18	ChMx	Call	1:1 consultancy: Footballer (SM). Ongoing development and support.	1	Football / ChMx
3/9/18	ChMx	Call	'What Constitutes a good learning environment' MDT brainstorm session.	3	RFU / ChMx
4/9/18	RFU / ChMx	Westminster	NPP Recce: The Passage. Assessing environment for learning experience. Developing tasks and ideas.	6	RFU / ChMx
7/9/18	Fortress / ChMx	Birmingham	Project Fortress Programme Design with Adam Wright and briefing call with Fortress Head of HR.	6	ChMx / Fortress
11/9/18	Fortress / ChMx	Worcester (WFH)	Masterclass Program Design – Project Fortress.	4	ChMx / Fortress
12/9/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	'What Constitutes a good Learning Environment' MDT brainstorming session.	2	RFU / ChMx
13-14/9/18	RFU / ChMx	Loughborough	Academy Managers Forum. Attendance of both days and presentation of Pathway Psychology Program and survey of Academy Psych services and potential festival/CPD agendas.	15	RFU / ChMx
17/09/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	'What Constitutes a good Learning Environment' MDT finalising session (Creating document + presentation for the new coaches)	2	RFU / ChMx
19/09/18	Fortress / ChMx	London	Program Proposal Presentation to CEO, COO and Head of People, including peer supervision post session with Prof Peters.	5	ChMx / Fortress
24/9/18	WCCC / ChMx	Worcester	Club Consultancy: WCCC Case formulations for 6 players with the Head Coach.	2.5	WCCC / ChMx

25/9/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. Season planning; presentation of psych programme and learning environments to new coaches; Case conference of NPP Players.	8	RFU / ChMx
28/9/18	RFU / ChMx	Newcastle	NPP Club Visit: Newcastle Falcons (CNK + JH, hosted by Mark Laycock). Stayed for Falcons vs Wasps with MDT.	9	RFU / ChMx
2/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	Athlete Development Meeting: England Rugby National Performance Programme. Notes on file.	5	RFU / ChMx
4/10/18	ChMx	Anonymised	1:1 consultancy: Football Coach (OM).	1.5	Football / ChMx
4/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Leicestershire	NPP Player Visit and onboarding (GM). Included a phone call to his mother to offer the same service.	6	RFU / ChMx
5/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Call	NPP Camp final preparation skype with PM and DB. Organising activities, schedule, and groupings.	1.5	RFU / ChMx
7-9/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Westminster	NPP October Camp. Theme: 'Holding an Opinion'. Vehicle: homelessness. Included ongoing mentoring of players and a 40-minute group session on Monday 8 th around rational/ emotional thinking and belief formation.	6	RFU / ChMx
10-12/10/19	Fortress / ChMx	New York	Fortress Delivery Phase 1. Keynote: Optimising the Functioning of the Human Mind. Followed by 36 screening interviews.	40	ChMx / Fortress
15/10/18	RFU / ChMx	The Lensbury	Bangor University Research Update and forward planning. Present: AT, RR, DR, AS, RA. Action Plans: Bangor to send proposal for measures and roll out of data capture across national Pathway teams.	3	RFU / ChMx
17/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Worcester (WFH)	'Final' Pathway Psychology Programme write up and communication with Pathway Management Team.	4	RFU / ChMx
24-25/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	England Rugby U18 – development camp. Included delivering a 30-minute group session (slides on file), 1:1 consultations (formal and informal), and medical / coach meetings.	18	RFU / ChMx
30/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	NPP Club and Players Visit – Bristol Bears. 2 x 1:1 consultancy (WC + JD).	4	RFU / ChMx
31/10/18	ChMx	Anonymised	1:1 Consultancy: Football Coach (OM).	2	Football / ChMx

31/10/18	RFU / ChMx	Coventry	NPP Club and Players Visit – Wasps. 1 Coach and 2 x 1:1 player meetings.	4	RFU / ChMx
1/11/18	RFU / ChMx	Witney Golf Club	PMT Meeting. U20s Campaign planning + Coach Induction; case conference of NPP Players.	5	RFU / ChMx
2/11/18	Fortress / ChMx	Buxton	Masterclass and 1:1 planning day. Supervision by Prof Steve Peters and Peer group.	6	ChMx / Fortress
9/11/18	RFU	Cheltenham + Worcester	AM: NPP Review and Planning (with DR) PM: NPP 1:1 (TW, S2) – Facetime	5	RFU / ChMx
12/11/18	RFU	Twickenham	Psychology Heads of Service: Board Report (review + proposals) Slides on file (though whiteboard and handouts also used)	4	RFU / ChMx
19/11/18	RFU	WFH	RFU Case and Project Work + Skype Call with Pathway Sport Scientist (MA) concerning the use of psychological profiling.	8	RFU / ChMx
20/11/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	PMT Meeting. NPP Player Reviews. New NPP Player Intros. PM: All-Pathway Meeting.	8	RFU / ChMx
23/11/18	RFU / ChMx	Leamington Spa	U20s Coaches Meeting (RA, SB, JM) – Learning Environments Review and Planning for JWC Campaign	2	RFU / ChMx
26-30/11/18	Fortress / ChMx	New York	Fortress Delivery Phase 2. - Masterclass (x3): Getting the best from yourself. - 18 x 1hr 1:1 consultations - Evening peer supervision sessions within the ChMx Team.	40+	ChMx / Fortress
10/12/18	RFU / ChMx	Skype	NPP January Camp, content planning. RA + PM + SA.	3	RFU / ChMx
17/12/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	AM: Contract Review (and proposed revamp) – RA + DR PM: NPP Player Reviews.	5	RFU / ChMx
18/12/18	RFU / ChMx	Twickenham	All Pathway Meeting. Was due to present a Mental Health session, but cancelled due to a reschedule by DR.	4	RFU / ChMx
19/12/18	Fortress / ChMx	Worcester + WFH	AM: 1:1 consultation: Football Coach (OM). PM: 2 x 1hr 1:1 videocall consultation: Fortress, NYC	5	ChMx
20/12/18	RFU / ChMx	Salisbury	NPP Recce: Serve On. Assessing environment for learning experience. Developing tasks and ideas. (RA + PM)	6	RFU / ChMx

21/12/18	Fortress / ChMx	Worcester + WFH	1hr 1:1 videocall consultation: Fortress, NYC (BF)	5	ChMx
03/01/19	RFU / ChMx	Cheltenham	AM: RFU Contract Review + NPP Camp Planning (final elements). RA + DR PM: RFU 'Contract Revamp' Proposal Writing + U20s Planning Peer Supervision Call with Tim Buckle	5	RFU / ChMx
7/1/19	ChMx	Call	1:1 consultation: Footballer (SM). Ongoing development and support.	1	Football / ChMx
6-9/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp. Including: - 2 Groups sessions (part of T+T Case Study) - 8 x 1hr 1:1s with NPP Players - 'Open clinic' for non-NPP Squad players	24	RFU / ChMx
10/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Worcester / WFH	AM: NPP Final Planning Call – PM (Leading Edge); + Planning. PM: NPP Final Planning Call – PM + DR	5	RFU / ChMx
13-15/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Salisbury	NPP January Camp. Theme: Self-Awareness & Self-Regulation. Partner: Serve On (Human Rescue Specialists). Included working in subgroups to address multiple challenges of a simulated post-hurricane rescue mission. I presented a Session on The Chimp Model on the Sunday Night, with my reflective exercises/opportunities built into the programme and facilitated by myself, PM or SA (we each had a group of 6-8 athletes).	6	RFU / ChMx
16-18/1/19	Fortress / ChMx	New York	Fortress Delivery Phase 3. - Masterclass (x3): Getting the best from others. - 18 x 1hr 1:1s Consultations - Evening peer supervision sessions within the ChMx Team.	21+	ChMx / Fortress
23-24/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Worcester / WFH	NPP Skype Clinic. 7 x 1:1 consultation. Reviewing reflections from the Jan Camp, takeaways and action points.	7	RFU / ChMx
30-2/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey + Cork, Ireland	U20s 6 Nations Camp and Game 1. Including: - PMT Meeting. NPP Player Reviews - Group Session (part of T+T Case Study) - 6 x 1hr 1:1s consultations with NPP Players	30	RFU / ChMx

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Game day coverage - Team and Individual Reviews 		
6-7/2/19	RFU / ChMx	Worcester / WFH	Skype Clinic introduction communication to remaining NPP players (via text or call) 2 x 1:1 consultation: SM & MS (NPP) (Facetime)	7	RFU / ChMx
9/2/19	RFU / ChMx	Exeter	U20s Six Nations: England vs France.	9	RFU / ChMx
13/2/19	Fortress / ChMx	Skype	Needs Assessment for 1:1 performance coaching contract. Client = ND. SR / SF / RA / JW on call.	2 (inc. write up)	ChMx / Fortress
20/2/19	RFU / ChMx	Cheltenham	AM: NPP April Camp Planning. Cheltenham. DR / RA / PM. PM: NPP Skype Clinic. 1:1 = WC (1hr).	5	RFU / ChMx
21/2/19	RFU / ChMx	Bristol	U18 6Nations Development Camp. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 x 30mins 1:1 consultation: OB / GM / GB / HB (NPP) - Meeting new U18 Coaches (JF + SB) - 'Open clinic' for non-NPP Squad players 	8	RFU / ChMx
22/2/19	RFU / ChMx	Colwyn Bay, Wales	U20s Six Nations: Wales vs England. Included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel and contract communication with DR - Practice placement visit by Martin Eubank. 	9	RFU / ChMx
25-6/2/19	Fortress / ChMx	New York	Fortress Delivery Phase 4. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 hr Masterclass (x3): Communication & Team working. - 18 x 1hr 1:1 consultations. - Evening peer supervision sessions within the ChMx Team. 	21+	ChMx / Fortress
7/3/19	RFU / ChMx	Skype	1:1 consultancy: HB (NPP)	1	RFU / ChMx
8/3/19	RFU / ChMx	Bedford	U20s Six Nations: England vs Italy. Including Coach Development strategy dinner with Gordan Lord and Jim Mallinder.	7	RFU / ChMx
11/3/19	ChMx	Call	1:1 consultancy: Footballer (SM). Ongoing development and support.	1	Football / ChMx

13-14/3/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s 6 Nations Camp. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group Session (part of T+T Case Study) - 5 x 1:1 consultations with NPP Players - 'Open Door' service for squad players (e.g. OHC) 	16	RFU / ChMx
15/3/19	RFU / ChMx	Northampton	U20s Six Nations: England vs Scotland. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents workshop pre-match (with Richard Shorter) - Academy Managers box 	10	RFU / ChMx
19/3/19	Fortress / ChMx	Skype	Project Management call + 1:1 consultation (SR). Including agreement of session focus for Master Class 4 in London and New York.	2 (+ prep and write up)	ChMx / Fortress
20/3/19	RFU / ChMx	FaceTime	NPP Virtual Clinic. NPP Athletes including JM, HB, JD, & GB.	4	RFU / ChMx
27-29/3/19	Fortress / ChMx	Worcester	Content planning and design: Master Class 4 (Stress Management). Including peer work with Dean Coomber.	8	ChMx / Fortress
1/4/19	Fortress / ChMx	London	Delivery of Master Class 4: Stress Management. (2 x 2hr sessions).	8	ChMx / Fortress
2/4/18	RFU / ChMx	The Lensbury	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update.	8	RFU / ChMx
3/4/19	Fortress / RFU / ChMx	Call + Skype	AM: Master Class 4 Feedback Call (SF / SR / RA). Constructive critical feedback (reflection in log). PM: 1:1 FaceTime consultation: OB (NPP).	2.5	ChMx / Fortress / RFU
4/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	U18 6Nations Festival Planning.	3	ChMx / RFU
7/4/19	Fortress / ChMx	New York	Fortress Delivery Phase 5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 hr Masterclass (x3): Stress Management. - 18 x 1hr 1:1 consultations. - Evening peer supervision sessions within the ChMx Team. 	22+	ChMx / Fortress
14-16/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Hamble, Southampton	NPP Camp: Hamble. Sailing based experiential learning project (Understanding others).	42	RFU / ChMx

18/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Hartpury College	U18 Six Nations festival. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Placement visit and observation by Dr Martin Eubank - Observed 1:1 consultation with 2 x NPP players (GM & OB) - Psychology Group Session: Wales and Italy mix 	15+prep)	RFU / ChMx
23-25/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Camp. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Leaders' Session (part of T+T Case Study) - 8 x 1:1 consultation with NPP Players - 'Open Door' service for squad players 	16	RFU / ChMx
26/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Coventry	England U20s vs South Africa.	4	RFU / ChMx
30/4/19	ChMx	Anonymised	1:1 consultation: Football Coach (OM).	1.5	Football / ChMx
15/5/19	RFU / ChMx	The Lensbury	PMT Meeting. Monthly report + update. RFU funding decision feedback.	8	RFU / ChMx
16/5/19	ChMx	Anonymised	1:1 consultation: Football Coach (OM).	1.5	Football / ChMx
19-22/5/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Camp. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group Session (part of T+T Case Study) - Mental preparation seminar - 4 x 1:1 consultation with NPP Players - 'Open Door' service for squad players - Coach + Staff competition preparation seminar 	28	RFU / ChMx
29/5/19	ChMx	Skype	Preliminary intake call with international client – Snooker. (Building relationship, checking for language barriers, agreeing intake assessment timings)	0.5	Golf / ChMx
9-12/6/19	ChMx	Anonymised	Consultation 1, 2 + 3: Snooker Player. 1:1 consultation held for 2 hours each afternoon, over 3 days.	6	Golf / ChMx
25/6/19	ChMx	Phone	1:1 consultation: Football Coach (OM).	1	Football / ChMx
10/7/19	ChMx	Worcester	1:1 consultation: Performing Arts (ML).	1.5	ChMx

Close of Consultancy Activity Log

Research Activity Log (Key Role 3)

Date(s)	Client Details	Location	Nature of the activity	Contact Hours	Placement Host details
31/8/17	N/A	Skype	Research Ideas + Approaches – exploration with Martin Eubank.	1	LJMU
12/9/17	ChMx	Newlyn, ChMx HQ.	Discussion group (ChMx): focus - the possibilities for research in our elite athlete groups/programmes. What measures would we use? What protocol? Pitfalls + Actions	2hrs	ChMx
2/11/17	N/A	LJMU	Research Group Meeting (1). Summary notes on file.	1	LJMU
23/11/17	N/A	LJMU	Research Group Meeting (2). Summary notes on file.	1	LJMU
7/12/17	N/A	LJMU	Research Group Meeting (3). Summary notes on file.	1	LJMU
Dec 17	N/A	Home	Scoping review - 'characteristics of effective practitioners. Excel bibliography of reviewed papers (15) and key words on file.	10	LJMU
Jan 18	N/A	Home	Systematic literature search for SLR.	35	LJMU
24/1/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: research methods (realist synthesis); good and poor examples of SLRs; project proposals.	0.5	LJMU
28/1/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Editing draft proposal; EndNote; Search strategies.	0.5	LJMU
5/2/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: running and reviewing early search	0.5	LJMU
February 2018	Self / LJMU	Worcester	Reviewing and refining the literature base from my original search	20+	
12/2/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: PRISMA flowchart; search refinement	0.5	LJMU
14/2/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Backwards and Forwards searching; database downloading issues; finishing the search; quality control and critical appraisal techniques;	0.5	LJMU

14-20/2/18	Self / LJMU	Worcester	Final run of my search (backwards and forwards) and consolidating my search results	9	LJMU
26/2/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Overview of papers found (approx. 14 that use qualitative methodologies); data extraction spreadsheet creation.	0.5	LJMU
Feb 18	N/A	Home	Mapping, drafting and writing components of the SLR write up	15+	LJMU
5/3/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: findings; philosophical perspectives; methodologies; perspectives change depending on who you are asking; creating an audit trial.	0.5	LJMU
19/3/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: 'fixed characteristics' papers; professional titles as a characteristic; meta-synthesis – adaptation of Wampold & Budge?	0.5	LJMU
20/3/18	RFU / ChMx	Shrewsbury	Psychology Research Review Meeting: RFU (RA + MB) and Bangor University (RR). Project Overview.	2.5	RFU / ChMx
2/5/18	RFU / ChMx	Worcester	Psychology Research Review Meeting: RFU (RA + MB) and Bangor University (RR, LH, AT). Project findings (to date) and request for continuation.	3	RFU / ChMx
5/4/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Meta-data findings discussion; creating working definitions for items in my findings; Bath Uni lecture and opportunity to capture a litmus test of findings; commence meta-method and theory.	0.5	LJMU
12/4/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Meta-method and meta-theory exploration.	0.5	LJMU
3/5/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: RA felt needed to get writing the paper; Publication options and requirements; Good meta-study examples.	0.5	LJMU
5/6/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Methods section. Good examples and structuring.	0.5	LJMU
29/8/18	Self	LJMU	Reading for SLR: Winstone & Garvis (2006), Wampold & Budge (2012); Gelso (2014). Tuned myself into the 'what' and 'how' of the final write up.	4	LJMU
30/8/18	Self	LJMU	Reflective conversation with Peer-Researcher (NW) around our research findings, ideas, processes and queries.	2	LJMU
27/9/18	Self	LJMU	Presentation of SLR findings to BPS Working Group and PhD Cohort. Audience Q+A of my research.	3 (inc. prep and reflect.)	LJMU

5/10/18	Self	LJMU	SLR Introduction planning	1.5	LJMU
15/10/18	RFU	The Lensbury	Bangor University Research Update and forward planning. Present: AT, RR, DR, AS, RA. Action Plans: Bangor to send proposal for measures and roll out of data capture across national Pathway teams.	3	RFU / ChMx
18/10/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Introduction and Methods drafting.	0.5	LJMU
30/10/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Purpose statement; Structuring / restructuring draft introduction (guidelines on how to structure the introduction)	0.5	LJMU
13/11/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Draft Introduction and Methods feedback; Beginning to plan the results tables / section.	0.5	LJMU
23/11/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Introduction and method inclusion considerations; Pruning of content and language. What will my results offer to practitioners? (i.e. my synthesis)	1	LJMU
2-4/12/18	Self / LJMU	Belfast	Presentation of SLR findings at the DSEP Annual Conference. Q+A from audience.	2	LJMU
11/12/18	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Draft results tables and findings (submitted via email); Reviewed my yellow marks from draft submission; Review of meta-theory...are people using theory, or just referencing ideas?	1	LJMU
04/01/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: How to structure the results section (from my 'block of stone' i.e. 15 pages of ideas!); The 3 categories: whether I need to define each category.	0.5	LJMU
11/01/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Meta-synthesis. How I will use an adaption of W&B to integrate my findings and offer new directions. e.g. I would want to further adapt to include factors unique to the data I have found (such as the environment).	0.5	LJMU
23/01/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Structuring the discussion (from my 'block of stone' i.e. 15 pages of ideas!); Prioritise what is important + helpful to the client (practitioners + researchers)	0.5	LJMU
Feb 19	Self / LJMU	Worcester	Writing draft SLR discussion + supplementary reading	20	LJMU

14/2/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Feedback on SLR synthesis + discussion of possible amendments	0.5	LJMU
21/3/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Review of SLR amendments and discussion restructure.	0.5	LJMU
2/4/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Discussion of interests and ideas for research projects.	0.5	LJMU
April 19	Self / LJMU	WFH	Reading around narrative approach to qualitative research (e.g. Tod et al., 2019) Creating possible interview script. Drafting project proposal.		
21/4/19	Self	Skype	Participation in research. Topic: exploring Prof Doc students' reflections on the journey (FT). Preparation notes and reflections on file.	3 (inc. prep)	LJMU
7/5/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: Project proposal draft feedback and ethics application.	0.5	LJMU
May 2019	LJMU	Worcester	Ethics training (Online, via LJMU) and Ethics application	12	LJMU
May 2019	LJMU	Worcester	Ethics Application. Included supervision and background reading around methodology and research proposal. First submission on 31 st May 2019.	11	LJMU
June-August 2019	LJMU	Multiple (in person and via Skype)	Research Interviews with 9 participants + transcription. Some great data collected for my research and some absolutely brilliant learning for me as a practitioner Reflections in log.	80+	LJMU
8/7/19	Self / LJMU	Skype	Supervision with David Tod. Discussed: How to get the best from my research interviews and analysis. Advice was to keep immersing myself in reading around narrative structure and narrative enquiry.	0.5	LJMU
Early July 2019	LJMU	Multiple	Reading around narrative analysis, storytelling and case studies – all to improve my insight and skill as researcher applying narrative inquiry. e.g. Smith (2016); Yalom (1989); Saks (1986); Carless & Douglas (2008); Smith & Sparkes (2009); McGannon & Smith (2015); Tod et al (2019). Reflection in log.	25+	LJMU
17/7/19	LJMU	LJMU	BPS Research Group Meeting. Presentations and discussion included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nick and me – combined review - David – Longitudinal study and expansion - Charlotte and Hayley 	7	LJMU

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion – grant applications - Moira - consensus statement - Planning next steps to complete tasks <p>In preparation I read examples of position statements, including Moesch et al (2018); Schinke, Stambulova, & Moore (2018); and a selection from the FEPSAC website (e.g. definition of sport psychology, and gender in sport).</p>		
August-March 2019	LJMU	Multiple	<p>Writing up of 2 research papers. Described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1. Practitioners Narratives of why they Adopt the Chimp Mind Management Model - 2. Practitioners Narratives Highlighting Active Ingredients in Service Delivery with the Chimp Mind Management Model 	80+	LJMU
Close of Research Activity Log					

Dissemination Activity Log (Key Role 4)					
NB: despite disseminating an update of my work and players' status each month in the RFU, I have logged those deliveries under the consultancy log. That was because I considered them more of an ongoing consultancy activity as opposed to stand alone event of dissemination as are logged hereafter.					
Date(s)	Client Details	Location	Nature of the activity	Contact Hours	Placement Host details
4/9/17	Pathway Team, RFU	Twickenham	Communication of modern opinion and research in regard to Psychology and Talent ID.	4	RFU
8/9/17	General Public	Buxton Opera House	<p>Evening presentation of psychological research, principles and practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-presented with Professor Steve Peters. - Responsible for presenting psychological research and practical considerations around the work of Sigmund Freud and Albert Bandura. Also did a Q+A for the audience of 800 people around applications of psychological principles to personal performance (including several on Sport.). <p>Reflection in log.</p>	8	ChMx

8-18/10/17	RFU	Northampton	NPP Camp: “doing it for real” (Struggling School). Role in leading briefs, debrief and other group-based and enquiry-based learning.	30	RFU / ChMx
23-26/10/17	RFU	Leeds	Squad Sessions: U17 - Intro to Psychology / reflective thinking), and U18 - Intro to Pathway Psychology	5	RFU / ChMx
9/11/17	RFU	Leamington	Co-led session with Patrick to review the Oct NPP Camp with the Pathway Staff.	7	RFU / ChMx
18/12/17	RFU	Twickenham	Met with the CEO of the RFU (at his request) to present and discuss my approach to delivering psychology across the Men’s Pathway.	4	RFU / ChMx
7-10/1/18	RFU	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp Group Session (Leadership / NPP Group): Engagement and Agreeing Campaign Focus	4	RFU / ChMx
26/3/18	RFU	Bristol	Squad Sessions: U17 - Intro to Psychology / reflective thinking), and U18 - Intro to Pathway Psychology / reflective thinking) and U18 (Intro to Pathway Psychology) group deliveries.	4	RFU / ChMx
28/3/18	RFU	Cheltenham	Presented my design for the NPP Programme Framework (e.g. self, others, applied; and buckets for development capture) to Head of Pathway and other stakeholders (Leading Edge and Don Barrell). Discussion, feedback and action planning.	3	RFU / ChMx
4/4/18	RFU	Wellington	Supported group delivery to 4 academy teams as part of Day 2 of the RFU Academy Festival. Had recruited Jess Thom as lead, but I offered to support as she was doing me a favour and I needed to supervise at least 1 session. Good hands-on session with good engagement and feedback from the group.	8	RFU / ChMx
12/4/18	Bath University	Bath	Delivered ‘Applied Sport Psychology’ Guest Lecture for 2 nd Year Sport Science Programme.	5	N/A
15-17/4/18	RFU	Cheltenham	NPP Camp: Understanding Others (Big Brother). Role in leading briefs, debriefs and other group-based and enquiry-based learning.	30	RFU / ChMx

6-8/5/18	RFU	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp – Small group sessions (Carry on from Jan camp, group decided not to do a big team session and do small group activities instead). I facilitated the groups reflection and collection of ideas + actions.	12	RFU / ChMx
9-10/5/18	ChMx	Sheffield	Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing Conference. Presented: Creating Cultures for High Performance.	9	ChMx
20/6/18	BBC Radio	N/A	Live media work. BBC Wales radio interview regarding Geraint Thomas and the Tour De France.	1	ChMx
19/9/18	Fortress / ChMx	London	Presentation of our delivery proposal to the Fortress Board, relating to the findings of our interviews / need's analysis and formulation thus far. I presented the 'structure of the programme', following on from Steve's introduction and Stephanie's explanation of the methodology + key findings.	7	Fortress / ChMx
7-8/10/18	RFU	London	NPP Camp: "Holding an Opinion" (Homeless/applied/community drivers). Within the camp I also delivered an impromptu group session on 'belief formation and unconscious bias's which I tied into emotional thinking and behaviour in relation to everyday life in athletes worlds / sport.	2	RFU / ChMx
15/10/18	RFU	Twickenham	Update presentation to the Pathway Management Team regarding the Bangor Research Project – current status and next steps.	2	RFU / ChMx
24/10/18	RFU	Bristol	U18 Group Session: What is normal, helpful and unhelpful for you?	3	RFU / ChMx
12/11/18	RFU	Twickenham	Feedback presentation to the CEO and Heads of Programme at the RFU concerning how I am delivering psychology in the Men's Pathway and being part of a Q&A panel on if and how psychology could be centralised across the professional department (e.g. Men's, Women's, 7s).	6	RFU / ChMx
26/11/18	Fortress	New York	Masterclass 1: Understanding Yourself (repeated to 3 groups)	18	Fortress / ChMx
4/12/18	LJMU / DSEP	Belfast	DSEP Annual Conference - presented my SLR research findings. Audience Q&A.	3	LJMU
11/12/18	University of Bolton	Bolton	Delivered 'Applied Sport Psychology' Guest Lecture for 3 rd Year Sport Psychology Programme.	5	N/A

12/12/18	ChMx	Sheffield	ChMx Annual Conference. Co-Presented: Building effective relationships (Repeated for 2 groups).	10	ChMx
6-9/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp. Including 2 groups sessions (part of T+T Case Study). NB: I recorded these session (with permission) and shared them with my supervisor for feedback.	5	RFU / ChMx
13/1/19	RFU	Cheltenham	NPP Camp: Understanding Self (Serve On). Led an introduction and reflection session around 'what skills do I have and need?'; co-led group debrief.	8	RFU / ChMx
4/2/19	Fortress	New York	Masterclass 3: Effective Team Working (communication + common purpose) (repeated to 3 groups)	18	Fortress / ChMx
13/3/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s Training Camp. Group sessions reviewing progress to date and evaluating next steps (part of T+T Case Study).	4	RFU / ChMx
15/1/19	RFU / ChMx	Northampton	Parent Session (co-presented with Don Barrell and Richard Shorter) aimed at exploring and supporting 'Life as a Pathway Parent'.	4	RFU / ChMx
26/3/19	ChMx	Digital	Preparing and recording content for 'The Troop' (ChMx's digital learning platform). Focuses: The Self-Concept & Self Worth; effective reflective practice; getting over setbacks.	5	ChMx
1/4/19	Fortress	London	Masterclass 4: Stress Management and Goal Setting (repeated to 2 groups)	10	Fortress / ChMx
8/4/19	Fortress	New York	Masterclass 4: Stress Management and Goal Setting (repeated to 2 groups)	10	Fortress / ChMx
18/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Hartpury	Delivery at the U18 6Nations festival. Group sessions for athletes of mixed nationality.	10	RFU / ChMx
23/4/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Prep Camp. Group session reviewing progress from 6Nations and focusing attention of preparation for the JWC (part of T+T Case Study).	4	RFU / ChMx
8-9/5/19	ChMx	Sheffield	General Public ChMx Conference. Co-led on sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Unconscious Basis for High Performing Teams - Making Resilient Team Players Delivered each session twice, for approximately 60 delegates each session.	8	ChMx

22/5/19	RFU / ChMx	Bisham Abbey	U20s JWC Prep Camp. Group sessions focusing on final prep for departure to the JWC (part of T+T Case Study).	6	RFU / ChMx
Close of Dissemination Activity Log					

Reflective Practice Diary

Learning Outcome 1– Reflections Concerning Ethical and Professional Competency		
Date	Summary of Activity & Learning Objectives Matched	Reflection
June 2017	<p>Occasion: General Subject: Ethical practice audit</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p>	<p>In preparation for working with the Rugby Football Union, I conducted an audit of my ethical practices in keeping with Keegans (2016) recommendations. I was happy with the ‘readiness’ I found myself to have on 2 levels.</p> <p>First, I had investigated the literature and options around how best to operate in team which have multiple layers of ‘stakeholders’. For example, I researched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coaching Relationships: the relational coaching field book (De Hann & Sills, 2012). Chapter 7, The Coaching Contract. - P. Jenkins. (1999). Client or patient? Contrasts between medical and counselling models of confidentiality, <i>Counselling Psychology Quarterly</i>, 12:2, 169-181. - NHS: Code of Conduct (2017) (confidentiality research) <p>Second, I used the findings from my reading to bolster both my own understanding of appropriate language and practices around ethical consulting, and used that enhanced knowledge to updated the physical resources (e.g. informed consent forms, notes keeping templates, information sheets, etc) that I would use practically in my consultancy.</p> <p>The first test of my procedures came when I had to respond to an email from a Coach which simply read: “<i>How do you see this working re sharing info?</i>”. I felt well informed of good and expected ethical standards in this regard and comfortable to explain my approach to the coach, which would essentially be a ‘client-led confidential contract’...meaning all conversations between any client and I would treated in strict confidence, unless the client gave me explicit permission to share it with agreed third parties. I had created an informed consent form to reflect this, and also included a section around how I am expected to report to the RFU – which I now discuss with Clients on our initial intake assessment, and from which they can ask any questions and agree to the plan of communication I would take forward with the RFU.</p>

		<p>A secondary issue is that I recognise the coach themselves can be a potential client, along with many other members of the organisation (Anderson, Van Raalte, & Brewer, 2001). At the outset of this contract therefore, I worked to clarify relationships with the various stakeholders regarding consent and how confidential information would be shared (Mellalieu, 2017; Stapleton et al, 2010). As an ongoing commitment, I work with clients to gain consensual agreement on what information can be shared among the layers of the organization (e.g. coach, management, medical support staff, other players, parents, teachers, etc.), and also apply contextual intelligence to understanding how the organisation works in relation to reporting of issues and incidents, service reviews, line management, and accountability.</p> <p>I've found this experience to be highly rewarding in that it helped me to explore good practice in fields such as Sport + Ex Psych, Counselling, Medical practice, Executive Coaching, etc., and come to a position of feeling informed and capable of explaining the difference between 'hard' and 'soft' contracting and how considerations such as information sharing and reporting will work in practice.</p> <p>As per Mellalieu's (2017) paper on his work in Rugby Union, I have found the use of checks and balances to be particularly useful for helping establish who is my client (Baltzell et al, 2010) and who needs and/or can know what information in regard to their support. To action such decisions, I have lent on the support of my line manager and supervisor at Chimp Management, who is also a practicing sport psychology consultant.</p>
July 17	<p>Occasion: Chimp Management Company Training Day Subject: Consultation Skills, Scenarios, takeaways</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p><i>Description:</i> Chimp Managements (ChMx) 1 monthly CPD days target a variety of learning agendas and opportunities presented by a variety of experts in the related field. The group size for this Training Day was 12, meaning a good size for interaction and individual contribution in an almost 'focus group / seminar' event.</p> <p><i>Learning Topics:</i> Consultation Skills (Dr S. Caddy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main concerns the group experience in relation to 1:1s - Working with 'heart sink' clients - Ingredients of a good session (our experience)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ingredients of a good session (Dr Caddy + research) <p>NB: Dr Caddy is a medical practitioner and qualified GP. She also works in ChMx as a psychological skills mentor so has a good knowledge and practice base to lead on CPD events such as this.</p> <p>Scenarios (role plays we worked through on the day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict resolution (mediating skills) - High performing teams (what makes them work) - Confidence levels (foundations of and application) - Forgetful + disorganised client – or treacle? - Unforgiving anger <p><i>‘Light Bulb’ Learnings</i></p> <p>From the consultation Skills session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In relation to working with ‘heart-sink’ clients, just to check in on the relationship from their perspective. E.g. “Is this interaction actually working for you? If not, what can we both change? If we can't change it, would you like to work with somebody else?”. <p>Also, Feedback to them that you are observing an uncomfortable feeling in the relationship. You want to understand their position on this. Could it be something that is happening elsewhere?</p> <p>I found this to be some really helpful language which could open up some honest and likely necessary conversation in an otherwise difficult situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some nice language the doctor uses in her practice when a patient comes in with a long string of issues is: “ok, well we are not going to get through all of that today – so why don’t you pick 2 3 areas”. I can relate to this in Q+A settings I have done in sport, and even in 1:1 consultations where the person brings many issues in the first instance. I believe that it would be important to listen to the client and record as much of what they shared of course, but then to perhaps repeat those back to the client and ask them to identify where they would most like to spend the time available in that instance. - “Take it all in - body language, dress, how well kempt, tone and speed of speech, eye contact, extreme features. A lot of information enters the room overtly and covertly”. This was a sentence which the Doctor mentioned, and which I noted down verbatim. It sparked an inquisitive line of thought in my mind – ‘how observant and curious am I when I’m interacting with others?’ Could I improve this and look beyond the words a person speaks. I decided to make this a work on
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		<p>over the next few weeks of interactions with people. One example was to just be more curious about people, go beyond the regular ‘how are you doing?’. I found this took (and still takes) practice though as I don’t have that many explorative questions! (or so it seemed when I pushed myself to ask them). This is something I intend to work on further as it will surely come with experience and practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active listening: ‘if you are sat waiting to speak, you are not listening’. This was a great one liner that I knew I could put into immediate practice. Was I actively listening to people, if not – lose your agenda and engage in it, if I feel I can’t listen to people (for example due to time constraints) make sure you let people speak first – show interest – and then set the rules/timescales for the session. - Medical history model is simple but quite helpful: PMH (previous mental history), DH (drug history), PC (presenting complaint), HPC (history of presenting complaint), SH (social history - work, living conditions, partners). Be worth creating a mental model or rough outline in my session notes of the key / essential ingredients of history I want to take during consultancy. - EVERY SINGLE CLIENT = ALCOHOL & SUICIDE CHECK <p>From the Scenarios session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My overall reflection from all of the case studies (but particularly advanced by the Unforgiving Anger and Disorganised Individual cases) was the importance of ‘being a detective’. That is, to not always take things at face value; to dig with open ended questions followed by closed ended questions or checkbacks to re-establish facts; to look for supporting or opposing evidence, to believe that <i>you do not have the full picture</i> rather than filling in gaps to feel that you do. The forensic Psychs in the ChMx team offered that 80% of a diagnosis can be linked back to the case history, so history gathering and facts checking is essential. My takeaway was: don’t try to put together a jigsaw if you aren’t starting with all of the pieces. - When mediating a clash between two athletes, Steve worked behaviours with B (what good is that going to do for you?) and values with C (how do you want to be seen?). He also got them up in front of the room as he knew they wouldn't want to lose face. - When working on confidence, look at the foundations and if they have a plan. Also <i>does their plan include how to deal with consequences?</i> If they can deal with failure, then that’s one less thing to trigger an emotional response before or during the event.
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- While evidence build and practical approaches can be important with ‘forgetful’ people, remember that executive skills - (DLFC) are genetically dictated, so some people are natural organizers, whilst others have practical intelligence.

What does this mean next:

- Off the back of this team day I decided to set myself two working challenges
- 1) To practice active listening, with specific attention to ‘listening with flexibility’, which I describe as taking in information with the willingness and readiness to adapt your own viewpoint right up until you choose to speak. Try to avoid listening with a loaded gun! I will look to ask for feedback from others around how they find me as a listener.
- 2) To be more curious, with specific focus on listening more (as previous) and practicing asking more open-ended questions about the person and their world which invite them to talk rather than feeling interrogated. To look at people more closely and see what messages they may be giving off without speaking.

UPDATE entered 20/01/18:

I have been focusing on my listening skills over the last few months and at the recent NPP camp choose ‘Linking Questions’ as my targeted work on. The first and interesting thing was that my colleague John Fletcher (England U18 National Coach) said that this wasn’t something that I needed to work on, from his observations and opinion. I received this as positive feedback in as much as I have been working with John for over five months now, so he has clearly had a chance to observe and experience my listening skills. I set myself the task of asking more linking questions because I want to refine my ability to check for understanding in what I’m hearing from others without seeming forced or as if I am perhaps missing the point. For me, it about being able to go ‘one-below’ the level of what the person is saying to explore what they are really thinking, feeling and *wanting to say*. I was surprised that when I asked a few additional questions, nobody seemed to notice. Instead they just carried on talking and elaborating on their point - which was exactly the outcome I was looking for. I suppose I was surprised because it made me realise that people are happy to elaborate if you ask appropriately (e.g. Athlete: “that session was amazing”. Me: “In what way?”). This challenged my view that others may become

		<p>frustrated, or that I'm not skilled at asking good questions. Overall, I'm happy with how my targeted practice of listening skills is going and I may soon turn my attention to other areas of focused development.</p>
<p>15/7/2017</p>	<p>Occasion: LJMU Contact Day Subject: Reflective Practice</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>This class was very helpful to me as it opened my eyes to the ways in which reflection can be formalised, or at least structured, to enhance learning opportunities. After all, the reason we reflect is that it's thought to afford practitioners the opportunity to examine their own practices and the thoughts and feelings that are associated with their actions in the particular context in which they occur (Cropley et al, 2007).</p> <p>In the class we discussed that we all take time formally or informally to reflect on ourselves and others. The question is however: how, where, when, why...and could it be better?</p> <p>This class was the first time I had considered how to reflect in accordance with the expectations of Doctorate level work. That is, D-level work should seek: knowledge generation, originality, impact / significance, and rigor.</p> <p>Similarly therefore, a good D-level reflection will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a reflective model (e.g. Gibbs) - Go beyond simple description (be a reflection, not a description) - Connect with the literature - Demonstrate the key competencies <p>To offer structure to this end, we explored reflective models we could consider. I particularly like Gibbs (1988) Reflective Cycle Model, which contains the elements of: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan.</p> <p>I favored this approach as it had clear reference to feelings, which are so entwined into our being and practice to my mind, that they <i>must</i> be elicited or at least considered during reflection. I have committed to using this structure hereafter to guide my formal reflection.</p> <p>Conceptually we also considered Schöns (1987) notion of reflecting IN and ON action. That is, you might reflect while things are happening and react to events, which is IN, and, you might reflect AFTER things happen, which is ON. Working examples of this for me would be when I'm sitting in a consultation keeping track of the thread of conversation and working with the client to identify their needs and direction. At certain times I'll think back to something they have said previously and consider (internally) whether to draw it to shared space or not. That would be reflection IN action.</p>

		<p>Alternatively, when I am driving home after a session and unpicking the exchange or considering what could have, or should now, happen: that is reflection ON action.</p> <p>Overall the session was very helpful in bringing new ideas and methods regarding reflection to my attention. My plan now would be to consolidate this new learning with some further reading as a number of authors have advocated the use of reflection as a tool for consultants to self-evaluate and improve their understanding of the effectiveness of their own practices (e.g., Anderson et al., 2002; Cropley et al, 2007, 2010; Knowles et al, 2007, Partington & Orlick, 1991; Simons & Andersen, 1995) and then to put my learning into (reflective) practice...as should be evidenced in this log!</p> <p>Please note: it might be helpful to reference to the reader here that entries in this log which predate this entry are left in as examples of how I <i>was</i> reflecting on practice before this learning development. I discussed with my supervisor whether I should go back and revisit/edit the previous reflections under the lens of Gibbs' model, but we agreed it would be more authentic and a good reference point to leave them in.</p>
17/08/17	Shoulder dislocation (11/8/17)	<p>This sporting accident is of great frustration, as is clearly something everyone could do without. Perhaps especially for me at this time, with my PhD and new role responsibilities.</p> <p>I've applied facets as Acceptance Commitment Therapy to myself however, accepting that accidents happen, being injured before the rugby season and report writing period may in fact be the 'best possible time', and that I can use the time to commit to positive behaviours such as research + reading in relation to both my PhD submissions and my understanding of the context of the RFU and this systems (e.g. the behavioural framework, Academy Manager introductions, player profiles, etc).</p> <p>I have communicated my situation with my Martin Eubank, Sarah Broadhead and Dean Ryan and hope for a speedy recovery.</p>
Sept 2017	<p>Occasion: Confidential disclosure of a possible health issue by an athlete</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>I was approached by a player in the England U18 camp as he wanted to discuss something in confidence. Within the session he disclosed having suffered a (non-obvious to others) concussion within training the previous day and had been feeling sick and confused since. He had approached me as he was worried about telling the coaches and risking his chances of selection, but he also recognized that he didn't feel right in himself and physically.</p>

	<p><i>Feelings</i> Upon the players disclosure, I was pleased that he had reached out for help from one of the staff members at the camp and not kept the incident completely to himself. I was very aware of the health risks of concussion having done the IRB Concussion Training multiple times and having some experience of adult concussion cases in past. In this instance however I was aware that the player was under 18 and also under the care of me/the RFU being with us in camp. Although I wanted to maintain a calm and supportive approach to helping this player find an appropriate resolution himself, I was also aware that if he wanted to keep this ‘confidential’ between he and I then I wouldn’t be able to do so because of the potential risk to health involved.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i> Reflecting back on the interaction now (it all happened pretty quick at the time obviously!) what I think went well was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the player felt able and had the support options around him to discuss such things - That I recognised the seriousness of the incident/disclosure - That I was aware of my professional boundaries and also my responsibilities to the athlete - That we were able to hold a supportive conversation through which the player expressed their worries about disclosing their concussion, their worries about performing poorly whilst concussed, and the possible options available to him - We collaboratively navigated the issue to a satisfying outcome for both the player and I - Also, that I would have stood my ground with this player if he hadn’t of wanted to share his concussive symptoms with the Doctor <p>The one thing I’ve been thinking about since however, is what would I have done if the player was an adult and they <i>didn’t</i> want to include anyone else (e.g. a doctor) and they requested me to uphold confidentiality of the information....</p> <p><i>Analysis</i> Going first of instinct and professional judgment, my inclination is that I would still communicate the disclosure – first to my supervisor if they were available straight away to talk through the incident particulars and agree a plan of action. Or, if my supervisor wasn’t available then I would tell the team</p>
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		<p>doctor anyway, as I believe my responsibility is still to protect the client from harm. It's hard writing that though as it makes me think of the damage it could do the relationship or the athletes trust in psychology in general.</p> <p>Having cross checked the literature available on breaking confidence, the general census appears that its only necessary when risk factors are apparent and the client is resistant to taking healthy actions themselves. For example, in a study of school counselors who were asked if and when they would break confidence, the results showed that it is indeed a grey area with multiple factors determining whether to break confidentiality, however the overriding consensus is that any "clear and imminent danger" is reason enough to break confidentiality (Moyer & Sullivan, 2008: Factors Influencing the Decision to Break Confidentiality With Adolescent Students: A Survey of School Counselors).</p> <p>There is some truth that breaking confidentiality could disrupt the trust between myself and the client, although I set out up front with client the terms of confidentiality and the clauses around getting supervision and disclosing information in the face of risk-taking behaviours. I also hope that the client might come to realise I'm doing something to protect them, which is in line with my initial promise / terms of support to them. At least I could stand by my decision professionally, ethically and morally.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>This was a surprise disclosure which I felt I dealt well with at the time. We were able to support the player in the immediate session, get him appropriate support afterwards and I have maintained my support of him since. The subsequent reflections have made me think about and clarify my boundaries, processes and responsibilities as a psychologist and as a result I feel I will make a point of clarifying my confidentiality break clauses just a little more deliberately moving forward so that they are clear for the client. Of course, some circumstances will still require professional judgement and may cause upset, but at least I'll know what I'm trying to achieve and that is ultimately a safe outcome for the client where risks are involved.</p> <p>Action Plan / Future Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow up this reflection with Martin Eubank. Am I on the right tracks with my reflections here?
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate the confidentiality clause purpose and break clauses clearly to clients' up front. I can also make very clear that all of the clauses are ultimately there <i>to protect them and provide them the best possible service.</i>
Oct 2017	<p>Occasion: RFU initiated Think Tank on High Performance Cultures + Leadership. Facilitated by John Bull (Management Futures) and attended by me, 2 Olympics Performance Directors, 1 Rugby Coach (DB) and 1 Performance coach (MA).</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description: Reflections on “what it takes to create and support the best environments?”. Really interesting afternoon with some very experienced coaches and performance directors from elite sport. The 4 questions posed were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the most relevant insights from performance psychology and elite sport which business can learn from? - What is elite sport better at than a lot of other environments? - What stands out as different from the best environments we've experienced? - What are the insights from performance psychology that would be relevant to virtually any environment? <p>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice: I have detailed session notes on record, so won't overdo my analysis here. However, what did stand out on reflection is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The amount of investment (human, time, financial, knowledge, etc) that is put into elite athletes <i>as individuals</i> is actually quite extraordinary in some places (e.g. Athlete development plans) but can be quite lax in others (e.g. transitions). In the sports I have worked in, there is the risk that without a performance lifestyle advisor, or a psych with enough contract time, the lifestyle/personal welfare side of supporting an athlete as a person rather than performer can suffer (or at least be not 'optimal'). The important thing is to check what the Sport is prioritizing, but also communicate the areas you think are important. Champion them – who else will? And it's what they are actually paying you to do often, but they just get distracted wanting to win! Check upfront do they agree/buy-in/reject your recommendations and/or values? Can there be compromise? Are you willing to walk if it doesn't sit right with you? - Creating cultures that support and drive <i>individual excellence, team environment</i> seems a real winning formula (e.g. Saracens, GB Canoeing, GB Cycling). You can do this through empowerment, ownership, and a whole load of endorsement/reinforcement. E.g. saying hello

		<p>costs nothing but means a lot. In Saracens, they referenced their values <i>deliberately</i> in every coach-athlete phone call or meeting for months...“If you believe in it, talk about it. Make it important – make it stick”. This reminded me of the research around psychological nudging and is definitely something I could explore/promote in practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a difference between ‘what is a good game’ and ‘what is a great game’. Coming to recognize what a ‘good game’ is can help people not be too anxious when a game hasn’t been extraordinarily good. A potential pitfall here though could be people becoming complacent e.g. “good is good enough”. I think that could be avoided if people mapped out what great/excellent is for them and strive for that, but also understand that performing well is the next best level – the danger is not to fall into underperforming because you over-strive for perfectionism ever time (perfectionism vs Growth Mindset ideas coming in here). - A massive lightbulb moment for me was “you can spend all of the time you want on these, but it’s the order (as shown) which is essential: (1) People, (2) Processes, (3) Outcomes”. I feel this concept is just so important for anything (sport, business, life!)...if you want a outcome (e.g. Gold Medal or happiness), work on your process (e.g. swim technique or happiness list), if you want your process to work (e.g. stay hard working, disciplined and balanced) then you need to be in a good place yourself. It is people that drive our processes and processes create outcomes. <i>Invest in yourself and your people.</i> <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue being an advocate for wellbeing and support of people in sport. It’s my value set, and duty of care – but also its often what the sports actually want/need, but just might not see it so clearly before being educated. - Help people with unhelpful expectations of themselves / others identify what a good game and a great game look like. Triangulate with coaches to get support / encouragement / reality check along the way.
Nov 2017	Occasion: LJMU Prof Doc Taught Day Subject:	<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr David Tod led a session on practitioner growth, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two case examples (rugby player returning from injury and young attractive female who says “you make me feel special, don’t hurt me”).

<p>Responding to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically & Practitioner Growth</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationships in ASP - Practitioner characteristics (3 components be, know, do) and the shift from internal to external back to internal in your training journey. - The importance of knowing yourself really well (e.g. countertransference). Possible personal counselling for self-development? <p><i>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The female triathlon case was a real thought provoker. It brought up points of boundaries, power positions, supervision, relationships, how your consultant framework may really help you above and beyond ethics in this instance. For example, for me it raised the reflection of how I would broach the conversation with the girl. There is likely transference at play here, and I would want the client to not feel bad for feeling emotions. The important thing would be to approach her disclosure with sincerity, ensuring the relationship clearly remained professional, e.g. “you’ve shared some feelings there which suggest you are afraid of getting hurt, why don’t we talk about that in more detail”. The <i>key</i> thing here is obviously going to supervision too and just checking your competency to work with this – although from my initial take on the case I do think I would keep working it, I would just make sure I logged appropriate records on the clients disclosure and my actions (including sharing with a supervisor) and not explore the client’s needs in isolation. - The other thing from this session that stood out to me was the idea of understanding yourself. Your identity, your beliefs and your reactions. I have reflected post-session that my SOL is a real good reference point for me in that regard. I am aware of and review my values and world views regularly as part of my self-development work. I think that helps stabilize me and give me a guidance source, for example, in case which might be fine ethically but not fit my personal values. The missing part that I see however is this idea of “can you see what you don’t see about yourself?”. That is, ‘what are my responses?’. Are they helpful? Unhelpful? Habitual? Cognizant? I think they way to explore that would be to record some session and watch/listen back. Hopefully that way I could observe if my actions are matching my thoughts or my ideal approach. I could also, with permission, share a consulting video with a supervisor for feedback or get observed. I think I would be more natural on video, than observed,
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		<p>although that's just an impression so would be happy to try either and will get the chance this programme with placement visits and Chimp Managements observed sessions (as part of their appraisal process).</p> <p>Actions Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video record or arrange observations for 1:1 and group sessions. What do <i>you</i> notice about your responses? Your behavior? Does it align with your intentions? What do others watching, or the client, feedback?
Nov 2017	<p>Occasion: Insurance Company Consultancy Report Request</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>I received an email from a solicitor acting on behalf of an athlete I had previously supported, requesting me to provide a consultancy report and professional opinion regarding an insurance claim they had in motion.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>At first, I felt a little bit unsure as to how to respond to this request. It was a new request to me and something I hadn't come across in my training, supervision, or practice experience to date.</p> <p>I recognised it as a professional practice matter nonetheless and decided that given the novel and serious nature of the request the appropriate action would be to raise the incident to the awareness of my supervisors and to seek guidance. I completed an ethical decision-making form (on record) in preparation for discussion with my supervisor and was clear that if appropriate I would be happy to provide the consultancy report. I felt that this decision was in keeping with my ethical and competency boundaries, as per the decision-making protocol I had completed.</p> <p>Both Steve and Martin were supportive of my decision to provide a consultancy report, and both provided feedback and supervision in its drafting and submission to the insurance company.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>I think the best thing about this experience was the opportunity to put ethical decision-making protocols into real practice. I found the act of working through the ethical checklist and referencing the bps code of conduct to be valuable in guiding my decision-making process and making it a professional rather than personal judgement. In particular, I think it was the act of systematically</p>

	<p>referencing each value (e.g. respect, competence, responsibility, integrity) in a considered a methodical approach. Giving myself this time to make an informed decision and then taking that thinking into supervision enabled me to make what I considered to be a robust and professional course of action.</p> <p>Additionally, I found the support and expertise garnered from supervision to be particularly helpful. Steve offered sound advice and guidance on what a ‘legal’ report should look like, and this was valuable learning experience for me (i.e. the nuts and bolts of report writing). Martin's input during our supervision call (notes in supervision log) was also very valuable in helping me to consider the depth to which a report may be best written. For example, in this case I learnt that the report may best be kept simple and descriptive.</p> <p>The report writing itself wasn't too arduous once I had a framework to follow, and the feedback from Martin and Steve helped me to refine it into a robust and appropriate document.</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p> <p>Overall, I'm glad that I looked upon this incident as an opportunity. I think it would be easy for a sport psychologist (in training) to stray away from providing legal reports as they may not see it as ‘Their role’. In this incidence however, having followed my decision making protocols, I felt that there was good learning and just reason in meeting the request for a consultancy report.</p> <p>This event also raised my awareness of how important case notes are. I was very pleased to be able to go back to the notes I created when consulting with this athlete as to explore exactly what we covered, what had been said, what had not been said, send any theorising and/or discussions that had been conducted along the way. This put me in a strong position to write a factual report based on real events. This is a timely reminder of the important of completing thorough case notes irrelevant of how trivial or not a case may seem at the time.</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i></p> <p>I think the key takeaway is from this experience where the importance of leaning on support when you come across something you are unsure or unfamiliar with. Taking responsibility in the first incident to make your own opinion was important to my mind and I'm glad I didn't just refuse the request straight up or look to my supervisors to ‘solve it’ for me.</p>
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		<p>I certainly learnt a lot about how a legal report should be structured and the types of content it should contain. There is no literature concerning this agenda in the sport psychology domain, which could perhaps make an interesting addition to a book chapter for those seeking support in such an area moving forward.</p> <p>Action Plan If this situation were to arise again, I would follow the exact same process. This gives me reassurance that my processes are sound and that I can take confidence in having them and following them.</p>
Dec 2017	<p>Occasion: Chimp Management Company Training – key takeaways on reflection</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description and reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media Training (Professor Steve Peters) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cover 3 good points and applying these - Think what are my key points, and why are they important? - An average sound bite is 9 seconds. Short, sharp and repeated messaging. - E.g. What is the Chimp Model? Neuroscience simplified. 3 teams fighting for power in your brain and generally 1, which we don't want, wins. Here's an example, road rage - Know your audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-call <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Background / context - Expectations (e.g. when I leave the room what would you say is a fantastic talk?) - How long will I get? - Watch your language - Classifying offenders (Sgt. Aiden Kearney & Prof Peters) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fantastic grid representing the different categories of engagement by offender (A – committed to change based on primarily internal factors such as values; B – committed to change based on primarily external factors such as reward or punishment; and C – unable or unwilling to change) and the ultimate goal broken down into: independent; semi-independent; and dependent.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key takeaway is not to waste your time in sport psych (or any sector!) being told by an employer that your job is to make a cat hold a knife and fork and then get told your approach clearly isn't working. - From a scientific perspective, the uncinatate funiculus is the last tract to develop: meaning, morals, values and compassion is last to come on. The brain and hence thinking and behaviour will change over time irrelevant of your interventions...but they can help brain development - Remember: 1 in 200 people is a psychopath. Not everyone has the potential to be great - Effective Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An audit we covered in session was really helpful for seeing what might be missing when comms break down in settings such as sport clubs. It went: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1. Is the message clear and simple? - 2. Can the message be repeated by the person receiving it? - 3. Can the person explain what the message means? - 4. Does the person understand the consequences of responding or not responding to the message? - 5. Does the person agree with the message? - 6. Have you allowed for any questions? - 7. Has the person been given the chance to commit? - 8. Was there a final "thank you"? - NB: my lightbulb reflection here was that stage 4 was definitely missed out when a sports coach briefed a team, I work with about being allowed out 'for a few drinks'. I really don't think that step was achieved, and few more to boot! This audit could definitely have helped encourage could practice. <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the communication audit to important messages I need to deliver. Share it around my sport clients as a reference resource and look for any feedback.
Jan 2018	Occasion:	<p>Description:</p> <p>Keynote presentation by ex-GB Canoeing Performance Director John Anderson, who oversaw and led the British sprint and slalom canoe programs to 5 Olympic Games. The session focused on his lessons</p>

<p>CPD & Networking event, presented by Leading Edge @ The Royal Air Force Club, London. Subject: Creating a High-Performance Environment – lessons from Elite Sport and Industry</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>and experiences of organizational, cultural, performance and people level issues when running an Olympic programme. Then followed an interactive group session, identifying key discussion and learning points from the talk for our personal development or practice.</p> <p>I was sat on a table with the psychologist for the Welsh Rugby Union, a performance psychologist working with teams at Levi’s and Land Rover, a sport psychology masters student and a colleague from Chimp Management.</p> <p>John Andersons talk covered these key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision (strategy) - Clarity of purpose - High standards culture - Unlock and develop talent (people are your resources) - Feedback and reviews - Alignment (intentions and behaviors need to be aligned – make ‘tough’ decisions when this is jeopardized) - Adaptability (the world moves, so must you) <p>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</p> <p>Key popcorn moments for me during and on reflection of John Andersons session are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always think about it from the perspective of the athlete. This came from JA talking about when they have to make funding, human resources, logistical, or any other decisions – “What will this be like for me as <i>an athlete?</i>” he would ask. Reminded me a lot of the empathetic position of Rogerian theory, but with a more practical angle of actually trying to relate to the challenges people face and the solutions available, as opposed to just the emotional side of empathetic relating. - 'Situation normal' - forget the noise that is around you. Just do what is normal and what you control without emotional or situational influence (e.g. Florence missing his K1 gold before the C2 Final) - How quickly you can adapt in an agile way will dictate your success. 1000m to 200m - everyone else just ploughed the same furrow...we changed track. Complete and utter
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		<p>revolution and interrogation of the approach and opportunities. How are you going to get ahead of your opponents? Do you have time to reflect on this? ...or are you too busy ploughing the furrow? This last point was a great one. I remember my MSc research publication covering the importance that PDs place on having time to ‘stop, reflect, then act’ – but so many of them felt just too busy to do it. This is a <i>great</i> personal reminder for me that although I find reflection a chore sometimes, the personal (how am <i>I</i> in and of myself) and professional (who am I progressing and performing as a Psych) are really important areas and not to be overlooked!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give people ownership (and responsibility) for what they are doing - People are all that matters (people are your most important resource). This reminded me and the conversation at the RFU ‘Successful Environments’ think tank. Yet another high-level high-experience director saying that investing in your people is all that really matters in sport. This is really focusing my ideas/values around ‘person first, performer second’. - You have to aim for stars with your vision. Canoeing weren't even on the medal table after Atlanta 1996, but they set the vision to be: "the number one canoeing Nation in the World". They achieved that after Rio 2016. Inspiring! Wonder how many psychs aim to be the best in the world?? What would that even mean?!? Keegan (2016) book suggests a similar exercise to be fair. Might be something to review after my PhD as part of my ongoing CPD efforts. <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really enjoying all of the exposure and opportunities that my RFU contract is presenting, just remember to keep taking time to reflect (like this) and capture key learnings. Martin thinks one a month should be a good amount (though I'll probably do more, due to the different areas to reflect upon e.g. CPD, practice, research, dissemination). - From a practical perspective – it can be helpful to remember to look at things from the other persons perspective. Especially the athlete. What would help them most? What hinders them? How can you / others help them best?
Jan 2018	Occasion: peer observations and feedback of my 1:1 consultancy	<p>Description</p> <p>Back in November I identified in an LJMU taught session (on ethically challenging case studies) that I wanted to increase my awareness of the way I respond to unpredictable events in consultancy,</p>

<p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>including what I notice about my responses and my behavior and whether that aligns with my intentions. I was also keen to build feedback from clients or peers as to what they are observing or experiencing with me.</p> <p>I have since undertaken 2 observed sessions with clients (one observed by a chartered sport psych & Supervisor – Dr Anna Waters; and one by a qualified doctor who assess consultation skills for Chimp Management – Dr Sarah Caddy). I have also recorded 2 group sessions, 1 for England rugby and 1 for Chimp Management (with both groups permission!) both of which me and my supervisor have watched with a reflective stance.</p> <p><i>Feelings / Thoughts, evaluation, and analysis (I couldn't help but blend everything into one for this reflection!)</i></p> <p>With regard to both the 1:1 and group level observations I garnered some really helpful feedback (from Martin) and development points.</p> <p>At the group level, my energy and approach of audience engagement have been appropriately targeted with the audience in mind. I have tended to opt for an audience engagement approach, that is interactive and small group exercise based. Some constructive feedback is that I might overplay that card if the audience was not so willing to engage, or, if the information I was presenting was more academic as opposed to conceptual. I found it a little cringy to see how energetic I was at a few points in the presentations to be honest and it's a note to self to deliberately take my energy down a notch within sessions as I won't lose my natural enthusiasm, but it might help me make my points clearer. That's my biggest work on from group level observations – to keep my enthusiastic style, but to try and be accurate and concise in the way I conceptualize points or answer questions.</p> <p>With regard to 1:1 sessions, Dr Annas Waters feedback was that she felt I have a calm and professional approach to sessions – but that she wasn't always clear the direction I was taking and felt I could work on my session close a little more...that is, the way I draw sessions to a close, summarise and facilitate any action planning. This was great feedback as I didn't feel I have an 'ideal' framework of how to finish sessions which is what she likely observed. I have since developed a formula to put into practice where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of time and with 15 minutes to go, begin the concluding process
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the client of the time remaining and invite any final points they want to share, any larger points can go to the next session - Encourage the client to reflect on what has been discussed in the session to that point. - Support the client identifying any key points or takeaways from the session. - Agree any actions for both the client and practitioner - Discuss the process for arranging the next session / follow up <p>NB: though it's really helpful to have this outline, it's just a possible structure and key points - not something I'm following verbatim! I hope to refine its content and delivery over time.</p> <p>Dr Sarah Caddy's feedback was also really helpful, she essentially questioned how through my history taking process is. She felt I was quick to ask about client goals and explain how we might work together, before commencing work – but often at the sacrifice of a more thorough history take. To be honest, that's a really good observation because I can't say I've got a solid history taking process and at times I question how much history I should take up front because I don't the client to think "crikey I only came in to ask a few questions but am getting a Spanish inquisition!". My reflections since talking with Sarah and working through my own reservations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A thorough understanding of my client is helpful for me (and hopefully therefore them) so worth getting, were possible - As long as expectations and intentions are clearly communicated up front, then people don't usually mind you asking a few questions – some actually welcome it as it helps them reflect - You don't need to continue asking questions if clients wish you to stop or clearly don't feel comfortable (the skill of assessing this will likely develop over time) - I can use a physical map when I first start taking a more thorough history to ensure I ask questions around the important areas (such as personal, social, work/education, health and significant life events). Over time this will likely become more internalized and feel less rigid. <p>Just as with my 'closing process' as in development from feedback with Anna, I know want to practice putting my intake interview questions to use too. In particular I want to work on how I frame history taking so that the clients understands why it is important that I do it and then I need to keep working on, and seeking feedback for, how I ask the questions and note down response. I've seen Steve do intake interviews which last a few minutes, but his ability to ask and capture a whole range</p>
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		<p>of information is really impressive and very natural / non-invasive. I think the things he does well is to bridge quickly from one point to another so that it doesn't take too long, plus he rights in shorthand which helps him capture information really efficiently.</p> <p>Conclusion Overall, I'm really glad that I set myself the challenge of having more work observed and getting feedback. I want to be able to respond appropriately to what comes up in consultancy and I can see now that a big part of that will be the way I set consultancy up, invite and record information, and close consultancies with time to cover new points, capture important points and keep the client in the driving seat of 'next steps'. Lots to keep reflecting upon and certainly lots to trial and refine.</p> <p>Action Plan / Future Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a proforma of an extensive history take and insert it into my session notes master doc. - Practice explaining the history take process to clients and refine my use of history-based questions in sessions. Seek client and observer feedback - Add a session summary section into my session notes master doc. - Practice and refine my practice summary process – reflect on where it does and doesn't seem to work, including using client feedback. Refine over time.
Feb 2018	<p>Occasion: Responding to a request to support an athlete during the illness of their mother.</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Description This reflection relates to a request as to whether I could support a player, (pseudonym = Jon) whose mum was terminally ill. I have submitted this case in more entirety as one of my consultancy case studies for assessment, however, this entry relates more explicitly to my reflective practice and ethical decision-making in action.</p> <p>Feelings My initial thoughts when asked if I could take this case on were if it falls within my competencies and remit. I recognized immediately that I am not a bereavement counselor, although do have training in counselling skills and experience of supporting bereaved athletes. As this initial request had been instigated by a coach over a phone call, I used the opportunity to ask for the evening to reflect on what I thought might be appropriate options for Jons and that I would get back to the coach the following day.</p>

		<p>During that time, I employed my ethical decision-making protocols (worksheet & supervisory advice) to help me clarify my options and position, which was that I would be happy to meet with Jon's under the proviso that it would be an opportunity for him to talk through their thoughts and feelings around what they were experiencing and what support, if any, they felt they may benefit from moving forward. I also advised that Jon be offered local counsellors' numbers too to give him more choice in self-directive help seeking.</p> <p>On agreeing to meet with Jon I did feel a personal requirement to advance my understanding and skill of supporting people through instances of grief. This was likely promoted by my desire 'to do well' by Jon. I set about reading appropriate literature (e.g. Barney & Anderson, 2000; Bonanno, 2009; Katz & Hemmings, 2009; Longstaff & Gervis, 2016) which I found extremely helpful. It gave me insights into some of research into grieving and counselling in SPSD, including some helpful pointers around common misconceptions of grief and some tips for talking around loss and emotions related to loss.</p> <p>I also took these learnings into supervision with Prof Peters, who has extensive experience of working with grief in clients, and we shared ideas around how best to support Jon in an empathetic, non-judgmental, and ultimately client-led manner.</p> <p>In a final act of preparation for meeting Jon I shared the case in a peer supervision session as part of my Prof Doc at LJMU. I shared the consultancy request, my reflection in action, my learnings from study and supervision, my decision-making process and my planned approach to support. The process of communicating the process and my intended direction stimulated synergy in my thinking and approach to the point I had arrived at. The group asked some helpful questions around 'what if...?' and some reassurance that I was well prepared to do my best by Jon.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>3 key learning points stand out on reflection of this practice incidence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Using the 'pause button' to ask for time to consider the options was a helpful and effective idea. It enabled me to go away and deliberate properly over the support request and associated factors. I think growing confidence and practice in working proactively, as opposed to reactively, is an area to always aspire to keep on top of in sport psychology consultancy. In a future sense, I would like to consider if there are more occasions when it might be the right choice to ask for time to reflect on decisions rather than making them in the moment.
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		<p>been a great resource in that regard for how to get the best out of group based reflective practice sessions and more traditional supervision in conjunction).</p> <p>My takeaway from the experience was to ‘share and care’ in appropriate group settings and then apply professional judgement to use the groups curiosities to continue to enrich your own perspectives, and ultimately, to keep learning and developing as a practitioner</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>Ensure opportunities are upkept to engage in peer supervision. My best plan for this is to make use of the Chimp Management sport and team days (case study sharing) and to use the LJMU forums when they arise.</p>
<p>March 2018</p>	<p>Occasion: CPD workshop, ‘Courageous Conversations’ presented by Dr Katya Langmuur (Mind Gym) for the RFU Pathway Staff.</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>An afternoon session (3 hours) presented by Dr Katya Langmuur and relating to communication-skills. Specifically, how to hold difficult/challenging/courageous conversations. To be really honest, overall I didn’t take too much from this session. It echoed a lot of what basic training is consultancy skills will entail, and at times focused a little too much on things like mirroring clients (from NLP type programmes) in my opinion.</p> <p>My reflection is therefore more on why I found those parts frustrating or not interesting and what lessons I could take forward to my practice.</p> <p>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</p> <p>The key takeaways that I absorbed from the session relate to: communicating at/with the...right time, right place, right agenda, right way, right person. All of these are in the square of communication that we have training and applied experience with from Chimp management, however, it was good to have the points reinforced and to see that other practitioners promote/endorse them too. I also liked: (1) the reminder of the importance of silence (e.g. Barack Obama – ‘The Master of Pause’) in good communication - don’t fill space; and, (2) the principle of ‘putting your attention on intention’ (intention for me, for them, for the relationship).</p> <p>What I was less impressed/engaged by however is the practitioners quite strong opinions about how you “have to” mirror other people and “have to” look which way they are looking with their eyes to check if they are telling the truth. I agree with and have full appreciation for the promotion of people paying attention to other people’s body language – that absolutely is an essential skill in trying to</p>

	<p>understand, relate and communicate with others. I just felt there was an overemphasis on the seemingly non-negotiable stance that people should mind-read others and impose our views of what they are thinking based on observations alone. In my practice, I would happily feedback to someone that they looked uncomfortable when I asked them a question, or that their body language doesn't perhaps seem aligned to what they are saying, but I wouldn't try mirroring their every move in a strange attempt to connect with them at some unconscious level and in turn risk not being genuine and actually paying attention to the other person in other ways.</p> <p>I guess it comes down to a position of preferences and 'what works for you'. I was asked by a few of our coaches after the session what I thought about it and I was honest and constructive stating that certain parts of the session (outlined above) aligned with what understood from broader 'good practice' research, literature and training (e.g. the facilitative conditions from Rogerian theory). However, I did challenge the degree of emphasis she was encouraging on mirroring others hand and seating positions. It just sounds contrived! ...although I recommended that people have a go at things and find out what works for them and others they are communicating with.</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check back in with the Pathway coaches in a few weeks and see what has been working for them. What have they tried? What seems to work? What doesn't seem to work? How do they know.... impression or feedback? - Check the feedback and cross-check your own expectations. Maybes the eye-angle and mirroring techniques are popular with others? Cross check so that you don't write-off something which doesn't fit for you, but might for others? - Try to idea of 'Attention on intention' from the off in challenging communications. What are your intentions? What does it mean for you, them, the relationship? Why should they trust, or even listen, to you? <p>UPDATE March 20th (U20s Camp with the Coaches):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having spoken with Rusty and John Fletcher, both agreed that mirroring felt unnatural and pretty stupid. They did however find that kids tended to look at the floor when sad or lying or not fully engaged in the conversation - so it's good for me to note that giving examples of
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		<p>good ‘awareness of others’ could be something like looking at eye-movement or general body language. I’m very happy with that to be fair and also happy to not recommend the mirroring idea!</p>
<p>March 2018</p>	<p>Occasion: LJMU taught day – Dr Martin Littlewood</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Dr Martin Littlewood presented a learning session on his approach as a practitioner. Including some great insights based on how he taught, not just what he taught (e.g. as an introduction I really liked the way he showed a Wordle and a photo to present a snapshot of himself and then just talked around it)</p> <p>Key reflections/ lightbulbs/ impact to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your life influences you as a practitioner and you should explore that, so that it is a positive influence (e.g. my injuries give me experience, but my experiences shouldn’t be projected onto others) - Lightbulb: Injury, identity and your sport are hugely interlinked - When consulting, Dr Littlewood believes in and focuses on ‘life cycles’ (at so many levels e.g. individual, team, club, culture, identity, readiness and relationships). The discussed 4 stages he recognizes: (1) Introduction, (2) Growth, (3) Maturity, (4) Decline / Extension. - If you imagine 3 concentric circles, the middle is the core (your values, beliefs, and behaviors) of a team, some people will be in the core, then some will be in the semi-periphery, and some in the periphery. People in the semi-periphery have 3 choices: move towards the core, stay put, or move away from the core. Ultimately people on the periphery have 2 choices: move in towards the core or leave. <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I thought this session was great for reinforcing the work we are doing the NPP group at England Rugby. Build the identity of the person, so that they are robust, and then help build emotional and life skills so that they are resilient (with extra support along the way for those struggling to self-regulate/manage) - I really liked the idea too of thinking “what has happened in my life that can actually help me relate/connect/support/inspire others”? It doesn’t always have to be what you learned at Uni

		<p>that makes the impact (was what I took from this session). I have life experience too, which young players might want to hear about and find more relatable than a psych model. Obviously just need to check the balance and not become self-indulgent soap box! :D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of how to be aware of, and manage, the life-cycles of contracts is interesting. I think GB Canoeing did it really well every cycle with a review + refresh forum. Equally, I liked the on-boarding and concept/language refreshing processes at Worcester Warriors. I guess some good ongoing reflective questions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What stage of development am I at on the life cycle? - Where are relationships with the key stakeholders in the organizations (e.g. RFU + Chimp Management)? - What key relationships am I targeting? - How do you plan to move all of these on? - What might move ME and PSYCHOLOGY into the red zone?? <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Created a work sheet of all the ‘key relationships’ / stakeholders I have professionally and if I am doing what I need, and they need (from their feedback) to keep those relationships well oiled. Was a helpful audit and just reminded me how to keep the life-cycle alive and not declining / moving into the red zone. - Going to create a Wordle and use a family pic in my next presentation as the intro to self!
April 2018	<p>Occasion: PhD Taught Day – Pete Lindsay + BPS project presentations</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist 1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description Dr Pete Lindsay presented a learning session on “Doing Sport Psychology”, insights from his experience as practitioner and Lead of EIS Sport Psychology.</p> <p>Key reflections/ lightbulbs/ impact to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pete holds a philosophy close to that of Milton-Erikson: “you should create a new form of therapy for every client”. This was reassuring to hear to be honest, as I have alluded to throughout my training journey at LJMU I subscribe to an individualized and pragmatic approach – which means tailoring the approach to every client. I guess hearing Pete say he also practices like that was good,

because I know he and the EIS are a research-2-practice type organization (like Chimp) but clearly still tailoring things to the individual.

- Another quote Peter presented got me thinking, Gregory Bateson: “for all objects and experiences, there is a quantity that is optimal. Above that, it becomes toxic. Below that, you are missing out”. This is interesting because I wonder ‘how much’ is enough at times? How do you know when a client has covered enough, or too much, or too little? I figure you can ask for feedback, check-in with them to see if and what knowledge/ability they are demonstrating, or look for performance or external feedback...but I would really be sure if that answers the question – how much can someone take/be exposed to in one session?
- Really loved Pete’s story about consulting at Man City. The key lightbulbs were: (1) he felt sidelined and isolated when the new manager came in, but Mark Bowden said ‘you need a crisis to help with’...I know sport psychs don’t like the idea of being ‘fire-fighters’ – but in this instance it was needed really! That is, an area that a sport psychs skills and knowledge are unique and helpful. For Pete/City, that was their ‘identity crisis’. Just thought this was a really good example of where being able to work at the individual, team and culture level is key. Pete was able to explore the club’s history (the fruits are in the roots) and in with some creative license inspire a great video and a team motto which really galvanized the time. Another really good example of building team identity and driving things like buy-in and motivation, but not exactly through a textbook approach! This also tied into the idea that we have to make our interventions ‘sticky’, this is something Leading Edge (on the RFU contract) have been saying recently and I really agree with it. We have to make our interventions accessible and stick when we are not there. Change can happen at the click of the fingers; we just need to find the right trigger and then reinforce it often enough.
- Final insight was his story from GB Boxing, the coaches were unhappy with the boxers’ ‘discipline’. ”They leave pee pots everywhere and wear the wrong sponsored gloves”. Pete said, don’t do 12 months on discipline - get a drinks cabinet with pretty coloured and tasty drinks, and get a bin bag and throw out all the Lonsdale gloves (bin bag therapy!!). Reminded me of the time Steve pushed the swimmer in the pool. Key message: not every intervention needs to be cognitive. Sometimes just do the obvious and see if it makes a change first.

Summary

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enjoyed Pete’s session today and took an overriding message of common-sense consulting. Go in as a person and not a magician. Look for practical solutions and ways to make things appealing and ‘sticky’ for clients. - For my RFU contract, I hope it supports the NPP Camp approach. Accessible and relatable. I would be helpful to pick up on the idea of ‘how much is too much or too little’ though. <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take the question to supervision, how much can someone be exposed to in one session? (e.g. how much ground can you cover, and how could you judge that?)
July 18	<p>Occasion: Submission of Consultancy Case Study 1 Subject: the articulation of my philosophical underpinnings and practice approach</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description The act of writing out consultancy case study 1 was like a serious reflection in action! As I tried to verbalise the reasons I consult as I do (or at all!) I found myself going back to the deeper level of philosophical underpinnings and how they consequently manifest in my practice approach. It was a significantly insightful process, and as such I’m seeking to capture some critical learnings and reflections here. After all, as Keegan (2016) has said: “A basic knowledge of philosophical assumptions might be considered a map, but reflective awareness and supervision might represent a compass to orientate yourself” (p.45, Keegan, 2016).</p> <p>Feelings Primarily, the biggest feeling I have from this experience in my development journey is one of reward and contentment. Reward because becoming more aware of one’s principles and worldviews offers a congruence with your approach which is unparalleled to any point previous to the investment. In particular, it was rewarding to be able to articulate what I believe can be known in regarding to humans and our psychology and how knowledge and growth in general can be achieved. I’m not quite sure now what I stood for before I invested time and effort into better acknowledging my own position and practice philosophy! ...except high level outcomes such as ‘helping people’. Contentment therefore is the emotion I feel now being more aware and aligned to my own philosophy and having it as a personal and practical reference point.</p> <p>Evaluation and Analysis</p>

		<p>Time wise, there was obviously an investment in reading around philosophical paradigms, practice frameworks, theological positions, and many other areas of interest and importance to self-growth in this area. The time in reading and reflection are worth it though.</p> <p>I came to appreciate that a construalist world view is most accurate to my own beliefs, which in turn rules out any reasonable expectation of myself to endorse or apply positivist methodologies. Clearly in sport – ‘a results business’ – this could be seen as an issue. If I can’t ‘prove’ my impact, how can I defend or maintain my worth? What I came to appreciate is that standing for a construalist world view and favoring a consequently client-led practice approach does not mean that I cannot apply a pragmatic sense to my work and to meeting the needs of others - especially if their needs lean more towards a certaintist service and return!</p> <p>Overall, I have come to ‘live’ rather than appreciate that the professional philosophy of a consultant is the driving force behind the technical aspects of the consulting process and thus plays a key role in the effectiveness of the service provided (Poczwadowski et al., 1998, Poczwadowski et al., 2004). Indeed, the importance of understanding the theoretical principles related to applied sport psychology has frequently been demonstrated as a characteristic of effective practice (Gould et al., 1991; Hardy, Jones, & Gould, 1996; Tod & Andersen, 2005)</p> <p><i>Conclusion and Action Point</i></p> <p>Completing a consultancy case study has allowed me to make sense of my practice and become aware of my knowledge, skills, values, and underpinning beliefs.</p> <p>I am aware that it is unhelpful, it not unrealistic, to say my beliefs and perspectives won’t or can’t change. Indeed, Tod & Bond (2010) suggest that a change or development on assumptions as we develop may even be an inevitable aspect of learning the job. As such, I am to keep track of my assumptions and how they manifest in my practice moving forward through informal and formal reflection, and through the monitoring and sharing of case studies in supervision to ensure that my practice is by all efforts congruent to needs of the client, as to avoid an incongruence and/or mismatch in expectations and delivery.</p>
5 th + 6 th Sept 2018	Occasion: Spotlight Practitioner Training	<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Two day training course with MindFlick (Dr Pete Lindsay and Mark Bowden) in their new psychometric, Spotlight. A mixed group of sport and performance psychologists and some coaches. Training involved some general principles from psychology, the specific tool and how to do a debrief.</p>

	<p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Feelings I felt comfortable interacting with people, as a representative of the RFU. Pete had welcomed me to GB Boxing over a decade ago and Steve had helped him and Mark with their pig wrestling book – so no animosity. Overall, I felt the sessions were well presented and the product seems pretty good, although in its early stages of development. I’m not sure I would promote/use it in a team setting yet as per my following reflections.</p> <p>Evaluation Based on the principles of identifying introverted vs extroverted traits, and then thinking vs feeling traits, SpotLight is suggested to give people a better understanding of their behavioral style and mindset. Essentially it offers people a ‘profile’ of their preferences and personality style. My evaluation on the tool is that you would have to use it in the right setting, if at all. What I mean by that is that if you thought this is a robust, ‘sorts-all’, tool then it’s going to miss a lot. For example, it doesn’t really cover emotions and tends to look at symptoms not causes. Background / history of a client is non-existent, although could be explored through the debrief? Strengths of the product: easy to use; can stimulate conversation around how a how a person and team might interact with others; loved the back page of the document for a team going away to a competition (it’s like a summary page of drivers, strengths, stressors, pressure points) – think that could be really helpful for people to be able to access about team mates (if shared). Weaknesses: some people would be resistant to a ‘form’-ulation, quite a high percentage of my profile didn’t have good face validity – maybes it will improve in accuracy over development time but for now it would be more likely to lose my interest than build it. As for the programme experience, I really liked the balance between: two presenters (one quite factual/research based, one more anecdotal), good use of space (e.g. different chairs and floor space, movement over to a standing exercise, going outside to work in the grounds during breakouts, evening meal together). Just think the whole thing was set in a nice vibe, that’s important I believe as people will remember the feeling as much as the specifics of the product – that a good point to remember for my consulting sessions. That said, although I liked the set up and teaching approach, I didn’t like the product that much – so I guess the moral of the reflection is that you can only do your best to set up a</p>
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		<p>good environment, deliver the best content you have, and hope it works/fits for some of your audience. Maybes over time it will improve as a product and be more appealing for possible use in my work.</p> <p>Conclusion A good example of where a psychometric tool might be helpful in a brief team-based intervention <i>where it is requested</i>. For me, psychometrics doesn't really fit with my preferred client-led and individualistic/interpretivist approach. I've taken a few good ideas however around how to set up a good learning space and mix the mode of delivery (e.g. standing and moving, dual presenters, mix of media, role-play). A key reflection for me is that this helped to confirm that a psychometric-based approach to formulation and consultancy is not a preferred approach, as informed by my philosophy of practice.</p>
Oct 2018	<p>Occasion: Chimp Management Company Training – key takeaways on reflection</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description Chimp management company training day at the Meadowhall business centre (Sheffield), topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to the GDPR complaint hardware and software - A review of our processes for working with clients (in preparation for project fortress) - Case study / scenario examples <p>Reflections/Lightbulbs/Change to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From GDPR section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The introduction of the new iPads, including the software for note taking and session summaries is really good. In particular the structure of the session summary is very helpful and the fact that it will be quality assured/checked by an independent reviewer is really good. - I think having things like risk assessment on the summary remind you that it is essential, along with the other core components such as practitioner and client objective outcomes, key points discussed, and any action points. I can see these becoming a very clear mental model for me during sessions, or certainly now at least in my uniformed notes. - The big progression therefore is just the standardisation of what we are recording, where we are recording/storing it, and the quality assurance of it.

		<p><i>From working processes section:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lightbulb: when setting up a starting point with people - ask what the important outcome changes are for them. To be honest, this is something I have always done but the idea of getting the client to think where they want to be can then help them identify where they are. Take note of where they are, get them to work that out/establish it with you. This marker in the sand will be a great reference point later down the line of your work. People often cannot recognise how much progress they have made psychologically, so this is part of helping them do that. - The basic structure of what we all agreed would be the ideal for each fortress client is to have a record of: (1) identify the important outcome changes for them, (2) garner an initial measurement, (3) discuss and agree the process for moving forward, (4) discuss and agree a very clear outcome and how to measure it. - The important takeaway here for me is just the importance of really clarifying that outcome objectives that would make the client happy. Is it realistic? If so how can they pursue it? What is in the way? How they feel when they get it? These are all questions to ensure you are climbing the right mountain before you take significant steps. If they know how they would think, feel, or act at the end, then you know what you are working towards. <p><i>From Scenarios:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key Takeaway: always start by identifying facts and truth. If they won't work with those, there will always be conflict as they are not working with reality! <p><i>Action Plan:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create session summaries for each fortress client. - Check feedback regularly from David around how to improve the quality of my note taking - Put into practice the ideas/processes around outcome identification and evaluation in consultancy
Oct-Nov 2018	Occasion: application of Chimp Managements new session summary and note taking processes across clients – I made an error however, sending	<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Two things to reflect upon here...</p> <p>Topic A. I have started using Chimp Managements Session Summary protocol and it has really helped me to reinforce good note taking, session planning and review, and supervision practices.</p>

	<p>someone's client information sheet to another client by mistake!</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Topic B. I made an error sending what I thought was a blank client information sheet to a new client, but it was in fact already completed. Meaning I inadvertently shared someone's personal information (Name, DOB, mobile number and next of kin details) with another client.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Topic A. The new Session Summary sheets have been bought in partly as a response to GDPR compliancy, but also in line with a new chimp management initiative to raise the quality of supervision given to mentees on their general session and note taking processes. I have really welcomed the resources (iPad, digital forms, GDrive folder) and accompanying process (independent review, feedback loop, development reviews).</p> <p>Topic B. My initial feelings on realising what I had done were fear and stupidity. i.e. how could I have done that?? And what would it mean??</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Topic A. The most helpful thing about the session summary sheets is the structure and accountability it offers for actively reflecting upon and capturing session essentials within 72 hours of a delivery (a company policy). The areas on the form are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk assessment (any risk factors apparent) - Outcome objectives (client and practitioner) - Mentor impressions (of the client's status and session particulars) - Clients plan of action - Mentors plan of action for the next session - Any information to be sent or shared with others – and who <p>One of my first recognitions has been that being aware of risk assessment makes me more primed to ask about client's wellbeing. I'm certainly not treating myself as anything more than a trainee sport psych, but I am attuning to the emotional wellbeing of clients and being aware that asking around mental health is okay and appropriate in my role. I have reflected and shared with my supervisor that I'm still not 100% confident about different mental illnesses or disclosures about poor mental health</p>
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	<p>however – so I’m going to make learning about those issues a development point for the coming few months. I just want to feel more comfortable to holding a conversation around mental health and to have my own insights and understanding of the key agendas beyond my currently insights. I’m happy that I have good support and referral networks in place, but that doesn’t stop me from upskilling myself in the recognition, discussion and support of mental health issues.</p> <p>A second learning for me has been about keeping succinct summary sheets, but with the essential information. That has been a work in progress with helpful feedback from David and Steve. I’ve learnt about inserting subjective and objective observations within my notes and that detail around how a patient presents and engages in the process can be as important and helpful to record as what is said. I have found that helpful for example when looking back over one athlete notes to observe how the physically presented at session 1, compared to session 7 where they were noticeably better presented/dressed and less shy in the session.</p> <p>A final point has been the advances made by asking the client to reflect upon what we have discussed and think of any helpful actions for moving forward before the end of each session. This was part of the session closing process I developed from supervisor feedback back in February – but not I’ve integrated it into my practice and I’ve found it makes a real difference to empowering the client to set directions of their own (which they often take better ownership over) and it helps me to check in with their thinking and direction of travel at the end of each session rather than proposing ideas that make sense to me. The session summaries also help me to easily pick up where we left off after each session and to easily check back on what the clients follow up actions have been.</p> <p>Topic B.</p> <p>After immediately recognizing my error (I could see the handwriting on the PDF in the email after I sent it) and took a few minutes to reflect on my actions and options. My initial feelings of stupidity were quickly transcended by fear of the possible consequence. In truth, I pretty quickly got a grip and recognized that I needed to act professionally and deal with the issue – including taking responsibility over the error and any consequences that might follow. I contacted my supervisor to disclose my error and to discuss the options I felt were available, as well as any they might have which I hadn’t considered. We agreed that the first, and right, thing to do was contact the person whose information I had disclosed by mistake and let them know. Of course, I was a little bit embarrassed making that call – but I accepted it as part of the necessary actions of the incident. I explained the error which has</p>
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	<p>occurred and the exact information that had been shared. I informed them that I planned to send an email to the recipient explaining the information had been shared in error and requesting them to delete the form from their records. On the call, the client was completely and utterly non-phased by the event. They said it wasn't of concern to them at all and that they appreciated me calling and letting them know.</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Topic A.</p> <p>Overall, I would say that the introduction of a session summary sheet and other note recording, review and storage processes have really enhanced my delivery and bolstered my ethical and professional standards.</p> <p>The act of reflecting on sessions within a short time period and having to condense my full session notes into a summary really makes me reflect upon what was and wasn't being said in sessions, and in doing so I reflect more on my actions and possible actions for moving forward.</p> <p>External feedback from David and Steve continues to introduce new insights to my development that I wouldn't have if we didn't have the processes in place.</p> <p>Topic B.</p> <p>To be honest, in many extents I consider this a 'lucky' wakeup call and learning experience around being extra careful with people's personal information and session notes, etc.</p> <p>Clearly the client whose personal details I shared could have been much less understanding / non-phased about the accident. They could too, for example, have been a high-profile client and by sharing their name alone it could have exposed their involvement in psychological services when they might not wish others to know. Also, the fact I made an error might have alarmed the recipient of the information to question "what is he doing with my data?". No doubt all of these considerations are real and important. My analysis of the situation however is that I acknowledged my error early, assumed a responsible approach, and communicated appropriately with the client and my supervisors, reflecting upon the incident since (including this log). I have learnt a huge lesson myself in the process around <i>slowing down and putting checks in place</i> when sending forms and sensitive data across the internet. I now double check every file before I send it and double check the recipient</p>
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		<p>(person and/or place) that it is going to. I didn't have those precautions in place before and have implemented them as a direct improvement from this incident.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Topic A. Really happy with the session summary process and very keen to continue utilising the resources and processes we have set up at ChMx.</p> <p>Topic B. A mistake, which I accept full responsibility for, turned into a good learning experience once handled in a professional and ethically sound manner. Obviously I'll never know exactly what either client thought about it themselves, but I do know the learning I have taken from it and am glad to report that I have continued to work with both clients to this day suggesting the incident was dealt with their satisfaction.</p> <p>Action Plan / Future Practice</p> <p>Topic A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore options to improve my mental health awareness and understanding. Internal options within Chimp such as Dr Caddy, Prof Peters or Dr Geddeon? <p>Topic B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue double-checking every document and the recipient before sending. For example, is the document the one I intend to send, appropriate for sending across the internet, have a lock on it if it contains personal information, and is the recipient the correct person or place I intend for the information to go to.
5-6 th Nov 18	<p>Occasion: Teacher Training Course (3is) @ LJMU</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>2 Day training programme exploring ideas, information and insights regarding effective design and delivery of small and large group learning sessions. Completion of the course + the associated assessment criteria (e.g. observation, delivery, & reflective assignments) qualifies attendees for the Associate Fellowship of Advance HE award and status.</p> <p>Took some great practical tips from this learning programme, which I hadn't thought of before:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes to work out what makes something good, reflect on what makes them bad! - 3 steps to taking control of yourself as a teacher: examine your fears, prepare yourself, starting. - 3 levels of preparation: personal, practical, subject-related - What qualifies as a good learning outcome? - Giving people time to think independently and contribute to idea formation <i>before</i> a group activity - Group (even of experts) don't solve problems / create better ideas than individuals. The evidence suggests this is because group fail to effectively organize themselves and their processes - Different ways of structuring groups (e.g. jigsaw, debating, Scale Up – using technology) - Pedagogy research + theory (e.g. motivation, attention, engagement) - Things to do other than a PowerPoint - How to plan effectively <p><i>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</i></p> <p>This was a really helpful course. Often I found it giving the theory and evidence behind much of what I do in my practice (thanks to great teaching in ChMx). For example, Steve has always spoken about 'changing the medium' every 10-15minutes, we covered the research on that in this course and the practicalities of how you can change (e.g. what to).</p> <p>In terms of impact on my practice, the first thing I want to do is digest the information and offer it up to the coaches at England Rugby. They've always been interested in what good group learning looks like, the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of good classroom room. I've got great resources now to share with the coaches and stimulate their thinking and future actions. I would be fascinated to know if we could integrate the scale-up approach into a combined review and preview sessions with competitive, problem-solving and idea sharing components. That would be unique!</p> <p>A second advantage/application will be to apply my new and reinforced learnings in my own practice. For example, using the planning sheets for Fortress Workshops (amongst others) and integrating good practice (such as Delphi's, alternatives to PowerPoint, and good self-management and projection) into sessions. I've got my Teaching Case Study to do next year and ongoing sessions</p>
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		<p>with staff, athletes and other stakeholders through rugby and Chimp Conferences, so am really keen to see how I can integrate new approaches into my applied work.</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commit to sharing your learnings with the RFU staff. How do they want that communicated? - Integrate these learnings into my own practice e.g. Pathway delivery + Chimp Conferences. Could the U20s use Scale-Up innovatively?
Nov 2018	<p>Occasions: Mental Health First Aid (youth) – 7th + 8th @ Gloucestershire College And Mental Health First Aid (Adult) – 14th + 15th Nov @ Acacia Training</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist 1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Description Attended 2 training courses relating to mental health awareness and support. The first course focused on mental health first aid in youth populations, the second on mental health first aid in adult populations. There was <i>a lot</i> of content covered and good resources provided, so this reflection is just a capture of the key things that stood out with regard to my learning and application to practice.</p> <p>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From Youth course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great structure of the program e.g. handouts, slides, videos, research, definitions, activities (e.g. acceptable/unacceptable language, avatar, stress container), practical tips and approaches e.g. ALGEE. - Takeaways from day 1 (aside all of the other learning!): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People may have waited forever to see you/say this, the least they deserve is to be listened to. Genuinely and nonjudgmentally. To do that is a skill and needs practicing and maintaining! - Those struggling with suicide will be relieved to talk about it. - That teenage years seem a scary place! (especially for girls) - Takeaways from day 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hearing voices must be incapacitating! - The use of ‘episode’ as core language - ALGEE (approach, listen, give support, encourage professional support, encourage other supports). - From Adult course:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really respected the openness of the presenter (Gary) around his own struggles with poor mental health. It brought mental health into the room and encouraged others to disclose. It was like the idea of personal disclosure in consulting in action. - Takeaways from this course as a whole: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite having seen most of this content a week earlier – it was eye-opening how different it came across, how many different things I picked up, and how helpful hearing bits again was. In essence therefore a key thing for me is to remember that repetition in consultancy is no bad thing. People cannot remember that much of what they hear, so doing something new every time might seem like you’re giving more – but is it really helpful?? Repetition can reinforce learning. Also consider how different the two presenters made the content seem! Just because someone has covered an area before, it doesn’t mean it can’t be revisited or redelivered to good effect. - Don’t be afraid to ask people: how is your mental health today? - Mindset change: that it is a privilege when people share their concerns with me regarding mental health. UA - ALGEE. - Recovery is about changing our lives, not changing our biochemistry. <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revisit your session notes periodically to stay fresh and up to speed with concepts and terminology. Do a refresher annually to keep up to speed with current research, language and approaches. - Ideas for the Hartpury mental health keynote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intro slide: It can be emotive, particularly if this is a sensitive time or subject for you. Fully understand that. Explain people are welcome to take a break or leave the room. Equally if you need the toilet, they are just outside (this gives people a nice non-pressured out if they need) - No such thing as a silly question - ask if you don’t understand - Enjoy the hour - It’s a serious subject, but we can enjoy learning - Stress vulnerability model as visual and stress container and tap! - Model of Personal Empowerment (page, 134). Lift some key components?
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Dec 2018	<p>Occasion: 2018 DSEP Conference</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Various takeaway from this weekend. Things that stood out most were the insights from practitioners working with blind athletes, Brian Hemmings career insights, and Paul Wyllemens delivery style and concepts around TeamNetherlands promotion of psyches' and coaches taking shared responsibility for 'performance behaviours' and creating a 'triage' style support team.</p> <p>Reflections/Impact/Change to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From Baker et al (Paralympic session) section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advantages of creating opportunities for mutual sharing and disclosure, such as realizing shared coping resources. - Some specific notes of supporting blind athletes, which I won't list here, but are helpful to have notes on. - From Brian Hemmings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinforcement of the importance of silence. "I have often regretted my speech, never my silence". This has me thinking about when I'm listening well, being too passive (i.e. just letting people gas off, with no real direction/input), or not listening enough. I've resolved that when a consultancy is set up, the objective should be made clear. If its therapeutic then listening is necessary, not passive. If a 'change' outcome is identified however, then I can ask the client if the current approach to session is helping them move towards their goal. Its only when I don't know what the goal is that I'm likely to get 'caught in the crossfire' of wondering whether a client's disclosures are constructive. - Use storytelling to get a principle or concept across. For example, the story of 'Brian as a boy' who came home from football match...dad: did you win? Score? Assist? Non...but MOM trophy in his bag. This little story is a great way to prompt questions around a whole host of issues: what do people think are important to praise, Values, parents' roles in sport, expectations, etc. People make and take meaning from stories. - From Paul Wylleman: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If language is a blocker, remove it. For example, TeamNL removed the language of 'sport psychology' and started using 'performance behaviours', on which the coach and psychologist could work together. This reminds me a bit of the way rugby had turned psychology into
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		<p>‘behaviours’ when I first arrived, although I feel it removed the emotional and cognitive components of wellbeing and performance. I’m not 100% I agree with Paul’s solution as a universal application – but totally agree it was designed for TeamNLs needs and therefore cannot be argued with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of having a team of different Psyches was also interesting. Often in sport it seems like EVERYTHING from home life to happiness is the ‘Sport Psyches bag’. This clearly isn’t realistic or helpful. The thing that I would consider is how to educate people and sport of that reality, whilst not risking being dismissed. The important thing is like what Pete Lindsay spoke about at the LJMU day...tell them what you are an expert at and apply it. <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liked the idea of personal disclosure and group sharing. When combining this with the promotion of storytelling and imagery from Brains talk, I wonder if I could ask the 20s to send in a photo of a story ‘from their life’. We could talk through a few stories throughout the campaign building insights, understanding and connections. - Share the ‘Experts in Performance Behaviour’ slide with the RFU management and discuss our current position and network
Jan 2019	<p>Occasion: Chimp Management Company Training</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professor Steve Peters presented learning sessions on receiving feedback as a practitioner; understanding Silent Guides; and, Brain Development. There was also a case study observation regarding a client wanting to overcome procrastination. <p>Reflections/Lightbulbs/Impact to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite some good learning from the other sessions, this reflection focuses on capturing my lightbulbs and takeaways from the ‘receiving feedback as a practitioner’ session – it really has profound implications for me (and likely any practitioner!). <p>To start, the standout concept was how predetermined many people’s views and approach to life are – <i>irrelevant of how I show up or ‘perform’</i>. For example, I can see the realistic notion that 1/5 people are positive and will likely praise what you do, whilst 1/5 people will naturally be critical or pessimistic and come after you and have a go. I’ve certainly seen that in sports team I’ve` worked</p>

		<p>in – some are first supporters, and others never quite seem supportive at all, whilst some are outright haters! The kicker however from this session is my recognition that these scenarios are all <i>irrelevant of what I do</i>. That is profound. People will like and dislike ‘me/my stuff’ <i>irrelevant</i> of what approach I take. I know from my own work using approaches grounded in CBT that an opinion is only an opinion - it is not a fact. It actually makes me smile right now therefore to think “why would you get upset/agitated/whatever by an <i>opinion</i> of a chimp?!?!”.</p> <p>Another good insight from the session was Prof Peters insights that aggression often comes from illness, unease, or uncertainty. It’s often not about practitioners therefore when clients go for them. I’ve reflected that this is a bit like an aggressive dog, they don’t know anything about me or my personality – I’m best to stay clear If I don’t want to be bitten or try and understand/empathise where the dog is coming from if I do want to engage.</p> <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The key takeaways from this I figure are <i>do not base your confidence on what other people think of you</i>...particularly the vocal Chimps who speak first! Place your confidence on your values and if you are living them out. Also, remember that once people have given an opinion, you can then investigate it yourself. Are there any truths? Any learnings? Make positives yourself ...or chuck non-sense in the trash! - Although this reflection is brief – it really is massive in terms of potential impact. I think it’s important that I revisit these concepts regularly so that they become internalized. If I am going to out myself out there, I am going to receiving feedback. Rate myself on how I am living by my values and use trends in feedback as opposed to the views of the loudest duck!!
<p>28th March 2019</p>	<p>Occasion: LJMU Taught Day</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr Jeff Breckon (Sheffield Hallam) presented a learning session on motivational interviewing. Session included and introduction to the approach, key principles, key processes, supporting theory, and some applied exercises and activities. <p>Key reflections and takeaways for me from the session, as applicable to my practice in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think one of my biggest takeaways from this session was how well I thought it was structured and delivered. There was a really nice mix of ideas, examples, exercises, reflection, and action planning. For example, I thought the way Jeff established credibility for him and the approach,

		<p>whilst not overselling it was skilled. The research he offered was solid and accessible, especially when he used the transtheoretical model (a bedrock of MI) as a literal bedrock of an exercise...to the point we literally walked on it! I left the session feeling informed, challenged, and curious. This reflection alone could be what I'm going to take forward from Jeff into my practice. To avoid missing other key learnings I'll summarize my observations and learnings from his approach in these 3 reflections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jeff had a calm manor and was well presented. Him wearing a suit just seemed to set the tone that he was professional. 2. His slides were almost all based on research or applied considerations but were almost always a single quote of image which meant to focus stayed on discussion. That said, he was really easy to follow / stick with – so there was a good flow to the discussion and not just ‘open season’. 3. The exercises were brilliant for engaging the audience in the room, but more importantly they engaged me in greater thought e.g. the listening for 60seconds and paraphrasing task (made me realise how good it is to just be heard – even deliberately!), the affirmation task (made me realise how good it is to be appreciated / supported heard – even deliberately!), The task of standing on a position of the stages of change and the Jeff interviewing us with only 2 questions <i>really</i> made me realise that it's not our job/remit to move people up and down – <i>it's their proclivity</i>. That was a real lightbulb moment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From the session content, some more general reflections post-session have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working as an ego-less mirror. Really look at your listen/talk time. Go for 1 question but lots of paraphrasing and affirmations - Not knowing the outcome can often help you to ask better questions as you don't work towards the agenda you feel ‘should’ be covered - 3-minute piano concerto could be considered easy to do because it's short? Obviously not! Doing things more accurately in less time is a skill (e.g. 30 seconds corridor conversation) - Good language: Can I offer a professional observation? We've been talking for x weeks now and it doesn't seem we've made progress we might have hoped for. I just wanted to get your opinion on that?
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain to people why you are taking notes (e.g. I don't want to miss anything important, but please continue talking - I'm listening) - Elicit - provide - elicit (ask what they want - tell information with permission - ask what they think about what you told them) <p>Reflections and impact to my practice in regard to Fortress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mustivation (when someone feels they should do something, but not that they really want to!) - Stop talking - get people to reflect and think for themselves. Don't have outcome bias when you work towards the ideal end (for you). Sometimes it's more helpful to not even know what the person is working on - Having partook in Jeff's exercise of having us stood up and literally positioning ourselves on the Stages of Change (from the transtheoretical model of change) – this could be a create way of helping people to engage with the Triangle of Change. E.g. ask them to stand on the corner of the TOC to identify the biggest acting factor for them at present? - Could the image of an owner pulling against a stubborn dog work as a visual for Fortress? After all resistance and insistence most always builds resistance! Rather than wrestling, look at training and walking together <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See what aspects of MI fit into my practice. Immediate aims are to continue to embrace listening and to question more cleverly (e.g. around what the client thinks, believes, understands and feels about their position and potential. Also, will very likely use the 'Can I offer you a professional observation?' line and explain why I am taking notes. - Suggest using the 'on your feet' walking the TOC exercise for Fortress (or a conference/group session)
April 2019	Occasion: Request by a Sporting Organisation for information on the sessions I was holding with athletes on their programme	<p>Description</p> <p>I've recently taken on maternity cover work for an Olympic sport acting in place of one of my colleagues at Chimp Management. As my first engagement I was invited to a training camp to observe and build acquaintance and relationships with the staff and athletes. The 2 day camp was a great opportunity to meet people and get a feel for the organizational, cultural and sport specific demands of</p>

	<p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>this sport and my role. At one point however I was asked by a programme administrator if I would be able to upload periodic session summaries (i.e. who had I seen and roughly what had we had worked on) onto the programmes internal data storage system. After enquiring more information about what they wanted and why, I established that the sport likes to know how much support athletes require so they can continue to provide equivalent. I was aware that I needed to reflect upon what was being asked, what the possible solutions were and to agree actions for moving forward.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>My initial feelings about this are that we need to find a solution that meets the needs of the sport whilst not compromising the confidentiality and trust of any athletes. That might be idealistic in its own right, but it's my job to communicate the options and raise awareness of the pros and cons so people can make informed decisions.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>From the sports perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It's appropriate for any client (the NGB is paying for our services after all) to want to know if they are providing helpful support to their athletes - It would be helpful to better understand what information the sport would truly like and how they might use the information. What are their motives and benefits for seeking such information? - Have they considered the implications of reporting session goals / content on athletes trust and engagement in the process? - How do they currently engage with their doctor's session time and agendas covered? - How would the sport like to proceed if they knew athletes would like confidential support on occasions? - Would they consider some open work with coaches and confidential work for athletes if they wish? - What are they willing to compromise on and what concerns does that leave for them? - Have the considered asking the athletes for feedback about the psychology services they want and receive?
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	<p>From the athlete's perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They have the right to know what confidentially includes, excludes and what any information shared / reported would look like - If programme based psychology is not confidential, I could sign post them to confidential options (if the sport agrees with this?) - I could include them in what I am going to report <i>before</i> sending it so that they are privy to the information and give consent <p>From my perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It would be helpful to clarify who the client actually is (with this sport) so they, me and the athlete are clear of the contracting, focus and any reporting up front - I have to accept that sports have their unique desires and it is my job to offer ideas and recommendations, but also to uphold my responsibilities of sound ethical practice (in other words, be flexible and supportive, but keep my boundaries!) <p>Analysis</p> <p>Having written this out I can see that there is an interplay of factors and considerations at play here. My biggest reflection is that it's not actually my right or responsibly alone to decide what is 'right' here. I need to engage the client in proactive discussion and work through any grey areas before commencing any 1:1 work. That will include clarifying the grounds of confidentiality, any reporting and any other grey areas. From this reflection I have a much clearer mind of the considerations that are apparent and the possible questions and directions we might want to consider moving forward. I'm also going to take this to supervision to identify anything I'm not seeing here.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>This experience has been interesting because, whilst I wasn't part of setting this contract up from the start, I am part of setting it up now. As such, I have some actions and discussions that need to take place to help myself and others gain clarity and agreement of what happens regarding session confidentiality and any reporting moving forward.</p> <p>Action Plan / Future Practice</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize your thoughts into a summary and take to supervision - After supervision, arrange a call or meeting with the programme manager to discuss delivery and confidentiality and any reporting needed for the year ahead - Once agreed, communicate up front with athletes the terms of the relationship so they can make informed decisions about how they engage in the services on offer
<p>May + June 2019</p>	<p>Occasion: Creating my professional philosophy – visually</p> <p>1.1 Establish, maintain and develop systems for legal, ethical and professional standards in applied psychology</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>With the conclusion of my Prof Doc on the horizon, I wanted to try and create a visual representation on my professional philosophy (PP). The idea came from my research into narrative and discourse analysis, which commonly promotes the idea of turning a story into a picture to try and capture the essence of what is being told (Smith, 2016). I figured that I have been on a journey of immersion in my consulting process through my prof doc, so this could be a great opportunity to meta-reflect on my convergent beliefs and values about people, behaviour, sport, and change and how they underpin my delivery as practitioner. I figured that if I could capture, conceptualize and present my philosophy in an image, then it would mean that I could better describe/present it better to others – such as clients, peers or supervisors.</p> <p>Thoughts and Feelings</p> <p>The process of mapping out all of the primary principles (those which jumped straight to mind) was interesting and enlightening. Words like ‘care’, ‘the person’ and ‘performance’ hit the paper early...but soon I realized that they couldn’t always sit in synergy. Sometimes they even seemed opposing (e.g. what if sport is putting a person’s wellbeing at risk/harm).</p> <p>These important questions have always been emotive – because I care. That was my main reflection when starting out with this. <i>I care about the person in front of me.</i> So in that regard, the central focus of my practice became clear - The Person. From this point onwards I knew that my PP was a circle. The person at the middle, and everything else available <i>around/supporting</i> them.</p> <p>From there on I was using my personal values and professional expertise/preferences to identify, evaluate (often in a process of trying to rank/prioritise things) and place them with my PP. It was rewarding when a piece would slot into place, and for a few weeks I edited and re-edited the components...often after light bulb moments where I thought of better words, connections or conceptualizations of what I know, do and stand for.</p>

One example of this would be when I changed a word on the left side of my 4th circle from discovery to empathy. This was after I had reflected on a case I was supporting, where I recognized the client didn't want 'discussion, discovery, knowledge, or skills' (my previously identified areas of work...instead they just wanted and needed to be heard. To be understood. To have some *empathize* with their experience and their suffering. The clicked for me as an essential part of what I believe and do in practice. Discovery emerged as more of a personal value – a guide to me *before* I practice (“go and discover, be curious”). Discovery and empathy slotted into their places.

Evaluation

The best thing about the process was its capacity to help me meta-reflect on everything I've learnt in my education, practice and reflective practice (e.g. supervision, self-reflection) over the years. It helped me crystalize what I stand for (as it stands!) and the best thing is that it has immediately helped me and my delivery. I've written about that in another (consultancy focused) reflection – but essentially it helped me move my focus from me (a common focus in trainee practitioners, e.g. Collins, Evans-Jones & O'Conner, 2013; Poczwardowski, 2017) and towards the client. I know what being authentic is now – because I can state my case and stand by it. This gives real, tangible, livable, meaning to concepts like Carl Rogers' (1961) advocacy of 'authenticity' or 'practitioner congruence', which I now believe so many trainees must read about, but for a period of time must have no actual idea of what it really means or takes to identify and uphold your authenticity.

The upshot of that of my growth in this regard is that I'm not worried about being caught out. Imposter syndrome has subsided, because I'm following what I believe in. I'm following 'me'. It helps to know that that approach is based on either sound research /theory or professional judgement aligned with my experience, beliefs and intentions – all of which can still be tied back to a coherent and client-focused approach. So, far from saying “I've got this, I'm done”, my outermost-left-layer (of my PP visual) states my commitment to continued growth and monitoring...meaning I'm going to keep reviewing what this conceptualization means for me, and my clients. ...Does it fit/work? ...When doesn't it? ...Why not?

Analysis

My only regret with this process, is that I didn't start it sooner. I guess I didn't know I needed it before, or that it could be as helpful. My research into narrative analysis certainly helped spark the

		<p>thought of creating an image, and I could argue that you don't know what you don't know until you know it. Perhaps I wasn't ready before to create a full, integrated representation of the PP? The most important thing is that in keeping with the Sport Psych literature (e.g. Poczwadowski et al, 2004) I have it now – and I can continue to reflect upon and build/grow from, through, and on it. As Collins, Evans-Jones, & O'Conner (2013) have written about other developing sport psychologists, by reflecting upon my consultancy philosophy, I've been able to explore whether my applied delivery is congruent with my personal beliefs and values and thereby maximizing my professional growth and development (Lindsay, Breckon, Thomas, & Maynard, 2007; Poczwadowski et al., 1998).</p> <p>I plan to share it with some peers and my supervisors to get feedback and challenge on its structure, content and implications. Hopefully through constructive scrutiny I can identify where it holds water, and where I might want to consider gaps, challenges and otherwise. There is also the question of whether I would/need to share my PP visual with clients? When considering good practice in ASP, Keegan (2016) suggests a practitioner should always outline their approach, which would include how they work and what they do & don't offer. I could see this resource being really helpful therefore for clients who are interested in a deeper understanding of my approach, therefore. Perhaps clients with a deeper knowledge of sport psychology/psychology who want to explore philosophy and principles before issues and practicals. It's just good to have it as a resource therefore – cognizant and available to me, and visible and explainable to a client.</p> <p>Conclusion Really looking forward to continuing to build on/from this resource throughout my career. I intend to grow as a practitioner, so I would hope/envisage the image and application evolving too.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share my PP visual with my peers at LJMU for their impressions and ideas. - Reference the framework in my practice, for both preparation and reflection. Does it help? Does it stick? Does it evolve?
24 June 19	Occasion: ChMx Company training - Peer learning – Adam Wright	<p>Description Adam Wright taught me the content I had missed from the June ChMx Team Day (due to Bahrain work). Inc: - Neuroscience (The Hippocampal Formation)</p>

	<p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) - Attachment theory (applied aspects in relation to silent guides) <p>Reflections/Lightbulbs/Impact to my practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neuroscience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity to myelinate could be genetic, so some will myelinate and transmit quicker than others e.g. good memory - Helpful to understand how episodic memory is formed, but not sure of what ‘form’ a stored belief actually takes? Want to research this further. What combination of grey and white matter? In which regions? - ASD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really helpful to better understand ASD as a spectrum of development and function disorder (i.e. from learning difficulties through to high intelligence). Gave me a real insight and lightbulb around ‘what is normal?’ ...for example in a savant syndrome case someone could be the world’s best pianist but find social interaction very difficult – but that is <i>normal for them</i>. - Key consulting points would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 in 100 affected – so be aware - Things to look out for are problems with communication (e.g. poor two-way communication), social situations (e.g. often poor understanding of social rules or expectations), and behavior (e.g. obsessive features and routines). - Can help with: UAR; help people accept and embrace difference; communication, social and behavior skills + role play. Remember – work with <i>that individual and their capacity</i>, not a rule book or recipe list. - Attachment Theory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key point from research: a child must feel wanted and secure. If not then a secure attachment is unlikely to form, meaning inhibited formation of the VMPFC dampening capacity. In adult life this will manifest and often people describe life (relationships, stability, etc) as hard work. - In applied work, people gaining insight of attachment and subsequent implications can help them to accept the machine and then chose which approach to take. Stability can come from SOL, as external attachment may be unlikely.
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		<p>- Lightbulb Reflection post session: Remember that all adults want to feel secure too, but most people don't think about where they place their attachments. We just emotionally bond to people. The most stable is yourself, although many typically bond to parents, partner, or the boss! (this last is to stress how inappropriate that often is, but through relational dynamics the boss mirrors the parent most!!).</p> <p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore how a belief is formed and stored in the brain - Explore how to broach concerns around developmental disorders (e.g. ASD) with clients. What is the appropriate approach? Language? Signposting? - Look into attachment theory more as part of your Chimp Management PDP post-PhD. Could it be an area for personal supervision i.e. how does my attachment style play out? Also, how can I best recognize and work with client's attachment style?
23-24 July 2019	<p>Occasion: Chimp Management Formal Appraisals and development of a new POT</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>This was a revamp of the annual appraisal program at Chimp, so the first of its kind in the years I've been there. There were preparatory elements before the 2-day event (e.g. preparing a presentation around the nuts and bolts of consultancy, completing a mentor assessment checklist, submitting a CPD and reflective practice diary); role plays, real life mini-consultancies, knowledge checks / tests (e.g. checking our awareness of ethical procedures, testing our neuroscience knowledge), and administrative tasks. The whole thing was structured well so that after each station we had designated opportunities to reflect in-action (using prompt sheets) and then we were given formal feedback from each station and each had a 45minute summary meeting on the second day to capture our learning and identify action points for our professional development plan (PDP).</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I was really looking forward to the event as I knew it would provide the opportunity to assess my competencies and identify areas for development. I don't tend to get nervous about these days anymore as I know anything can get thrown at you, but I did have 1 moment in the day when I noticed myself becoming preoccupied by unwanted thoughts and feelings. That occasion related to when I had to enter a room and talk to a mother of two autistic children. At face value, she had just come in to</p>

talk about her experience and see if we knew anything about autism or anything which might help her. I remember not having time to read the blurb fully before entering the room however and undoubtedly felt hurried and unsettled on the way in (there's my first amber warning for something to note and look out for!). I never felt I regained composure from there to be honest. The whole session is a blur and my notes when leaving were pretty much 'didn't have a clue what to offer, definitely need to read up on autism!'. The interesting thing though is when I received my feedback from this lady, it was generally positive and my one mistake in her eyes had been not listening more actively to her and instead jumping in too soon. That's really helpful feedback therefore on a few levels; first that I probably jump in and bumble my way through things *unnecessarily* if I'm spooked or nervous. A good autopilot therefore would be just 'relax and let the person lead' – listen to their story, just ask what is happening for them. That leads into my second recognition from the ladies' feedback (to everyone) that all she really wanted was to be understood. For people to say, 'that sound really tough, and it's normal to find it tough'. You don't have to be an expert in autism (or anything!) to listen to someone, hear if they are struggling, and recognize that struggle. That is a great settler for me. I think if I go into session again where I'm flustered or feeling pressured, I'm going to take a breath, clear my mind, and just be curious and empathetic to what the person in front of me is saying and experiencing.

Evaluation

The event was great really in terms of helping me create a practical development plan, almost perfectly timed, as my PhD POT comes to an end.

I've learnt that I don't need to be an expert in every subject, to be interested and listening to *how the person in front of me is*. In reality – that *is* my expertise!

Likewise, it was helpful to recognize that my basic consultancy (e.g. the real-life session with J, and the role play with Bev and Hazel) got really good feedback. I felt really confident with that – which is how I would want to be at the end of my 'formal training' at LJMU. Equally I felt so comfortable answering ethical and professional questions and scenarios with Andy. I know for a fact I couldn't have done that so competently prior to doing the two Mental Health first aid courses last November and from having had real life consultancy experiences where referrals were necessary and actioned.

In terms of what was bad – I'm not beating myself up about the session with the mother as at the end of the day the appraisals, and specifically the role plays, are designed to help us identify our areas of development and do something about them (Tod, 2007). I would like to visit some autistic schools

or settings as part of my PDP to get more experience and understanding for helping and working with people with an ASD diagnosis. I know it's not my area of specialty or practice, but it's a common part of the real world and could easily feature in sport, or family members of people I work with in sport, so it seems sensible to understand it as best I can.

Analysis

It's good to go full circle from writing my PhD POT, to arriving here at an appraisal and new PDP. In regard to the targets of my POT, I feel my consulting approach has become much firmer/clearer and will only improve further with my target of increasing my 1:1s with ChMx (a PDP action point). A particular strong point was my ethical and professional standards as assessed as appraisal, which is great to know because that was a direct target of my POT 24 months ago. Both role plays and practice placements have been recognised as helping learning events that contribute to practitioner development and competence (Tod, Marchant & Andersen, 2007) and I hope that continued applied work combined with supervision and self-led reflective practice will only help me continue to progress through the widely recognized stages of practitioner development (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003).

Conclusion

Good learning experience, with plenty to take confidence from and some helpful pointers for continued development. Key thing for would be to remember not to feel like you have to know everything in every situation. That clearly isn't realistic, and at a more subtle level it leans towards a model of practitioner-led / practitioner as expert practice – when I know I want to be more collaborative and essentially client-led practitioner-active. The best way to be active, is to listen – deeply. From there I can move forward with the client on understand their challenges or frame of reference.

Action Plan

Will definitely be doing this again so remember to do the same mental warm up (e.g. “it's all good experience + learning, give your best at each station, reflect and learn when it's done”) and remember to relate with *the person* in front of you before the problem.

End of Professional practice + Process development-focused Reflective Diary

Learning Outcome 2 – Reflections Concerning Consultancy Competency		
Date	Summary of Activity & Learning Objectives Matched	Reflection
July 2017	<p>Occasion: First month of PhD RFU Contracting Forward focus</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists 2.1 Assess requests for consultancy 2.2 Plan consultancy</p>	<p>Overall I have found this month a positive one. I feel more comfortable with what is expected of me on the PhD/Stage 2 combined process and I have enjoyed reading papers which share others key lessons from similar experiences (e.g. Holt & Streat, 2001).</p> <p>RFU Contracting has been good in that I have taken my time to immerse myself into that culture, agreeing my only current outcome objective to be ‘to understand the historic and current landscape, key stakeholders, and likely forward objectives’. I am a little concerned that the role of my predecessor was more than ‘the psych to the Men’s Pathway’, and that he did not do the role alone. I am going to produce a written ‘observations report’ therefore to share my understanding or historic, current and possible future roll-out of Psychology within the Men’s Pathway and this can form the basis for a discussion around contracting options between myself (Chimp Management) and the RFU.</p> <p>My forward focus for the next 8 weeks is to get my head into the research world and begin to explore interests and opportunities for my own investigations. I also endeavour to finalise my RFU contract for commencement FT (.8 equivalent) in August.</p>
August 17	<p>Occasion: 1:1 Consultancy with AC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rugby Player (19) - Skype, 1 hr. - 4 hours prep. <p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients 2.4 Conduct consultancy</p>	<p>Today was the first session with AC. Points of notability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used my revamped informed consent form for the first time (AC reported that it made sense and it guided us into appropriate ethics based conversations) - We agreed to work within a MAC-based framework (for my first time) following ACs agreement that it appeared to match his needs <p>Thoughts, feelings and actions prior to session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I was energised and a little nervous as Ali is my first 1:1 NPP player case - I was nervous due to my intentions to work with an unfamiliar framework (MAC) - I had done extensive research into the area and had begun a mindfulness development programme myself (Headspace) to help understand the process...and hopefully enhance my own emotional skill set!

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I set a clear structure of realistic and manageable objectives of the session (based on Baltzell 2016, p.280) and my autopilots around being conversational, interested, doing my best and allowing the athlete to find answers for themselves through the relationship. <p>Key Successes and/or learning's from the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You don't need to worry about first consultations! Its normal to get some caution of the unknown, so let the emotion pass, recognise your effort, and get on practicing again and again. - The experience felt a lot less 'clinical' to me through: (1) the amended the Client Consent form format, and (2) ensuring I was more relational/conversational and mutually-explorative in my approach to the session. (e.g. "we will explore this together, I will bring expertise and ideas from the field, and you can bring expertise and ideas from <i>you</i>"). I think the biggest influence of this was that I had met Mike Roberts (London Irish Psych) the day before and was refreshed to hear his openness of being a 'learner' and to see the freedom this gave him to ask questions of people and to just relate to them on a very human-to-human level over professional-to-client. - It was good to recognise that Skype is quite new to him and to normalise any concerns he has. Action: to check with him later whether he found Skype ok in case it was not preferable to him. <p>Future Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I didn't ask AC at the start of the session what he wanted from the session. And to that end I was still leading the agenda and wasn't 100% able to check in at the end if we had met his needs. - In the future, I need to remember to ask people that question, as the risk is that I run to my own agenda and could miss the person/problem that enters the room.
Sept 2017	<p>Occasion: Observational learning at my first RFU U18 Camp</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p> <p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy</p>	<p><i>Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open (coaches, questioning, integration of teams) - Questioning style (informal, open ended) <p><i>Coaching Style</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle (not outcome) driven. CARDS (Creativity, Awareness, Resilience, Decision Making, Skills). Will be interesting to know what the transfer of this is to club or U20 environment? - Give the coaches a task to do and feedback on, count rather than just 'observe'. They used the clickers to do this (e.g. closed end questions, transitions in play, trys scored, etc). <p><i>Psychological aspects</i></p>

	<p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting themselves a goal for each session, placed on the whiteboard pitch side. Often advised to compete with another player. We debriefed this after the session around the advantages and potential disadvantages of setting outcome (e.g. '3 turnovers') vs process (e.g. high work rate) goals. Individualism was the key. I offered the Taxi driver vs Passenger analogy and the coaching message was to make sure you understand what you are looking to gain/explore/achieve in each session. - Coaches would often openly 'agitate' players (they are familiar with) by promoting inter-player competition e.g. "point to the player you think is working the hardest lads". Then coach to that player: "out of 10 how hard you are working?" - Rusty called the players 'coaches' for one session and the feedback they started giving was amazing! This fits Steve's 'Cleaner vs Director' example and the idea that people adopt the role they are assigned (Zimbardo studies, perception is key, helping people see things from a different perspective etc). <p><i>Key learning's</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The feedback from players is that they like coming into this environment because "it's different". This doesn't necessarily mean every environment should replicate it though, otherwise they would become 'normal' and hence lose their appeal? What other countries coach in this way in all clubs? Do international players have an opinion on this? - When asked 'where have you learnt the most from over the past few years?' players consistently answer: XX player (so role models are key) and 'from XX mistake' (myelination principle in action). Interestingly – 'coaches' was not a common answer! Give people the opportunity for 'learning moments' (mistakes) and to learn from/with others.
<p>Sept - Nov 2017</p>	<p>Occasions: Club Visits at new National Pathway Psychologist (Saracens, Wasps, Worcester, L.Irish, Tigers, Exeter, etc).</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Getting out around the clubs these past three months has been really interesting and informative. I have been able to meet some of the key stakeholders in the player's club-based development (e.g. coaches, psychologists, S+C, etc) and begin to get an insight into the variable physical and cultural environments these players will be influenced by.</p> <p>Feelings</p>

<p>2.2 Plan consultancy 2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p>	<p>Being positioned within the RFU, but with a supportive role for Clubs (if they want it), I haven't felt pressured to need to go to clubs to sell or investigate any particular thread or angle. This has meant I've felt relaxed attending club and have done my best to ensure those I am meeting also understand that I am simply visiting and that there are no expectations or obligations apparent!</p> <p>Aspirations of the period:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Get to know Clubs management figures so they can ask me any questions and feel confident they know who I am, what I do/can offer, and what involvement I will have (if any) with 'shared' players. (2) Get a feel for how their club likes to support/challenge/develop players so I can have an understanding of that background and even look to compliment it when the players join the England environment. (By compliment here I mean to understand why certain players may think, feel, act in any given way in the England environment by getting a better understanding for the person and how they operate within multiple environments and through varying interactions). (3) To capture 'AOB' – that is, to ask coaches if there is anything important to think I should know about the NPP players, that club, the set-up, England rugby, parents, - the list goes on, and I tend to just ask this questions throughout the day quite informally but it helps me to build a more informed picture of how the coaches see these players, these environments, key stakeholders (including themselves, myself, England coaches, parents, etc) and what beliefs they may hold themselves. <p><i>Evaluation (good and bad)</i></p> <p>I have improved my approach (as with that outlined above) throughout the course of the visits. I think this has come with practice, of learning how to relate to these academy coaches and how to recognise stresses they may all be under and interests they commonly hold (they love talking about the players strengths and development points for example! They also commonly have views on parents, but this would not be a question to start the day with).</p> <p>I haven't really had a way of assessing whether my trips have been valuable for the Academy Managers. What I have asked at the start of every visit is what they would like to get out of my time there, and then checked back in on those objectives by the end of the visit. This has been a helpful way of ensuring the coaches' construct the agenda of the day as much as I do (just like when I work in</p>
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	<p>a 1:1 setting with an athlete). The only downside to that was that one club asked for me to input on developing their Academy Psychology roll-out plan. I was perhaps a little overenthusiastic to make an impression and feel I may need to manage their expectations in the future as my role is that of psychologist to the NPP players, as oppose to psychologist to that club. However, that recognition helped me to clarify my emerging role still further, plus I am happy to concede that supporting that club (within my working capacity) will only strengthen my relationship with them whilst hopefully impacting on the psychology service the NPP players (current and future) access within that club.</p> <p>Another challenge I have found since starting these club visits is that of time on the road. Not in as much as the travel itself, but in the amount of time it takes to travel and therefore the reduced amount of time I have for emails, planning, reading, reflection and otherwise. I have communicated this challenge to my line manager at the RFU and agreed that first priority is players in the NPP, and then the key stakeholders around those players. I have been recording the extra requests on my time so as the RFU could decide in the future if they wish to provide further resource to meet those requests/demands. This approach of clarifying my job role and responsibilities has helped me to know what I will be assessed on by my Line Manager, although it has left me having to say no to a few people and requests in order to manage my time and working capacity.</p> <p><i>Conclusion / headlines</i></p> <p>Good experience getting out around different clubs with often very different philosophies around player and/or person development.</p> <p>My target now is to connect with the players to understand how they interact within and experience those environments and what role (If any) I could play for each of the NPP either directly (with the player) or indirectly (through coaches, parents, environments, etc).</p> <p><i>Action Points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that I establish how and when clubs would like me to contact them and around what agenda - Make a schedule to visit clubs a minimum of 3 times per year – or let them decide how often? - Discuss with Dean the request from clubs for my support and how I consider this to be important, but likely beyond my work capacity. - Establish sound signposting mechanisms for issues that arise within clubs and for which I am unable to manage myself (capacity or expertise wise).
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<p>Jan 18</p>	<p>Occasion: U20 Training Camp (Bisham Abbey) Subject: Leadership Group and ‘Team Building’</p> <p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy 2.2 Plan consultancy 2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients 2.4 Conduct consultancy 2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>In my role as SPC for the England Rugby National Performance Programme, I was asked if I could help some of the players take a leadership role in the under 20s World Cup campaign. The leaders (nominated by the coaches) and I met a few times (including the supporting use of a WhatsApp group) to discuss what would be important for the under 20s group in the campaign ahead. In simple terms, I wanted to act as a facilitator in helping the players achieve autonomy and ownership over the leadership of the team. Based on principles of social identity (Turner & Oakes, 1986) and values-based approaches to psychology (e.g. Hayes, 2012) I spoke with the players around what kind of team they thought would be a ‘successful team’, what they saw as success and what attributes or principles might contribute to that end.</p> <p>The players and coaches agreed a set of principles/values they would like to use to guide behavior throughout the junior World Cup campaign. These included for example: relentlessness, courage, and having fun.</p> <p>In January, the full squad came together for its first time and this was the first opportunity for the leadership group to communicate the guiding principles/values to the wider group. In preparation for this camp, I had taken supervision with a team development specialist. We had discussed how teams he had supported had gone about bringing to life the values they believed they wanted to uphold. We discussed the notion of getting the wider team to bring each value to life with examples, helping them to contextualize and take ownership over the values – including identifying any challenges they foresaw in upholding such values.</p> <p>I devised an idea of having four flipcharts in the room, one to ‘house’ each value, with plenty of post-it notes for people to stick up their thoughts, and offering plenty of opportunity for each person to see each value and offer their own opinions, which could then be collated, discussed, and any actions agreed. I went out and purchased Post-it notes, coloured pens, whiteboard paper, tennis balls, and a quality rugby ball as a potential prize to use throughout the session. But I was in for quite a surprise...</p> <p>When I met with the leadership team on the first evening of the camp to discuss how they wanted to use their scheduled ‘Group Session’ slot (an evening slot of two hours halfway through the camp) - they offered a completely different perspective and approach. The group suggested that they would prefer to go off-site in smaller groups to go to a coffee shop where they could discuss the values that were proposed and garner people's opinions around them.</p>
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	<p><i>Feelings</i></p> <p>Overall, I was pleasantly surprised by the perspective and approach the leadership group suggested. They had proposed a different approach, taking ownership over their own style of leadership and influence. I was a little embarrassed (in my own mind) that I had ‘run away’ with the idea of an all-singing-and-dancing evening session, which was clearly far from what the players had in mind. It was a good indication that the group had preferences for quieter conversation, small group working, and off-site meetings when possible. These were helpful lessons for me to learn about this group, which I could use later in the season when working with them again.</p> <p>To stabilize my response to the situation, I was quick to reference my own professional values around collaborative, pragmatic and client-led principles of practice. I also value life-long learning and this was another opportunity for that. I was curious to see what discussions could be had in the more informal setting of a coffee shop. And indeed, what the outcomes of this different approach would be. I felt supportive of the players desire to take ownership over the task, in their own way.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>I suppose my main reason for writing this reflection is simple, it was a great learning moment for me recognizing that there is often more than one way of approaching an outcome, and the strength of a group is to be open-minded to the ideas it can create.</p> <p>Specifically, this particular group of leaders have a preference towards introversion. This is true in as much as the group has completed Jungian based psychometrics which showed them to be preference to introversion, and in my observations with them, of the 6 players, only one is what you may traditionally describe as a ‘vocal leader’. This seemed to show out in their preference for doing discussion in smaller groups, where a richer quality of discussion could be held in a less publicly displayed manner, or at least in a quieter more discussion-based forum.</p> <p>The idea of going off site had never even occurred to me – so it was great to hear it from them. It would fulfill the purpose of our ‘brief: to communicate the values to the wider squad and seek to encourage their engagement with them. Likewise, it would double up as an opportunity for this new squad to spend some time together on the walk into town, including in itself and opportunity to get away from the training site and coaching staff for a few hours.</p>
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		<p>I am glad however that I had a strategy in mind for how the session might of ran <i>if</i> the players had of asked for a steer. That to my mind is my role in support of this group, to support them to develop their skills in engaging and influencing others. To that end, we agreed that each player would take one smaller group of players – and that that player would subsequently bring their groups thinking back to a ‘catch all’ meeting later that day. The players brought some really rich information back and nominated 1 player to communicate back to the coaches what had been discussed, including any points for further input from the coaches.</p> <p><i>What was good and bad about the experience?</i> Good: Learning from athletes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good: The opportunity to reflect on, make sense of and learn from my own approach to practice (Anderson et al., 2004; Cropley et al., 2010) - Good: The success of the values-based work with the players (which later became part of the team's identity and a helpful tool to reference behaviour and performance against) - Bad: I just need to make sure I strike a balance between doing a session my way or doing a session the way that works for the group. In the future I will do this by engaging one or two workshop members prior to the session whenever possible. <p><i>Conclusion + Action Plan</i> Overall, I think this was a good learning experience. I learnt about engaging groups in a values-based leadership initiative, about how to engage a group to find a suitable vehicle to achieve the end desired, and I reflected on my own approach to practice and how I could improve it in the future by engaging players early enough to ensure delivery fits their style and needs.</p>
Feb 18	Occasion: Reflection on a 1:1 case (JS aka Jon) – supporting an athlete through a significant life event	<p><i>Description</i> An athlete who I have been supporting at club level has made it into the international set up. I need to work out what the best approach is for providing a continued safe relationship for him, whilst also possibly helping the national coaches (and doctor) to understand what is going on for him. In essence, on writing this out, I believe I need to work out <i>who the client is</i> and what the boundaries of confidentiality and communication are. For example, some questions that jump to mind are:</p>

<p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>2.2 Plan consultancy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will Jon want the national coaches / staff to be made aware of his home-life issues? - Will Jon want his teammates to be made aware of his home-life issues? - Will Jon want to have to think about this when he's got other agendas on his mind - If Jon wants to keep our work together private, does that mean I don't communicate anything to the national coaches / staff? <p>Feelings</p> <p>There aren't any strong feelings around this, except that I just want to do what is right by Jon. I'm really glad for him that he has made the national squads and I know (from what we have discussed in sessions) that he and his family will be really proud of this and just want to make the most of it.</p> <p>I do have a feeling that communicating what is going on in Jon personal life would help the coaches understand him and possibly adjust their approach to his support accordingly. For example, to let him come in late to camp if he's helping with caring. That decision isn't mine though, its Jon and I can imagine him not wanting a fuss.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>A good thing here is that I'm thinking about this matter in advance. When I saw the squad lists, and Jon inclusion, it triggered this proactive reflection.</p> <p>A few challenges I'm facing are whether this is an unwanted distraction/ burden for Jon when he already has a lot on. For example, he has already said that he doesn't want to tell his club teammates as doesn't want a fuss – so should I take that as the same for England, or do I have a responsibility to check and ask as I'm sure the bridge might come at some point? In Keegans (2016) being a sport psych book, he talks about agreeing and updating expectations continuously so that nothing is lost in translation along the way – especially when crossing ethical bridges.</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Primarily this is all about a professional judgement call. To help answer it therefore I'm going to lean on my professional values and training. I know that upholding confidentiality is paramount, because that was promised to Jon. So starting with that point again if how I will approach the chat with him. I want him to understand that my primary focus is upholding the safety of our relationship for him. As such, I want to involve him in deciding how to address a possible issues forthcoming. That would fit</p>
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with my values of client-centered consulting. What does he want to do about this instance? As long as he knows my intentions (to support him in a professional manner) than hopefully we can agree an appropriate forward action.

Conclusion

Despite an awareness that Jon might not want to think about letting his national coaches + teammates know about his mum's poor health; I think it's appropriate for me to raise it with him so as to understand how he would like to approach it/cross the bridge.

The paramount thing is that I assure him of his confidentiality; if he would prefer not to tell anyone about it then I *absolutely will not* tell anyone anything about it. If they ask, I'll just say that I am working with Jon so can't discuss his personal circumstance.

I guess that raises questions around, will people say "oh, well what's the point in having a psychologist them" – so actually the key thing will be to say that I was supporting Jon before he became an England player and as such I won't be speaking about anything outside of his involvement with England rugby.

Action Plan

Raise this point with Jon when we are next together. Has he thought about his involvement with England and whether he would like to communicate with a coach or the doc about his home life? Has he considered the possible implications of doing or not doing that? Ensure we have a clear agreement so he is assured and confident in our relationship. If he asks you to act in a way which you don't feel you can make sense of, take it to supervision.

UPDATE: After meeting Jon and following his wish to not communicating his personal agendas to the England staff, they subsequently found out from Jon's club coach. That led to the England head coach pulling me aside during camp and asking if everything was ok with him. I asked the coach if he would respectfully allow me to speak with Jon before he and I continued the conversation – he seemed fine with that. I just felt it still wasn't right for me to break Jon confidentiality without his permission. Jon and I met and I made him aware that the Head coach, the doctor and likely some other coaches were now aware of his mums' illness. He was annoyed with his club coach at first, but he came to rationalise that his intentions were right and ultimately it was important for the coaches to

		<p>know, as if his mum was very unwell near to the world cup then it could/would affect his selection availability. The outcome was that Jon asked if I could speak with the coaches and medical team and explain that we had been working together a while, that he felt in a good place, and that in general he just wanted to be treated like any other player. I held that briefing chat with the coaches and med team, who were all very understanding and empathetic of Jon's needs. The England Doc has offered his support to both Jon and I, should we need it. With all parties now aware of the situation, my plan is to continue my support of Jon in our session time and continue upholding the bounds of confidentiality agreed at our first session (i.e. I'm not sharing anything with one, except my supervisor, unless Jon gives permission first).</p> <p>A meta reflection is that I could explain how confidentiality can be difficult for Psychs to the staff of programmes <i>before</i> such issues arise. Hopefully that way they might be more sympathetic/understanding at times when I say I can't answer certain questions or won't be disturbed when they see I didn't disclose information which later become 'public' knowledge. I guess this is one of those situations whereby although people understand a doctor can't talk about patients, they don't always get what a psychologist can and can't discuss. I feel I've acted professionally sound in this instance, I just need to do my bit to keep educating others around my role and some of the practices it upholds/entails.</p>
March 18	<p>Occasion: Reflection on a 1:1 case (JS) – supporting an athlete through a significant life event</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically 2.4 Conduct consultancy 2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p>	<p>Description Over the past month I have been engaging in reflective practice (self-directed and formal supervision) regarding strong feelings evoked supporting a client through his mother's terminal illness.</p> <p>Feelings It has been through supporting Jon that I've come to realize how big the loss of my parents will be for me. I come from a close, supportive, family and have a good relationship with both of my parents. I've been fortunate that they have always been in good health, yet this case made their mortality more prevalent and that evoked feelings of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A deep feeling of loss, for when they do pass away - Uncertainty as to what I would do - Worry that I'm not doing enough now (e.g. to see them often enough) - A few, lesser, worries around "I should be able to deal with this, not fall apart like a client!"

NB: I recognized that these thoughts and feelings might be perfectly normal, but I didn't want them to encroach on my work with Jon. The literature around countertransference suggests that its effects can be managed and even harnessed – as long as the practitioner takes active steps, such as seeking supervision and looking to identify, process and manage their emotions (Gelso, 2014; Winstone & Gervis, 2010).

Evaluation

From a critical perspective I could start by asking if this occurrence is a consequence of me taking on a case which might not fit the traditional 'sport psychology' remit. The obvious answer is yes. My emotions have risen as a result of this case, but I've reflected that me taking this case is still appropriate on the following grounds:

1. I carried out due diligence when considering the client's needs and my competency at the offset
2. The client is happy with the ongoing provision
3. The emotions I have experienced are unexpected, so I feel I can now only do my best to manage them (i.e. I didn't have a crystal ball!).
4. I feel these emotions are normal, so processing them is healthy – just like I am helping the client to do

To many extents it could be the case that I'm experiencing what Gelso (2014) calls "Therapist Reactions", which are not only normal – but expected. Practitioners are human after all too. That is something that I've come to accept through supervision (which is almost more like therapy at times at the minute)...my parents are human. I'm human. None of us are superhuman and don't need to pretend to be.

Analysis

Probably my biggest personal movement on all of this is that I've come to internalize and accept/appreciate how special people and time are. Our most special relationships are finite. I've come to accept therefore that the thought of losing that is stressful! Literally, bereavement is essentially a stress reaction, an attempt by our minds and bodies to deal with the perception of a threat to our well-being (Bonano, 2012). With Jon I've been reassuring him that like any stress reaction,

		<p>bereavement is not uniform or static - emotions can and will come and go. I'm really glad I took it all to supervision therefore, so that I could verbalize and process the emotions of my own.</p> <p>From a practical perspective, I've written out my worry's and seen which I can address practically (e.g. planning more time with mum as opposed to worrying about not seeing her enough) and which I need to approach/address psychologically (e.g. acceptance that a feeling of deep loss will very likely happen when they do pass, and that that is ok...there's no avoidance of that needed – I'll just work through the grief with the skills I have when it does come). In the meantime I want to focus on making the most of the life and time I do have with family and friends. I feel I've really moved back (or forward) into a position where I've processed my worries and re-organized into wanting to make the most of situations – and that includes supporting Jon. That drive never went in supporting him, but I'm glad that my focus on <i>how</i> to best support him can remain fully calibrated on his needs and not accidentally supporting my own.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>I think a key take away from this experience would be to keep aware of your emotions – and connected to your supervisor/support network if you feel they could impinge on delivery.</p> <p>Another idea could be to consider, <i>in advance</i>, the potential emotional burden of emotionally-charged cases so as to prepare for them. This reminds me a little bit of my counselling training, when there was debrief session after every shift because they knew the content could be emotionally charged. I guess I have processes in place to pick these things up and deal with them, it just might be worth being even more aware at the offset of a 'heavy' case of the potential for it to be extra emotive for the practitioner too.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>Having completed the exercise, "what is important for the client when you are in the room with them?" I feel I'm well prepared and focused for continuing to support Jon. Me and Steve have agreed to talk again in a fortnight to check in if any new emotions have arisen, and how my support of Jon has been going.</p>
April 18	Occasion: Team Consultancy – Worcestershire County Cricket Club (WCCC)	Description

<p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy</p> <p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p> <p>1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>WCCC were playing their first home game of the season, which the Manger and Head of SS+M thought would be a good opportunity for me to meet with the CEO and finalise the service agreement (if it was to happen).</p> <p>I spoke with the CEO on the phone the day prior (a Saturday) and agreed we would meet at 10am on the Sunday.</p> <p>The meeting with the CEO went well, in as much as we struck up an open and constructive conversation around the club’s desire for me to work with them, and that I would like to if the contract could remain flexible (in terms of number of days, etc). The outcome of the meeting was that Chimp Management would invoice the club for any full or half days of service and that these would be recorded on a time sheet. I agreed with the CEO that he, I and the Manager would find a time in the next fortnight to sit together and discuss the aims of the consultancy (a needs analysis of the club as such) at greater length. The CEO and Manager were happy with this suggestion.</p> <p>I was then asked by the Manager if I would like to stay around and watch an hour or two of cricket as the match was due to start. I agreed to and found myself in the players changing /viewing room watching the match.</p> <p>The teams early order collapsed rapidly, and I found myself in a very quiet changing room. From this point onwards, I was in a slightly uncomfortable position of not being clear (or wondering if others were clear) of exactly why I was in there! I stayed for an hour and left at midday as I had agreed with the manager. On driving home, I decided this reflection would be helpful for me ‘unpack’ the experience and any learnings.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Feelings wise, I was happy to secure a contract with the cricket club. My initial meetings with the management and player group had been enjoyable and aligned to my professional interests. I had been quite clear nonetheless that the CEO would have to meet the fees I had proposed, as I simply could not take the work on for any less given ChMx’s demand for my time in other areas of the business. Those fees were agreed which was really positive as it meant all parties would be happy and we could proceed with the relationship.</p> <p>In the changing room, I moved between feelings of curiosity (around what was happening, what was I seeing, what rituals are normal, etc) and feelings of mild discomfort (unsure of where to stand, mindful of my potential impact on others, mindful of how I was dressed in comparison to the others).</p>
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		<p>On a few occasions I felt it was right and appropriate to ask questions of players around general topics such as the different aspects of the scoreboard, the batting order, etc.</p> <p><i>Evaluation (good and bad)</i></p> <p>On first reflection, I have mixed evaluations of the day. Overall, its positive that it’s another step forward in growing a working relationship with the club. I clearly had a constructive meeting with the CEO which is positive.</p> <p>I drove away with some consciousness of worry about the standard of the team, however. WCCC has already lost their opening two games, and on driving away from the ground they were putting in a very low first innings against their follow newly promoted club (Notts). This had my Chimp agitating slightly around “Is this a good idea for your career associating with a club that might not be any good?”, “Do you need this work load?”, and “Wow that changing room was quiet – you’ve got a lot of work to do here!”. I’ve come to understand emotional thinking such as this to be a normal function of human functioning however, and not something that I dwell overly on. Instead, I chose to answer each of these concerns logically or philosophically, as follows...</p> <p><i>Analysis (make sense of what happened)</i></p> <p>Chimps concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) “Is this a good idea for your career associating with a club that might not be any good?”. Answer: I have a philosophy and world view, which is that it is my ambition to support people to be as good as they can be. Whether that be the best person, or best player. I <i>do not</i> work only to win things. As such, a contract like WCCC is as valid to my philosophy of practice as a contract with England Rugby is. I am also aware that many contracts with ‘successful’ teams are rarely what they appear on the outside and that often you will get more time to support people and culture in clubs that <i>actively want you there</i> than clubs that can afford to ‘just have you there’. I was happy therefore to accept that I want to be a part of WCCC and their efforts to be the best people, players and club they can be. 2) “Do you need this workload?”. Answer: In truth I am concerned that my ‘lifeload’ (professional: RFU, PhD, WCCC, + Personal: health and relationships) can feel quite loaded at times. It would be easy for me to say no to the Cricket role and just focus on the RFU role and PhD work wise. I am drawn back to the ‘start with <i>why</i>’ question therefore...<i>why</i> take on WCCC. To me, I think it offers a ‘clean’ contract to use in relation to my consultancy
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		<p>development re PhD, with transparency from day 1 that I may use it/parts of it in my write ups. I hope it could also build to be a steady contract in a club <i>local</i> to me (the RFU role certainly has lots of travel, as would ‘other’ days with ChMx e.g. non-sport talks globally). As such, I have been clear and upfront in contracting this work with WCCC that I can only offer them 15-20 days maximum this year, meaning that both parties (WCCC + ChMx i.e. me) are clear of the time commitment. I will review this status regularly and be proactive to share any concerns with WCCC and in Supervision.</p> <p>3) “Wow that changing room was quiet – you’ve got a lot of work to do here!”. It’s true that I did drive away from the ground with lots of early thoughts and theories (formulations of sorts) of what I had seen at the Cricket club that day. I reassured myself that those conversations could and likely would be part of the service I would provide the club moving forward. Working <i>with</i> them to explore areas of interests and potential growth. I decided not to see this as a ‘burden’ therefore, but instead as a challenge. As my role.</p> <p>Conclusion / headlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pleased to have established a relationship with the Captain, Manager and CEO of WCCC (Core Consultancy Competency 2.1; 2.3) - Reflected on my own emotions and thoughts following an incidence of immersion into the sport - Happy that I am progressing towards a more thorough needs analysis and case formulation over the coming weeks. <p>Action Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share this reflection with Martin in supervision. Ask for feedback on the experience and entry.
June 18	<p>Occasion: U20 Rugby World Cup Beziers, France (3 weeks consultancy)</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Over a period of 3 weeks I consulted for England Rugby U20s during the U20 Rugby World Cup in Beziers, France. I travelled out to join the team for the final 2 weeks of the competition, having first consulted remotely (via message, calls and video calls) upon player request.</p> <p>Key reflections:</p>

	<p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p>	<p>Factual ‘positives’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good feedback from players and coaches around the availability and provision of psych at the competition - Uptake of Psych support (formal and informal) from both NPP and Non-NPP players - Uptake of support from SS+M staff - Good to experience the competition for the first time, so I could look to improve on factors for the future (e.g. mental health first aid or equivalent into the yearly programme for the players and staff; closer integration with the Team Doc / med team; greater inclusion of general psychology ‘education’ to develop players understanding in the competitive season) - Good to bolster relationships with the coaching and playing team. - Doing the media interview (CNN) was a great learning experience! (i.e. I didn’t feel all that comfortable that I ‘knew what to share’, but the edit came out good – so maybes it was more ‘fear of the unknown’ rather than imposter syndrome) <p>Factual ‘negatives’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognised that the ‘centralisation’ of knowledge on a player (e.g. coach, psych, doc, team manager) isn’t very well managed to get the best possible outcome (e.g. player rooming, important background information, etc) - Felt a little isolated at times, like I might be judged by staff for not seemingly ‘doing much’. <p>Feelings</p> <p>Really enjoyed the experience overall.</p> <p>Some feelings of: “do I really want to do this job forever”, “Am I really cut out to do this role?” throughout the trip which I have evaluated as follows...</p> <p>Evaluation (good and bad)</p> <p>This trip offered some good learning experiences around team dynamics and human interaction over a relatively intense and pro-longed period. It was interesting to observe the different personalities of squad play out to their own strengths through the trip, and that reminded me of the importance of having and embracing diversity in a team.</p>
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	<p>I felt a few times that my contribution to the tour was significant enough to warrant my attendance, in particular with reference to support BC and JH through their learning curves and in support the manager as a sounding board for various challenges and considerations throughout the camp.</p> <p>On the agenda of the few nagging thoughts I had, I understand that these worries are quite normal (Tod & Anderson, 2005) and are there to help me to find appropriate answers/actions. With the ‘do I want to do this role forever’, that is likely more a reflection of the time I have now spent away with Teams at international competition and the natural clash that can have with the desire to stay home and invest in personal relationships. I’ve accepted that this is part of the contract I signed up to for 2 years however, and that I am really enjoying the experience overall – so for now I will crack on and can review my desire to stay active as a travelling sport psych, or not, at the end of the contract.</p> <p>On the second concern, “Am I really cut out to do this”, I remember that thought occurring in reference to an incident where the S&C coach I was rooming with was super hyped up for the semi-final, whilst I felt completely calm and relatively indifferent in honesty! I remember thinking “am I really cut out for this, if I don’t ‘care’ are much as X”. I reflected in the moment that I do care about the players and programme and that me not being overtly buzzing about the game didn’t mean that I don’t. I just have quite a grounded perspective and approach when it comes to game day in sport. I ask myself, what can / will I do today to support others to be at their best? Of course, bringing energy is part of that...but not nervous energy to my mind. I like to remain neutral in order to remain available to players who may be experiencing a wide variety of thoughts and emotions. After reflecting therefore, I accepted that I do care about the team, but that different people show their passion in different ways. Mine would be to support the players as best as I could and to stay congruent to my own identity and values and to be authentic in my practice and approach.</p> <p><i>Analysis (make sense of what happened)</i></p> <p>Overall the experience was rich and enjoyable. A big difference in my practice this year (from previous) has been the change of always looking at what I’m doing, to instead who I am and how I interact with others. As Tod & Anderson (2005) has said, the sport psychologist themselves are a, if not <i>the</i>, ‘tool’ in the intervention. On this trip I used instances of consultancy and reflection to better acknowledge and assess my own personal qualities and how they position me in relation to my work as an SPC.</p>
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		<p>As Nesti (2004, 2010) has outlined, working on the front line of Sport isn't always plain sailing and can make you ask questions of yourself and your ability! On reflection I feel I did thrive in the JWC environment however and this was confirmed from coach and athlete feedback, but perhaps more importantly it was because I validated my own position through better recognising and appreciating my own values, virtues and beliefs as a practitioner (Chandler, Eubank, Nesti & Cable, 2014).</p> <p>Conclusion and Action Points</p> <p>A great learning experience, with some helpful pointers on 3 levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Work hard and make sure you invest time in the relationships before and during competition windows 2) Reference your virtues, values and actions before looking to external feedback when trying to assess 'how you are doing'. Take confidence that you're getting good stakeholder feedback too! 3) Work collaboratively the MDT to ensure the recording and information sharing protocols and resources are reviewed and improved for 2019.
July 18	<p>Occasion: Reflection on a 1:1 case (JS aka Jon) – supporting an athlete through a significant life event</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Jon mum passed away last week. I first heard the news from a coach who called me on Sunday. He had just called Jon to talk about rugby, at which point Jon shared the news that his mum had passed on the Saturday. The coach had rung me straight after, so I was left with a few decisions after the call...</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Obviously, I was sad for Jon and his family, although I did also have awareness that Jon had wanted his mother's suffering to end for a while. The thing I wasn't really sure about was whether to message him. ...would he be grateful for the sentiment? Or possibly unhappy the coach had shared the news? It was Sunday and we were all due into rugby camp that night. Would he be coming now? Could I help him around communicating with the coaches to get a few days breathing space for example?</p> <p>I figured that there's no textbook for a decision like that and you can ultimately only go with what feels right based on your values and best intentions. I opted to message Jon and just let him know that I'd heard about his mother's passing and that I was there to support him in any way. He replied almost immediately and was really appreciative of me making contact – I'm glad I did it for sure! Keeping with my philosophy I let him lead the conversation and asked a few questions to help him think out</p>

		<p>some things (e.g. would he like some breathing space from rugby?). He did want some space, but that meant telling the coaches and likely players would ask where he was. We chatted it all through and came to a plan.</p> <p>Evaluation I guess a good thing here was the relationship Jon and I had formed enabled me to judge his support at this difficult time. Texting him on the Sunday seemed right and proved to be. To be honest, even if he hadn't have replied I would still have felt it was the right thing to do to message him. The use of text was also really helpful, but it gave me time to construct balanced messages and the 'physical' space for people to take their time and process communication rather than the rapidity of exchange from a spoken conversation. Clearly, I would always text a client after a big loss or other life issue – but Jon had often messaged me, so I knew it was the right approach for him. That's something I'll continue to do in the future with clients...check the medium/approach they most favor for communication.</p> <p>Analysis There doesn't feel like much analysis is to be done right now on this. It's kind of is what it is. Writing this reflection has helped me to recognize that my values and core beliefs acted as a moral compass on how to approach this situation, which soon turned to a professional approach to supporting the athlete's needs. I feel organized and ok with Jon mum's loss, which is how I want to be after the work Steve and I have done. I'm ready to keep supporting him this week in camp.</p> <p>Conclusion None specific. Just an instance where supporting an athlete was about following your instinct (built through the relationship) rather than a textbook.</p> <p>Action Plan N/A.</p>
July 18	Occasion: End of year 1 in contract with the RFU. Review and Meta reflection of the delivery year, learnings, and	<p>Description End of year service review which I called for with the RFU. My line manager had not asked for a review meeting, so I called for one. This meeting was taking place in a climate/context which included the RFU making mass scale redundancies across the performance department.</p>

<p>communicating evaluations with the sport.</p> <p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p> <p>4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological and other applications and developments</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p> <p>4.5 Provide feedback to clients</p>	<p>Feelings</p> <p>The first thing to reflect upon is the fact that due to Steve’s (Chimp Management) back and reassurances I was in no way worried about the ‘what if I get sacked here’ implications of the meeting. Clearly, I think it would have been quite different I were a FT employee and that in its own right is food for thought on the value of working for Chimp Management and not as a self-employed contractor.</p> <p>Instead I focused my thoughts and energy therefore on what level of information Dean (my LM at the RFU) would want and what would be helpful in terms of framing the contract for the next year (if it were to continue).</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>I’m really glad that I took to lead to create the review and planning meeting and to provide the resources and impetus to make it happen. Evaluation is a key part of consultancy (Keegan, 2016) as, I believe, is being clear of where you stand and what you have and will be assessed on in your role.</p> <p>The meeting took place in a relatively informal setting (a coffee shop) which was mutually agreed between myself and Dean, and which I think we right because the meeting didn’t need a formal setting. If it were to be the end, then there would be no love lost and I’m sure we would have had the same chat as we did with the contract going ahead. We discussed the service priorities and outcomes I had shared in the summary document, all of which Dean was happy with, and we discussed and agreed the priorities for the year ahead. I was quite happy for Dean to take the main lead on outlining these priorities (he pays for the contract after all!), but I think the prep I had done and provided him meant that our ideas were closely aligned and nothing ‘left field’ emerged from the review.</p> <p>Analysis and Conclusion</p> <p>In summary, I’m really pleased that I took the proactive step to call the review meeting and clarify the RFUs position and my contract status, objectives and attainment. It could sometimes seem easier to ‘sit tight’ and wait for issues to pass or come to you, but I don’t agree with that approach as a general rule. I think being proactive and responsible to drive your own work agenda and review is appropriate and necessary in sport psychology consulting.</p>
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		<p>I also believe that there is an essential importance to forming, maintaining and investing in good relationships. In this instance, it was maintaining my relationship (and contact) with Dean – something which I know from wider reading is an essential part of effective and competent practice! (Keegan, 2016).</p> <p>Finally, I remain really grateful to have support and (relative) security in my employment with Chimp Management. It’s so great to have that backing, which I believe enables me to give my all to a contract without fear of what the implications on my employment might be if I chose to say/do or not say/do something within its delivery. In this instance however, I feel chuffed that the RFU contract in its own right has been acknowledged as a great success in year one and we now have a plan to make the most of it in year 2.</p>
Sept 18	<p>Occasion: National Performance Programme Recce: Homeless Hostel, London Westminster. Subject: The experience, the opportunities and the actions related to the day, forthcoming event and Programme as a whole.</p> <p>2.2 Plan consultancy 1.2 Contribute to the continuing development of self as a professional applied psychologist</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Part of a 4-person recce team to visit The Passage, a charity with a mission to provide resources which encourage, inspire and challenge homeless people to transform their lives. The multi-site charity is the proposed partner-host for the next experiential learning camp for the NPP group: Camp 3 - ‘Doing it for Real’.</p> <p>The visit was insightful to the humbling and undoubtedly challenging mission of the Passage. The center, people and problems are all very real, and visible. The challenge for me, Patrick and Guy is to continue to support a rich learning experience, which Dean eloquently describes as “helping the best young talent grow in ways which only life experience can give you, but which they won’t likely get/have due to their talent and the environments that talent places them in”.</p> <p>In essence, the NPP is about helping the person grow and in turn helping them be a more rounded, developed, rugby player.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intimidated: when walking through the corridors! However, ‘safety in numbers’ of walking with Dean et al ...gave me insight as to why the U18s are like this when entering England rugby environments.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspired: when looking at the people ‘doing their bit’ and not always seemingly ‘qualified’ in a classic sense (many if not most are volunteers), but their genuine intent to care just shines through. - Confusion: what is the right balance between giving experiences which plant seeds of growth or in their own right are helping develop our young players, VS, ‘traditional’ skill/knowledge development initiatives (which feel slightly more ‘measurable’ because you could do knowledge remember or skill transfer testing). - Overburdened: not by this project, as it is undoubtedly my lead responsibility as far as DR and the RFU go and say. However, there is also the Psych Framework, Psych Department and 1:1 work – just for the RFU. Then there is Fortress, PhD, 1:1s, Spotlight training (tomorrow) and personal life (mum & dads’ separation, H, etc...). - Excited: It’s going to be a hell of an experience, and I’ve got no doubt me and the lads will learn plenty from it! <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>Overall the experience was valuable, and notably so on a few levels:</p> <p>First, it made me appreciate the virtue of conducting a thorough assessment <i>in person</i> of a venue / situation prior to committing to action in/with it. Experiencing the people and their environment (physical and psychological) bought the opportunities and challenges to life. Sometimes some of the support I can offer to athletes over Skype doesn’t have that rich contextual information, although I believe there are pros and cons to that such as having an ‘informed’ opinion vs being detached enough to guide the person to explore <i>their</i> opinion.</p> <p>Second, the visit made me and DR reflect that we need a learning framework which doesn’t guide what players ‘should’ be experiencing, thinking, doing, etc...but which helps them to capture and advance their own awareness and learning. It led me to think of Humanistic schools of psychology that would support, but not direct, the growth and the individual; identity work + theory; the values-based foundations of Acceptance-Commitment approaches to therapy; the belief-emotion-behavior</p>
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interplay of CB approaches to human development; and, Steve Peters' Stone of Life which promotes people developing psychological and emotional growth and stability through the promotion of working with reality, values and perspective. I'm going to reflect on the kind of resource that would assist the athlete and coaches both in and away from these learning experiences.

Third, and perhaps most importantly to me, the experience was humbling. It put my life, and the work I cover in professional sport in perspective. The privilege of what I have, and the relative insignificance of Sport (in honesty!) when in comparison to the challenges and efforts of some others. It reminded me that unless you get outside of the 'bubble' of sport, then no wonder scoring that drop goal or winning that sprint is 'so' important. It really is, because you haven't seen or felt anything different. I'm not detracting from the ambition, desire, or dedication it's going to need a top athlete to have. But it has made me question if having more perspective will be helpful or unhelpful in making athletes better?? To one degree it could help ground athletes – a 'stabilising reference point' as Prof Peters would say. But what if it's the truly driven ones who win? What if saying "ah well, it's really not that important compared to what those guys are facing" means the athletes lose some of their edge?

Analysis

With regard to better understanding how I can have impact in this instance I am going to work with DR to better understand his definitions of success. This is because I'm pulled between providing a 'measurable intervention' (e.g. knowledge / skill transfer) or supporting an experiential learning experience with a client-centered reflection to help them 'making sense' of what they experience.

In relation to point 3 of my evaluations, I have reflected that it is not my position to tell another person what to think, feel or do. My professional philosophy center's around supporting others to get the best out of themselves and others – whatever *they* define that to be. If the athletes have an experience so profound that it changes their worldview and perspective on sport, then it will be their own experience, learning and discretion. I can offer them support to explore their feelings, the beliefs (new and old) and to decide how it relates to their sport and the efforts they believe they need to put in to be successful.

With regard to the feelings of being overburdened, my current impression is that this is a pinch point in responsibilities, but worth monitoring to avoid any risk of chronic stress. I will take the point to supervision too for discussion and guidance.

		<p>Conclusion</p> <p>I have considered if I should have spoken with DR prior to the recce to better establish his expectations <i>before</i> the day. I'm reflective however that neither of us knew what to expect, so we both agreed to go with an open mind. The follow up will now be important, as that is my chance to better gage his reflections and offer my own.</p> <p>I'm also excited to look into a learning and development framework which could aid the experience and outcomes for all involved.</p> <p>I will take this reflection and the emotional components to supervision to unpack them further and search for any blind spots.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take the feelings aspects of this reflection to supervision. - Confirm the 'definitions of success' for this intervention with the key stakeholders. - Begin work on a learning and development framework
Oct 18	<p>Occasion: England Rugby Development Camp - conducting a brief pitch-side consultation, using my internal framework.</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy</p> <p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>On arrival to the training venue of the rugby session, the squad physiotherapist pulled me aside and mentioned that a player (pseudonym) 'Andy' might benefit from 'talking with me'. Just as the physio was about to explain their rational for the approach, the Head Coach of the squad approached me with Andy (who was not in training clothing, so I assumed was sitting out of the session) and said "Robbie, would you mind if I leave you with Andy, I'm sure you two could help each other". I assessed the situation instinctively (mindful that I wasn't clear if Andy himself wanted any of this attention) and responded: "sure, it would be great to get to know Andy better. Why don't we go for a walk round the pitch whilst the session is on?".</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>My initial feelings were of sympathy for Andy. Whilst I couldn't be sure of his autonomy of being 'presented' to me, I was mindful that he didn't know me prior to this engagement and as such might have reservations around what was going to take place if we did talk.</p>

I also felt aware that the Head Coach, who was new to their role, might have approached the situation differently. Perhaps by having spoken with me first to explain the context of the situation and how best to proceed. I have consequently reflected however that I was not aware of what had already been said or who had even initiated the request. For example, it could be the case that Andy asked to speak with me but had explained to the coach that he would appreciate an introduction. I felt the important thing therefore was to give Andy reassurance, which I aimed to do by offering a safe and achievable target: just ‘getting to know each other’ on a walk round the pitch.

Evaluation

What was good and bad about the experience? (link to literature)

On the walk around the pitch I had the opportunity to put many of the components of consultancy, which I have internalized through rehearsal/repetition, into practice. For example, I thought it would be helpful to explain to Andy what we might do on our walk around the pitch i.e. to just talk things out, to share some experiences, what’s happening, and even some ideas – but all with no obligations – and all with total confidentiality. I explained my role and background (e.g. sport psych training and my role within England Rugby) so as Andy understood I was impartial in things like selection, and that my only role and interest was to help players be at their best – both on and off the field. I felt this approach was very constructive as I could see Andy relax from understanding my agenda here would only be to hear him out and support him (where I could) and in total confidence.

From there on I invited Andy to share his story. What was going on for him? At this point I employed my listening skills. Seeking to understand, acknowledge and empathize with Andy experience. We conducted this part of the consultation on a Subs Bench on the far side of the pitch from where training was happening, which offered me the chance to sit alongside Andy, in a non-threatening but close proximity – similar to that I would aspire to create in a consulting room.

After checking back with Andy that I was hearing his story and his challenges appropriately, I explored if Andy had sought support in the past...from a psychologist, counsellor or other support. I remember thinking vividly at this time that it was as if I was on autopilot, working through a mental model of how the consultation could flow – not so rigidly that it was robotic or unauthentic, but instead more like it was a state of flow – where options or avenues were presenting themselves as we worked our way through Andy needs and aspirations.

		<p>Consequently, we arrived at a clear and personal picture of Andy situation, his challenges, his supports and some of the needs he appeared to be presenting. I was aware that Andy did not fall under the remit of the athletes I can provide extended support to within that particular squad (due to contractual terms pre-agreed) and so we moved to tangible actions Andy could consider and a follow up approach (a communication email) he could send me in due course.</p> <p>We drew the consultation to a close with the opportunity for Andy to ask as many questions as he liked. There were several which he raised, which suggested to me that Andy had really bought into our working alliance in that moment. On exhaustion of his questions, Andy was thankful and appreciative of our time together. And to be honest, I felt really positive about the interaction and very grateful about his time, honesty and engagement too.</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>I think this was a great example of the “brief intervention unique to sport psychology” (Giges & Petitpas, 2000). This was truly pitch side, authentically raw, in the moment, no pre-warning and rife with risk (in terms of appropriate contracting, implications for the client and me, etc.).</p> <p>I felt able to take control of the situation however, in as much as influencing what I could. The decision to aspire to make the client feel comfortable, listened to and helped (if possible) we my foundation stones – and a clear bedrock of my consulting philosophy. Helpful to reflect on and reinforce that message again even when writing this reflection.</p> <p>I can see there could be benefit of finding an appropriate time and way of exploring with the staff of the programme how best to make an approach for me to talk with an athlete. I don’t think it’s necessary in this instance for example to challenge the Head Coach on how or why is presented Andy to me as he did. The reality is the introduction achieved an end which Andy and I were satisfied with. See actions points below for 1 action in this regard.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>This experience and subsequent reflection have demonstrated development in my practice on a few fronts.</p> <p>First, I feel my ability to handle a case which is presented to me ‘immediately’ has improved through the development of my consulting philosophy and approach. I am much more cognizant of the ‘nuts and bolts’ of consulting since partaking my PhD programme.</p> <p>Second, because I felt comfortable with how to approach a consultation such as this, I felt I was more able to give myself (attention, authenticity, no fear) to the session. I can imagine how I might have</p>
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		<p>reacted to a situation such as this in past, with a feel of ‘the rabbit in the headlights’ or unhelpful emotions around frustration or unhappiness about being put into the situation (though now I’m much more clear and comfortable that those are the exact situations I am training to be in!)</p> <p>Thirdly, due to this clarity and resultant composure, I found myself less judgmental and more reflective/acceptant of the context around the consultation e.g. the way the consultancy was initiated, the agendas and potential sub-contexts at play. This has enabled me to maintain working relationships with all parties involved (athlete, coach, physio) and also to maintain my integrity and professional standards in the process.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The foundations of ensuring the client is reassured, listened to and helped (wherever possible) would remain the same. - I will cover ‘when, what, why, and how to refer’ as a coach education piece within the Coach Development sessions I run for the RFU. - I would like to follow up with Andy and see if the session which ‘felt good’ to me, had any outcome impact for him. Though I recognize not all impact is immediate or even conscious.
Oct + Nov 2018	<p>Occasion: Delivery of performance psychology to staff of a hedge fund (Pseudonym: Fortress)</p> <p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy</p> <p>2.2 Plan consultancy</p> <p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>This was our first trip out to NYC. Steve's keynote really set the tone by outlining the neuroscientific principles of how the brain is structured and how it functions and how we would be helping them to apply such principles to situations they were wishing to understand and improve. From there onwards we held the first 1:1s (18 for me over 3 days) which focused on history taking, exploring key focuses of their work moving forward (needs analysis), and taking benchmarks.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I'll be honest and say I was pretty anxious in some regards about going into a new performance environment. For example, I wasn't 100% sure what the expectations of the clients would be of us as practitioners? Would we be able to apply the principles and processes I have learnt in my training to a different performance domain? If it didn't work out, what would it mean next? I did some really good self-reflective work on this in the weeks building up to the trip, and again on the plane journey out</p>

there. I focused on my intake and needs analysis processes and reasoned that these are ultimately just people (don't lose perspective!) and my processes should remain the same.

The idea of there being a terrible consequence if I didn't prove to be a good fit was of course emotional thinking, and with self-reassurance and a few shots of perspective (i.e. "I want to do this work, and I adult and can deal with consequences") really helped to settle me. I also shared these concerns and sentiment in supervision with Steve, where he gave me great reassurance that he wanted me to go in there and just enjoy the experience and do my best.

During all 18 of my one-to-one sessions I felt really attuned to the processes of the session. I don't mean overly absorbed in process however, as I felt I was able to be very present and listen and empathise/relate with clients. One recognition however was how tired I felt by the end of day one. Obviously, jetlag was playing its role in this, but I also feel that 6x1 hour 1:1s is probably too many for one day. I was certainly feeling pretty fried by the end of my sixth session!

One of the best feelings of the whole experience, however, was the buzz that I got each night when we held peer supervision session. I'll explore these more now in the evaluation section.

Evaluation

One of the great things about this experience was just to recognise that the principles of psychology consulting fit across domains. That is, establishing trust (e.g. confidentiality), collaborating to identify the grounds of the professional relationship (e.g. what is it that the client is working on? Needs analysis), formulate a plan and communicate this with the client (does it match their needs and expectations?). Having the chance to repeat a process across 18 cases in three days really helped to solidify my language (e.g. how I explained confidentiality) and general consulting processes (e.g. exploring background and context).

In one example, this was my first real opportunity to apply the principle of 'identifying a benchmark' as taught at our last chimp management training day. For some clients this meant taking confidence or happiness ratings (all done through subjective measures), whilst for others it related to their insight to human functioning (for example, "what are the characteristics of a good leader?"). Taking this kind of benchmark really helped people to identify where they were at this starting point and it gave us both good insights of the areas they might want to develop moving forward.

In a few cases it was not appropriate to be looking at benchmarks or a 'teaching' approach to consultancy. In these two or three cases it was entirely appropriate to just be present and listen to the

client. In particular one client seemed to be really struggling to cope with the demands of the environment and so the act of providing a nonjudgmental, empathetic ear, was the right approach in that consultancy.

The best part of this whole trip however was having the chance each evening to hold peer supervision sessions. In particular, it allowed us to talk through emotions from the day, highs and lows. We could then explore what had triggered such responses, unpacking experiences and discussing possible approaches if we were to face the same case again or for the next session with the same client. This form of real-time feedback is really rare in the sport psychology world in my experience, whereby often you are the lead practitioner in a sport. Of course, I can get instant feedback from formal supervision in the UK if I ask for it, but in this instance my peers were also consulting each day and were often coming across cases or instances of a similar nature. Utilising peer / social interactions like this has been noted as a significant contributing factor in sport psychologist's professional development (Tod, Marchant & Andersen, 2007). In fairness, I found that type of live feedback and real-time supervision was electrifying and really rich.

Analysis

Overall, I would say that this was a great learning experience. We had done good preparation as a team, so were clear of what needed to be achieved in each session whilst still supporting a client led formulation. The introduction of taking a benchmark seemed to fit well in the process and I honed my ability to make it part of a discovery-based question set rather than a dry objective measure.

From an observational perspective, I have learnt that culture of a non-sport high performance domain has many similarities to elite sport. For example, only a few talented people can perform at the level needed at the top and they need to work hard to stay at their best (e.g. constantly upskilling, managing themselves and their emotions/thinking, working well with others, mx rest and recovery, etc.). What was also interesting to see is that many of the issues faced by these performers are not unlike those of an athlete... Confidence in the face of setbacks, unsure of whether to change their technique/approach, unsure of their security in their role, stepping up to be a leader when previously they were just a highly talented/driven 'player'.

Moving forward, I think a really important thing will be to continue proactive preparation for these very intense delivery periods. In particular, I think getting all of my session summary sheets filled out in advance (obviously not the session content, but all of the name and date aspects) could

		<p>really help me to use the window between sessions. I also feel that supervision each evening is invaluable but should be capped at one hour over dinner. The reason for that is I think if you are not careful our energy and excitement/interest could have us talking about cases all day and all night - but we need some downtime to unload and recoup.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>I'm not sure I would have done much differently about this first trip. I feel we did great prep as a company, looking at good working practices and making sure we were all in a good place and personally ready to enter the sessions with our chimps well boxed.</p> <p>There after we really supported each other in the evening, giving good listening and feedback sessions as appropriate. I'm going to take a few cases to supervision just to make sure that my formulation and action plan seems appropriate to what presented on the day, for example with the client of a very low mood / possible depression. I will also circulate an email feeding back my reflections to the rest of the team, including the suggestion that evening peer supervision is brilliant but should be time limited to protect some recovery space.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep preparing well in advance for these visits (i.e. session summary sheets, read all client notes, take any issues to supervision as standard) - Communicate with the team around what has worked this time (give and gather ideas), including a suggestion that we limit peer supervision to one hour over dinner to give us all some recovery time (That might just be me of course, so let's see what the others say!)
Dec 2018	<p>Occasion: Service quality & Work-life balance audit</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Aware of the contract review protocol I had arranged with England Rugby, I set time aside in December to review my delivery in 2018 with them. My primary focus, as per the terms of the contract, was on my provision to the NPP players selected by the organization. I had sought feedback from NPP players around how they had found psychology support in 2018, inviting feedback for, amongst other things, what we should 'keep, stop, start' doing in 2019. The feedback was collected via an (optionally anonymized) survey monkey, which the majority of the 24 NPP players responded to and on the whole waived anonymity – a sign (I believe) of the open and constructive relationships we have established with one another.</p>

		<p>The feedback was positive towards the camps we had held throughout the year, and to my availability to them as individuals both in and away from international duty. No feedback was provided around ‘stopping’ practice behaviours (an indication that what had been offered had been appreciated, or at least not disliked!), however a few players did ask for me to start offering video call session if possible.</p> <p><i>Feelings</i></p> <p>In conjunction to the player requests for video call sessions, my December review of the RFU contract had raised my awareness that I had stopped enjoying it so much in recent months –primarily due to travel and general workload (e.g. RFU, Fortress, PhD, personal life, etc).</p> <p>I felt reassured from conversations I had held with my Line Manager at the RFU that he was happy with my delivery, and the athlete feedback bolstered that. A reality for me however, was that I felt stressed, like I was chasing my tail, and becoming overwhelmed. In Poczwardowski’s 2017 paper, he writes about the sport psychologist as the expert, performer, person and self-regulator. I was confident of the effort I was putting in at the RFU and the feedback I was getting was suggesting that the ‘expert’ and ‘performer’ parts of my self-in-role were going ok – but I felt I was beginning to erode my energy and enjoyment as a person. These things always hit most obviously for me when I can see a visual representation of them. It was seeing my calendar from Oct-April which hit home. There were almost continuous blocks of work, international travel, weekend competitions and of course – ongoing PhD writing (e.g. my SLR). I felt stressed, with little light at the end of the tunnel. But I did not feel helpless - I knew that no one could help me better than me. I reflected that I needed to self-regulate proactively or pay the price.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>No one wants to feel overwhelmed. So, whilst there was learning from this experience, my biggest learning is not to let your personal wellbeing and happiness becoming engulfed by work demands. McCormack, MacIntyre, O’Shea, Campbell, & Igou, (2015) and Waumsley et al., (2010) have both written about the importance of SPCs balancing work-life balance and personal growth / wellbeing as a vital components of career success and longevity.</p> <p>In my situation, the contracts wanted more and more, and I wasn’t sure I could sustain it.</p>
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The work I have done previously on my 'core self' and 'life force' (the way I see life and how I want to live it) gives me a good measure of if I'm being/living how I want to (e.g. enjoying life, enjoying new experiences, being empathetic, etc). Whilst I felt I was doing a good job at rugby, Fortress, and PhD, I also knew that I was losing energy in non-work activities and ultimately becoming worn down / chronically stressed.

Consequently, I took the action of having an honest and constructive conversation with my boss and taking ownership over my emotions and the fact I felt I was backing myself into a corner. Looking back, that degree of insight (into my ideal self) and self-awareness of how I was actually being / feeling, was likely a good example of Poczwardwoskis (2017) principle of self-regulation. Self-awareness and self-regulation don't always have to relate an acute event or stressor, I found it was also helpful to engage in self-awareness on more global scale (e.g. over life enjoyment in general). As such, in this instance I knew that I didn't want to, and possibly couldn't, keep 'ploughing on' with that work-life balance and recognized that it was my responsibility to address the issue, or at least to ask for help in addressing it.

Analysis

Reflecting back, my scheduled review of the RFU contract was positioned not only to assess how the work was going - and if I was meeting the client's expectations - but also, it was there to help me assess how I was doing.

The challenge of successfully balancing the many and varied demands placed on you as a practitioner has received attention in the ASP literature (e.g. Waumsley, Hemmings, & Payne, 2010); which generally reinforces the implications to practitioner wellbeing and the effectiveness of their service delivery as a consequence of a poor work-life balance.

To audit my situation on a more personal level, I completed a 'Role Pie' (a simple exercise is offered in Lindsay et al. 2007, p. 342) which really helped me see what needed to change where my calendar and feelings had only made me see that I needed to change things. In accordance with Role Theory (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005) I could see that I had too many conflicting roles going on at once – which was creating time and strain based conflicts. For example, there just wasn't enough time resource available to do all of the things I needed to do, let alone things I wanted to (such as spending more time with my mother during her divorce). My issue was that I felt I had hit what Waumsley et al described as a 'zero-sum' interpretation of role conflict: my investment

in one or two roles was using a disproportionate amount of my resources, thus diminishing capacity to invest in other roles (Senécal, Julien, & Guay, 2003).

Thankfully, social support from a supervisor has been identified as a mechanism for preventing or resolving work-life balance issues (Waumsely, et al, 2010). I certainly found this as the case. My conversation with Steve offered reassurances and an action plan for moving forward. Being heard, and offered his support, was such a relief. We identified that I had had honest intentions in working hard on all the tasks I had undertaken, but that ultimately, it was beyond my capacity.

For example, the time demands made by 2 of my contracts were each totalling around 30% more time than had been contracted. In practical terms for example, a two day a week contract was often a three-day week contract. Given that two of my contracts with two days a week, this meant I was often delivering six days a week - not including any time for PhD – or down time.

Steve and I agreed that I needed to address the balance, some of which we actioned contractually and some of which would be about me scheduling in down time – and learning to say ‘no’ more! Having my bosses backing in that regard was very empowering and I have been more able to respectfully decline work since that conversation. I know what the price is of not doing it now and I feel more comfortable explaining to people that I want to do my best for others but doing too much doesn’t enable me to do that.

Conclusion

In summary, it is my belief that good service delivery involves working diligently to help the client attain their desired outcomes, and this requires good physical and psychological health. My audit of my RFU contract made me realise that I was overstretched and jeopardising my health, happiness and performance.

Thankfully the acts of auditing performance and self-reflection/awareness had a protective influence in this case, helping me to see that I didn’t have the right balance and I needed to take action. My supervisors support was priceless in helping me understand that my intentions were good, my struggle was normal, but neither were helpful...or necessary!

The best part of all of this was how good I feel now my ‘role pie’ has been recalibrated. I feel I have more energy to give to each section and my quality is better therein.

		<p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct regular (4/8weekly) audits of my ‘role pie’ (I now like to call this my life pie) to ensure I am aware of the balance and maintaining a healthy calibration. Get better at noticing when you hit a 5/10 for stress, rather than an 8/10. - Hold regular supervision check-ins to communicate how I am finding my work-life balance, giving real examples (for extra accountability) of where I am upkeeping the balance (e.g. my happiness list) - Use the player feedback relating to ‘making more use of video call consultancies) to recalibrate some of my service delivery with the RFU. i.e. less time driving from club to club and more time consulting digitally. - Keep saying (respectfully) - no!
Jan 19	<p>Occasion: Mental health red flag for a Fortress case</p> <p>1.3 Respond to unpredictable contexts and events professionally and ethically</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Going to capture this whilst its fresh in my mind. Wendy (pseudonym) looked completely distracted in the group session today and was clearly not coping well with her homelife issues. I could see that she was really distant and not with the teaching / group-based content. I tried to catch her eye once or twice, but she didn’t really seem to want to connect. At the end of the session she asked Stephanie if they could go off for a chat. After some time (approx. 40mins) I left with the rest of the team as wasn’t sure how long Stephanie and Wendy would be. I was concerned for Wendy but wasn’t too sure what was going on so resolved to wait until I could hear from Stephanie. When Stephanie arrived back at the hotel about 1.5 hours later, we met up and she shared that Wendy ‘really isn’t in a good place’. Wendy had broken down in tears and offloaded a lot about her home-life stressors. She also mentioned feeling hopeless and suicidal expression (“I have even wondered if he’d be better off without me” - though no plans or verbalized intent according to Stephanie). Wendy had thanked Stephanie for the space to vent and agreed that (as it was getting late) Stephanie, her and I would meet the next morning to chat through her position and support.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I’m sad for Wendy that she is feeling so hopeless, although I can empathize that her current situation is tough at work and home. The important thing right now though is that she gets the appropriate care immediately on ongoing.</p>

I'm also a little unsure as to why she wanted to speak to Stephanie and not me. I know from our session work that one of her home-life issues relates to challenges in pregnancy so my gender + age could play a factor? Although to be honest on reflection I just feel it's good that she could talk to any of our team.

I'm a little bit concerned about the potential risk of self-harm tonight. Clearly this case is for referral – which we have already actioned to Prof Peters, but naturally your worry when someone feels that low/lost. I figure I can only work with and apply what I know for now, and that is that she finished her talk with Stephanie in a better place and has promised to come in tomorrow to talk further. The important thing for me tonight is to pick this up with Steve (as our medical supervisor), and if not then we'll look to refer this to the head of HR as per the agreed program/referral protocols.

Evaluation

NB: I'm writing this the day after yesterday's meeting between Wendy and Stephanie, having received word from Prof Peters last night, and having met with Wendy and Stephanie this morning. Its 17:31 now and I want to reflect upon and capture my evaluations whilst fresh in my mind.

The good news is that we received clear support and instruction from Prof Peters last night and held a constructive meeting with Wendy this AM.

From Steve the message was clear that we needed to formally advise Wendy to see her GP (something Stephanie had already done), but today we took it a step further by noting it in our formal minutes/notes and making sure Wendy knew we were recommending and noting the recommendation. That was good learning for me as it showed a clear but supportive way of saying “we consider this important”, but whilst also respecting her right not to take that advice and hence covering our backs professionally. We also asked about drugs and alcohol (on advice of Steve) and logged it in our records.

Asides these important and necessary professional steps, the meeting generally had a positive note. Wendy reported that talking the night before had been hugely cathartic and helpful for her. She recognized she had bottled things up too much in the month since I last saw her. That was good recognition for her (that talking helps/is essential for her), and good recognition for me/Chimp Management that certain support cases might need more access than currently contracted. We are going to follow that up as an action point with the client organization...can certain cases have more

access time? (e.g. once weekly for 6 weeks). Also, this has given me first-hand experience of consulting in the more 'rigid' confounds of 1 monthly meetings. We did say at the start of this program that it is not therapy. I'm also content that I spoke with Wendy early in our working relationship about whether she felt accessing additional support for her homelife issues would be helpful (e.g. some counselling). She had declined saying she wanted to focus on performance issues. Again, I'm just glad I have those things jotted in my session notes as reading them last night reminded me that I've done what I can within my remit

One reflection I have, however, is whether I should have just said early on "you seem to have a lot on, and this doesn't appear to fit my expertise/capacity (in terms of time). So I'm going to recommend you for a referral". When I shared the case with Steve at intake however, he was happy that there was no risk and that working with people to address the interplay of home and work life is what a performance psychologist will often do. I can't beat myself up therefore. Wendy and I have worked through a lot and she has reported it helpful along the way, opting to return voluntarily to our sessions. Yesterday appears to just be a day where things were on top of her (that's what she shared with us today) and that meant she blew off steam with the person at hand she felt most appropriate.

Analysis

I guess this has been a good 24hrs for recognizing the strength of working in a team. The most important thing is that Wendy got the support she needed yesterday (to vent) and has been given appropriate support and advice today. I'm meeting her tomorrow to follow up the reflection points we agreed and to sign off the paperwork before we return to the UK.

A particularly helpful thing in the last 24hrs was the process and people we have in place at ChMx. For example, being able to speak with Prof Peters was brilliant and necessary. In their writings about the development of practitioners, Rønnestad and Skovholt's (2003) emphasise the influence of professional elders and feedback from others (clients, peers, supervisors) in practitioners pivotal learning experiences and subsequent development. That was invaluable yesterday - having a medical professional on call. That said, if we couldn't have spoken with him then we had the plans in place to speak with Head of HR – and I'm really glad I pushed for clarity on that at the start of the programme (something I don't think I would have pushed as hard for if me and Leonie weren't mindful of the 'what if' questions that Stage 2 or equivalent really push you to think about). These procedures just took all guess work away from this situation which it is how should be.

With regard to how I feel I've managed myself over the past 24hrs – I'm pleased. Last night I was able to box my Chimp around concerns of 'why Stephanie and not me?', which turned out today to be what I had expected (gender) – PLUS, I settled straight down when I remembered it's just important Wendy accesses the help she needs, full stop. Today's meeting was a good chance to deliver a supportive session of active-listening and UAR, but with important professional questions and protocols built in as per the recommendations from Steve.

Conclusion

Working with undulant emotions and suicidal expression shouldn't be winced at or run away in my opinion. The important thing is that I work ethically and within my bounds of competence. In this instance I feel we had good people and processes in place to support that end and this client. There has been some great learning for me around how to approach and log the incident appropriately and legally which I will take forward.

Action Plan

Think this case was handled well in fairness. I'll await a review from David to ensure the notes are written up accordingly, but overall it seems a good learning experience.

The takeaways I have from Prof Peters supervision are:

- In any case where you feel that suicide risk is apparent, there needs to be formal exclusion from a qualified doctor on illness or risk. In the practical terms of this case, one way forward, since Wendy still wants to work with me, would be to ask her to go to her doctor and be assessed by them for any form of illness such as depression and for a formal suicide risk assessment, *as a condition for continuing to work with me*. This way I will adequately cover aspects of the case that I feel need suitable professional cover.
- In cases of suicidal expression, Steve explained that it is also important to take an alcohol and drug history because substance use can bring on ideas and thoughts at the same time as imparting judgment.
- Thirdly, unstable people quickly change depending on circumstances, for example what if Wendy's husband announces that he is leaving? ...So it is good to ask and record reasons why

		<p>she would not carry out self-harm and ensure that they would hold even in dire circumstances. Could I cover a risk agreement with her?</p> <p>In summary, Prof Peters is happy for me to continue on this case (stating it's an interesting case and a great one for learning as it continues to unravel), and that depending on my meeting with Wendy tomorrow I could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insist on formal exclusion from a qualified doctor on illness or risk - Explore Drug/alcohol history and use - for potential influence and judgment impairment under pressure - Explore valid and unshakeable reasons why they would not carry out a suicide or self-harm – recorded - Discuss a risk agreement (How she will approach any wobbles over the coming month. E.g. they agree that they will not do anything until they have talked with ...? So no voicemails, texts etc.)
Feb 19	<p>Occasion: mid-point delivery review of support for a Fortress case (Pseudonym: Wendy).</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>This was my final session with Wendy (Pseudonym) under the currently agreed contract (it may be extended, but we approached it as a final session in case it isn't). She reported being in a good place. She and her husband are getting along better, and she has decided to cease IVF for a while. I couldn't help feeling that she still has so much going on though, and that not much has really changed in or for her. I want to figure out what to do about those feelings to best serve her and myself moving forward.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I'm pleased that Wendy reports being in a better place with her husband. I'm also really pleased to see how much better she is than last month when she broke down with Stephanie and eluded to suicidal expression – her for, tears in session are not unusual, but the expression of suicidal thoughts was. I feel relieved she went to her GP and discussed her mental health and IVF – the former point more so to be honest. I agree with the doctor that she could do with some time off and TLC, I just hope she works her schedule to take it...but that's one of the concerns I have for Wendy...she is still super busy / over-loaded with work and it seems like her thinking and behavior isn't any different from our first few sessions – she's still more like the emu than the eagle with this stuff.</p>

		<p>Overall I feel I've done my job though. My formulation was to give her loads of UAR + TLC. To model a relationship in which she could feel safe and heard. I never expected to 'solve things' from the off, so I guess I just need to check-in with that reality now.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>What's been good about this case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm glad to have worked with Wendy. We've built a sincere working alliance and she's disclosed a lot along the way. There's been chance for her to disclose, vent, process, and decide on actions. - For me, it's been a good case to work with someone with a lot going on. Family, cultural, health, relationship, and performance issues have been raised in session. I've really executed the facilitative conditions in sessions and have been ready to explore practicalities/solutions when Wendy has invited me to do so. - Taking supervision throughout has been brilliant (e.g. how to help Wendy identify her challenges; How to approach suicidal expression). <p>What's been bad about this case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think the limit on consulting time (i.e. 4 x 1hr sessions over 4 months) means we were never going to get beyond building a relationship here. - It's often left me thinking post-session: wow there is a lot going on for Wendy...where will Wendy go next with this? - I can see how much pressure teams place on certain people, with little idea of what is really going on for them. Trouble is the person is often afraid to speak up as they don't want to be dropped / excluded, so actually they end up pressing on but poorly and hence people judge them anyway. I would have liked to have explored Wendy's perspective on that notion, but for 3 sessions (at the least) the most appropriate thing was to let her feel safe in our room and not to move too early to remove defenses which she hadn't asked me to do, and which I could work with her to build solid alternatives. - 1-hour sessions seemed to come and go made up of almost pure listening. If it wasn't for her thanking me at the end of every session, I really would have questioned (and still do a bit) – am I offering her anything here?
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Analysis

Writing this case out is helpful because it has already reminded me to look back at my formulation for this case. “Wendy has *a lot* going on and needs somewhere to let it out and be heard, understood and supported” that’s what I wrote. If I kept things simple – I can see I’ve done that to my best abilities and she has thanked me along the way.

Perhaps my biggest help with those though has been in reading Rønnestad & Skovholt (2003). Their work on practitioner development really struck a chord with me on a few levels. First, when reading about ‘The Beginning Student Phase’ of development I came across this quote:

“Compared to functioning at later phases of development, Norwegian therapists (Rønnestad & von der Lippe, 2001) reported more frequently to experience the following difficulties⁶: (a) Lacking in confidence that you can have a beneficial effect on a client, (b) Unsure how best to deal with a client, (c) In danger of losing control of the therapeutic situation to a client, (d) Distressed by the powerlessness to effect a client’s tragic life situation, (e) Troubled by moral or ethical issues that have arisen in your work with a client, (f) Irritated with a client who is actively blocking your efforts, (g) Guilty about having mishandled a critical situation with a client.

I was like...that’s me with this case!! Certainly points A, B (at times), and C. Not so much the others to be fair. Then I read the line...”Although some students feel competent throughout training, this is not the rule. Typically students feel threatened and anxious (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992b)”. That was my lightbulb moment. I smiled and it hit me...combined with my recognition that I was actually *doing and meeting* my intervention goals, this reading just really helped me place my current feelings, experience, learning, and reflections within my ‘bigger picture’ of personal and professional development. Prof Peters encouraged me to take this case on for my learning – and this reflection, and additional reading, and assimilation of thoughts, feelings and insights *is my learning*.

Its ok to feel anxious and curious about if I’m doing the right thing. They are helpful and (in accordance to the literature) *essential* reflections for a practitioner intent on developing and not stagnating (Andersen, Knowles & Gilbourne, 2004; Knowles et al., 2007; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003).

		<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Overall, I think I can take lot of positives from taking on, and reflecting upon, this case. If/when I were to take a complex case like this on again, I think it's best to just remind myself that you can only do so much in a limited course of work. My formulation should consider and show that. Supervisors can help me cross check the responsibility I am placing on myself/the intervention to that end. Equally, from my recent readings of Dr. Irvin Yalom I'm starting to realize that you can barely touch the surface of issues as complex as Wendy's in 12 sessions, let alone 4! The key thing is that I formulated a realistic plan and stuck to it – responding flexibly and ethically on route. The reason I have been threatening since, is more a consequence of my care for my client and aspirations to be the best practitioner I can - which I can now position as a healthy reflective interest rather than an unhelpful and disproportionate self-doubt. Besides reading about other young practitioners experiencing similar worries, my reading also showed me the importance of learning to draw a boundary about what can be done in consultancy and not carrying responsibility of 'over-spill' into my life.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>I believe this is covered under the conclusion section, but an essential for me is just to keep reading applied literature and case-studies to build my reference source and to continue to access expert insights and support from formal supervision.</p>
March 2019	<p>Occasion: Standing in for a Group Session Delivery, which received some critical feedback.</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy 2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p> <p>1.4 Understand organisational and systemic issues of relevance to the practice of applied psychologists 4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Conceptualised, designed and delivered a group session for a client as cover for Stephanie (a chimp colleague) who was on AL and meant to lead the session. Despite the session seeming to go well on the day (room engagement, good immediate feedback post-session from clients, positive formal observational feedback from Anna Waters) the contract lead emailed the next day to say she didn't think it 'hit the mark' and on a subsequently arranged feedback call said that it 'wasn't good enough and needed a complete revamp' both being rolled out a week later with a new group.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Quite a mix on this really. Probably best considered, (a) on the day; (b) after receiving some challenge; (c) after being told it wasn't good enough.</p>

	4.5 Provide feedback to clients	<p>So, on the day... I felt really positive about the delivery. I had engaged my colleagues at Chimp in identifying ideas; me and Dean had shared out sections of the workshop and co-created the content we got the room talking and engaging with the content throughout; and at the end of the session people stuck around to give praise and ask questions. It all felt pretty good! Dr Anna Waters had been in attendance that day to do a formal observation of me and Dean and the written and verbal feedback from her was good. We'd hit the mark in her eyes and to be honest I went home on the train pretty happy with it all!</p> <p>The day after, when the email came through from SR (the Clients Programme Lead), saying she had concerns and wanted to talk, I was a little taken aback. I welcome feedback though and see it as an important part of improving your delivery and meeting the client's needs. I was also aware that SR has a history of complaining about our delivery approach, despite being happy overall with how the programme is going and delighted with the feedback clients are giving via the anonymous survey forms. As such, I figured I just needed to speak with her and elicit exactly what the problem(s) are before getting too carried away. We spoke, she mentioned a few tweaks which I thought was great feedback and I was more than happy to do (e.g. set clearer session Aims + Objectives at the start and drop one activity which she didn't felt work). We ended the call and I felt relieved. "No panic!" I felt...some constructive feedback and changes to be made...</p> <p>For SR to then email the next day <i>demanding</i> an "urgent talk" with me and Stephanie (our Project lead) was a bit of a shock! Stephanie was on AL (the reason I had organized and lead delivery on this masterclass) and I felt sorry for her having to call in. I wasn't embarrassed at this point, as I still wasn't sure what had changed in SRs mind since talking the day before! Over a 3-way Skype Call it became apparent that 2 people had given anonymous feedback that the sessions was "okay" and "not as powerful as the previous 3 sessions". To be honest, I actually didn't think that feedback constituted an emergency phone call. But the facts stood – the client wasn't happy with what had been delivered. She considered it to have 'missed the standard' and needed completely re-writing.</p> <p>Stephanie was supportive of me after our call with SR. She reassured me that SR was often OTT with her feedback and micromanagement of our delivery, but that nonetheless we would need to revamp the content unless risk alienating the client and future opportunities.</p>
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	<p>I was let that day with a huge mix of emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frustration – at myself for ‘not getting it right’. - Hostility - towards SR for seemingly overreacting to a minority of negative feedback. - Embarrassment – that I hadn’t met the standard others in our team had already met - Embarrassed – that I could actually help out with the redesign as I was about to go into camp with Rugby, so felt like I was passing the buck - Pride – that I had gone in there and given it my best shot. I didn’t know this group Afterall. Stephanie had delivered to them throughout the programme and I had stepped in to cover her in the last session. - Concern – that I might have damaged my + ChM’s chances of continuing to deliver sessions and 1:1s with the organization. <p><i>Evaluation and Analysis</i></p> <p>A good thing about this experience is learning to take and use constructive feedback. I’ve been quite fortunate in most of my applied work to generally understand what a client wants from a group session and to meet those needs – not getting it right for once teaches you more than getting it right I think!! Ronnestad & Skovholt (2003) talk about the importance of therapist learning from a large variety of successes and failures over the years, and that the real growth comes from processing and integrating the learning from “blows to the ego” (to quote them directly) into yourself and practice development. In general, the ability to learn from setbacks and grow as a practitioner is what helps practitioners move through the recognized stages of practitioner growth (Skovholt & Jennings, 2004; Ronnestad & Skovholt, 2003).</p> <p>In terms of my learning from this instance, I’ve come to recognize and appreciate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I had failed to talk with / involve the client enough when designing the session. Tod (2017) states that a successful sport psychologist will ultimately be one who meets client’s expectations – and that regard I didn’t have their expectations clear enough, nor did I share how I planned to achieve them - Conceptual exercises like creating a development plan for an ‘avatar’ didn’t seem to work with this group. Whilst it appealed to me and was a helpful learning exercise when I did it on
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		<p>my mental health course, the feedback from SR was that it didn't make sense and felt childish. I have to take that feedback at face value – I certainly don't want to make people uncomfortable doing my exercises and in general this group have responded well to 'concrete facts' rather than enquiry or discovery-based learning. I'm happy to drop it and change it therefore and to take the learning on board for future sessions. That said, I will also keep the avatar exercise in my 'toolbox' as it might fit for other audiences or purposes in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I put a lot of pressure on the quality of the slides (Stephanie has pushed for this over the past 3 masterclasses), but I feel I was probably messing about with icing when the layers of the cake weren't that great!! My first point is probably the solution to this problem – but my reflection here is that I often do this in my written work too. I spend a LONG TIME writing reports because I'm focusing on good words and sentence structure – when really the story, key points and flow are ultimately important. What am I trying to say/show/do with my audiences? What will they think/feel/know at the end? What's important to them? For them? What do they want and need? All of these are questions I wish I'd spent more time on before the particulars of slide transfers and pictures etc! - I'm actually really happy with my self-reflection and self-management after all of this feedback. I remember a couple of months back at the team meeting when Steve was talking about receiving feedback as a mentor. How it could and likely would often be harsh (from a certain minority at least). I literally beamed a huge smile in the shower the other day when I set aside the time to ask myself: "What do I want to feel and think about this incident?". That's a question I've been reading from CBT based work – how do you want to think and feel? Don't just run with what the machine is giving you. I started thinking about wanting to see it as a success (because I had tried my best and that's what I base my success on); that I wanted feedback to improve (which I had received so couldn't now complain!); that I'm an adult and can deal with presenting poorly once or twice; and, that I can't be sure it was actually all that bad given feedback on the day was positive, Anna's observation said it was good, 2/3rds of the anonymous feedback said it was good, etc. I began to feel lighter / happier, but there was one blocker in the way...my thought, "but you've let the team down, they have to fix this now and you're going to look a plonker". This one needed some working through. First, yes – the team was going to have to work to change the session – and I was sorry for that. But I hadn't done it deliberately. I'd worked really hard – and it hadn't hit the mark. I figured I could and would
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		<p>apologies to the team. Then I considered how I would feel the roles were reversed, and I was one of them. I really would care!! I'd feel bad for Adam, Leonie, Ben, or Stephanie and I'd be happy to see what could be done. From their perspective I could see that SR is tough to please (we know that) <i>and</i> that I'd tried my best and probably not done a bad job. Above all – I remembered that I am an adult, I can apologise for the inconvenience and then hold my head high...I'm not a plonker and aren't going to keep beating myself up! ...and that was it. I genuinely haven't felt uncomfortable about it since. I've learnt lots about how to try and avoid such circumstances – but I've also learnt and reinforced good ways of dealing with them when they arise.</p> <p>Conclusion Glad the processes are set up to get multiple sources of feedback/evaluation from my delivery sessions. In this instance the primary feedback was that I hadn't met the mark, which I've reflected upon and taken away good learnings. On a broader sense I'm pleased that I can keep the event and feedback in perspective – learning on other sources of feedback (e.g. Annas formal observation) and my own internal processes for dealing with setbacks. I'm looking forward to delivering again with this client, with no hesitations!</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve the client in agreeing session aims + objectives - Bounce the 'flow' of a session off a colleague - Maintain the approach of seeking multiple sources and forms of feedback - Keep seeing feedback as constructive and managing any wobbles in confidence accordingly.
April 2019	<p>Occasion: Placement visit by Martin Eubank during my delivery at the U18s 6Nations Festival</p> <p>2.1 Assess requests for consultancy 2.2 Plan consultancy</p>	<p>Description This was one of those days in sport where you think “my God, what is going on??”. There is absolutely no doubt that I was stressed in the lead up to it, way beyond what I would want to be. I want to do this reflection therefore to see what I can observe about it and learn from it.</p> <p>The brief overview is that I was first asked by England Rugby to present group some 'psychology sessions' to each of the 6 International Teams at the U18 6 Nations Festival (a week-long festival during which England, Scotland, Wales, Italy, France, and Ireland play each other, with</p>

<p>2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients</p> <p>2.4 Conduct consultancy</p> <p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>additional off field activities such as social media training or psychology sessions are made available). In the original brief I was told it would be a 30-minute session for each team, with a translator on hand for the international teams.</p> <p>2 weeks before the event I was told by the organizer that due to scheduling and that they thought it would be a good chance for the players to mix and socialize, they would now be sending two teams to a one hour session (meaning for example, I would present to England and France for 1 hour, then Italy and Ireland for 1 hour, and so on).</p> <p>In addition to this challenge, I was set to have my placement visit my Martin Eubank on this day.</p> <p>I spent the 2 weeks I had working really hard to create a session that would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Meet the set objective of being: “informative and fun, with the change for players to mix” (b) Be relevant and appropriate for U18s year old’s (c) Work for people who don’t speak English as their first language (d) Actually be a sport psychology session – otherwise not great for my placement visit! <p>Needless to say (hopefully) that the challenge was quite tough, which I’ll speak about in the next section. But it wasn’t finished there...on the morning of the event (on route to the venue) I was informed that 2 teams would have to pull out due to a clash with triage/recovery (no one had figured the players might be a bit bashed up from the games the night before!). That meant two new teams would now merge (Wales and Italy), and the slide deck I had built for Wales and Ireland no longer worked (on titles and what not, but still not ideal). To round it off, England asked if I could use the time allocated to the first scheduled session (now cancelled) to meet two players instead.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>It’s funny really that even writing out that description makes me realise that this delivery was an uphill challenge. If circumstances change that much, there’s only so much you can do to stay on top of it – and your emotions! (...laugh or cry??).</p> <p>Humour aside, this gig was stressful. I remember sitting for long hours and LATE into the night trying to think of topics that would engage and audience of 17-year olds. Half of which wouldn’t speak English, and then of course there is the dynamic that they are actually rivals (often even more so at 17 when their identity is so encapsulated by their sport). I thought about that as a topic – identity, and how it manifests and plays out for/on them. My main worry kept</p>
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	<p>resurfacing/blocking me though...is that too complex for 17-year olds? And especially for 17-year olds who might not understand much of what you're saying. I had recurrent images of a room full of disengaged boys thinking "what the hell is going on here?" and subsequently, "what was the point in that session? ...wish I'd stayed in bed/recovery!"</p> <p>I wasn't frustrated with or pointing any blame at the organisers. In fairness to them they set a pretty open remit: "informative and fun, with the change for players to mix" isn't horrific. But in reality, I felt torn between whether to make the session purely about interaction, or whether there was room for giving insights too. To more I thought of ideas, the more confused or stressed I felt. It was like that shape-blocks game toddlers have, my ideas where a triangle and a square and the workshop brief seemed like a circle. Nothing was slotting into place.</p> <p>Eventually I reasoned that 'anything is better than nothing' (it had literally gotten that late in the day preparation wise) and I figured the best thing was to ask for help. I reached out to my supervisor, which was hugely helpful (practically and emotionally). We bounced ideas, many of which I had already had – but with some new insights and settling utterances from Steve. Through a medley of my ideas, Steve's ideas, ideas from the sessions I've watched this year at LJMU, and some ideas from other colleagues – I came to create a session. I felt so relieved.</p> <p>On the day the delivery went...really well! I'm saying that based on: (a) the feedback from the group (garnered through an anonymous feedback phone app), (b) my supervisors observational feedback, (c) the fact a whole team stayed back after the session to ask more questions (which I had invited, but hadn't expected quite such a engaged uptake), and (d) the fact I met my outcome objectives (people interacted, learnt, and seemed to have fun).</p> <p>By the end of the session I was really pleased that Id "pulled it off". I was also exhausted from the stress of the late night before and adrenaline within!</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>Trying to evaluate this session brings a few pointers to mind which just seem best listed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can do 'youth' sessions. I wasn't sure I could before this, and I by no means so it as my specialism – but this has boosted my confidence. <i>How</i> I set about creating them I've learnt a lot about, for example: ask for help sooner, consider but don't overplay what young people will or won't do, be yourself and bring your energy, tell your story or an interesting story,
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make the room safe, praise and reward/recognize effort. There's plenty more – but those really seemed to help me and the session work.

2. Success in a session which focuses on psychology and fun isn't about teach & test, it's about getting people to think. The best way to get people to think is to get them to reflect ask them questions. That's the advice / lightbulb my supervisor gave me. It's completely shifted my focus and lifted the pressure I put on myself. My session suddenly moved onto questions (which I could pop into google translate!) and sharing answers enabled interaction. I varied the questions between silly disclosures (e.g. which country would you like to play for if not your own), to more psychology focused (e.g. what is the biggest pressure you experience when playing international rugby?). Being able to speak, draw or act answers was an idea I got from a different colleague (who works with children with learning difficulties) – that brought great fun and energy into the session. All of that change came from moving the onus from direct instruction to enquiry-based learning/reflection and mutual sharing. It was a huge shift and lifted all blockages in developing the session.
3. The stress I experienced in the buildup to this session wasn't great. I can see it was out of proportion now and I was in in a total Chimp hijack. I even saved the video message I sent to my GF after the workshop which was like "I survived, it was great, I'm an idiot for stressing so much!". The truth is I let it build and didn't address the issue early enough – I didn't have a solid understanding of what success with a young group of people looks like and as such just kept circulating and jumping around ideas. I've recognized that I do this with writing reports too...I try and write things once, without a map. As a result, I spend a long time frozen with 'what next', 'what am I saying?', 'where does this fit?'. Supervision in research writing has been great to help me through that; supervision was great in a similar regard here.

Analysis

Making sense of all this I can see that I did what many developing sport psychologists do – super eager to help out, but aware of my limited knowledge (in this instance of working with adolescents) I started over thinking things and experiencing loads of apprehension, anxiety and self-doubt. I know this is normal, as I've read about it elsewhere in the literature (e.g. Owton, Bond, & Tod, 2014; Tod et al., 2009; Tonn & Harmison, 2004) but I think the important thing is to *learn from it* rather than to normalize it as 'just something that happens'. I certainly don't want experience that amount of stress

(and sleep deprivation from late nights at the computer!) for the rest of my career every time a new topic emerges.

The key learning points for me sit around remember that my role as a psychologist in a classroom is primarily to get people to think and I'm confident I have a whole array of methods to do that (e.g. from the 3is course, others reading and experiences). If I keep sight of that simple remit, then the pressure is off and I can set about being creative and enjoying the work. It's when unhelpful and unrealistic expectations creep in (e.g. "how can I make it a great session for everyone?") that my stress response will rise...it has to as I'm basing my success on something I can't control.

It was helpful to read Rønnestad & Skovholt (2013) this year and realise that mature practitioners' also experience anxiety and self-doubt when working in novel situations or with new clients. I guess the reality is that *I would expect that*. They are human, as am I. The key thing is 'how do they manage it?', or more importantly for me – 'how will I manage it?'. No doubt from this experience I recognised that asking for support earlier is one key way. Sometimes you can't see the wood through the trees, and our intentions to do our best for clients can naturally mean we push for high standards (Tod, 2017).

I don't think there's anything wrong with my pushing to create interesting, thought provoking, engaging group sessions. Why not set the bar high? My learning from this experience is, however, is don't let your own expectations become debilitating to your own efforts. Share responsibility *with* your learners. They are the ones there to think after all.

Conclusion

I've got no doubt this won't be the last session I ever experience offerings of self-doubt or anxiety. To care, is to feel. My biggest learning here however is to 'box smarter'. Instead of putting loads of nervous energy into not getting it wrong, recalibrate your focus on what 'getting it right' means. And if you can't work that out – lean on an external eye or opinion to help figure it out.

Action Plan

I've got a good mental plan now for dealing with things like this...Recognise (that I'm uncomfortable), Identify (what's making me uneasy), Solutions (what can I change?). If I'm still stumped, my fall back is to ask for help.

		<p>I could seek out more opportunities to work with youth groups to improve my knowledge, skill and confidence with them. To be honest, it's not a group I jump with joy about working with – so I'll reflect on that more myself as to whether I want to have it as part of my Professional Development plan next year. Afterall, if I am asked to work with youth groups I would like to be able to (and certainly not experience so much angst!).</p> <p>On a final note, I plan to monitor the level of worry I experience before group sessions over the coming year. If I observe it to be disproportionate/undesirable too often, then I'm going to take it to supervision/therapy/self-reflection to address the underlying causes more thoroughly.</p>
June 19	<p>Occasion: 1:1 consultancy with a snooker player in the middle east</p> <p>Reflective focuses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How I managed myself and approach through my Professional philosophy. -Client with English as second language. -‘Open afternoon’ sessions were too long! <p>Closing and summarising as a development area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Assess requests for consultancy 2.2 Plan consultancy 2.3 Establish, develop and maintain working relationships with clients 2.4 Conduct consultancy 	<p>Description</p> <p>Was asked to work with a snooker-playing client (through ChMx) who lives in the middle east. He wanted 3 x afternoon sessions over 3 days. Clients outcome objective was to better understand how to manage his mind (he used the Chimp Model language) during matches, as he commonly plays worse under matches than he does in training. The client also wanted to explore general, non-sport based, quality of life with relevance to work-life balance.</p> <p>A week prior to arriving I held a briefing call with the client to check on things like language, logistics and his focuses for the consultancy. Despite that preparation, I still felt quite nervous on the day of going to see him and chose to look to my professional philosophy as a guide and stabilizer.</p> <p>I have since reflected a lot on the good and development points from this experience, including taking the case to formal supervision. This account journals my key reflections.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feelings of being excited to take on the consultancy (a new learning opportunity...part of my core philosophy) - Heightened emotional activity on the morning of the consultation. Likely best described as imposter syndrome type thoughts and feelings e.g. adrenaline response + “what if I can't relate to him”, “what if we can't understand one another”, “what if I can't match his expectations” - Feelings of real calm, acceptance and focus once I had gone over my professional philosophy (PP). - Complete congruence during the session. Real sense of ‘being there’ and tuned in.

	<p>2.5 Monitor the implementation of consultancy</p> <p>2.6 Evaluate the impact of the consultancy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content with how the process went and pleased with the positive feedback – just keen to learn as much a possible from it now. <p>Evaluation</p> <p>I think this was a real ‘success moment’ in my professional development. The main reason being that my personal values and PP really came together with my professional processes (e.g. background & history take, needs analysis, intervention, audit, etc.) and I just felt completely in control of a professional engagement which could have definitely been more nerve racking if I didn’t have those things in place. For example, having the picture of my PP on work phone served as a great mental warm up and great stabilizer on my way to the client’s house. It took the weight off me “having to know everything” to getting back to my roots of client-led, practitioner-active consulting. I literally smiled in the car when I read it and remembered what I believe in!</p> <p>To progress my learning, after each session I reflected back on how I thought they had gone and looked for a key ‘even better if’ action point. I recorded these as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Session 1: look to create a window at the close of sessions where you can summarize (client-led) the key points taken from the session and any actions points for moving forward - Session 2: Be aware of long drawn out sessions which, if allowed to keep happening, might encourage the perception of a friendship rather than a working alliance. - Session 3: at the end of a consultancy as the client to summarise what they see as the action points (if any) moving forward. Also, check if they have any expectations from you in their forward plans e.g. do they want to feedback anything to you? If not, explain they may be contacted for anonymous feedback from Chimp Management <p>Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really pleased with how much of a guide and ‘settler’ my professional philosophy visual was. In essence, it really helped settle any pre-session anxieties and direct my actions. Williams and Andersen (2012) have observed that mindful practice helps us be present and attuned to our inner states and sit with them even if they are, more or less, distressing. For me, that meant accepting
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that I had some worries and then focusing more on being present (or genuine in Rogerian terms) so that I could really mindfully attune to the clients cognitive and emotional states. Such mindful attunement has been described as “one of the finest gifts a sport psychologist can give to clients” (Williams and Andersen, 2012, p. 150). This is definitely something I want to recreate time and time again with clients and was likely only so prevalent in this case due to its relatively unique nature.

- In terms of my process-based development points, the key area for development appears to be summarizing and concluding sessions. In supervision I identified the process of ‘closing’ sessions with time (e.g. 15minutes) to go so that the client can cover anything else they hadn’t raised, reflect on what had resonated with them, and set any actions points. This is a helpful mental model which I look forward to using.
- The reflection that session 2 was a little too long (4hours) is likely due to the unique circumstances and not something I’m too concerned about. In the future if I am asked to visit someone in that relaxed nature, then I would suggest certain durations of consultancy with them (e.g. 1 hour on history + objectives; 1 hour on the presenting issue + intervention, etc). I do feel however that due to this client’s unique cultural position, they actually really valued having someone to open up to over a period of time in complete confidence. That was the feedback I received so it appears the structure we followed was fine – I might just be mindful of suggesting more structure for future sessions so that we don’t run into the situation of cognitive or emotional fatigue.

Conclusion

- Overall, I felt really pleased with this consultancy experience. My self-regulatory skills really helped to be how I wanted to be in the sessions and to attune to the client’s needs. On reflection, there are a few areas I can continue to improve and have a plan to do so. The experience of working with a client from a completely different culture was hugely rewarding and a great learning experience in my continued professional development.

Action Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the same preparatory process (e.g. offer a briefing call and complete personal management / mental warm up). - Agree working structure (e.g. explaining that it is not unusual for people to get tired during consultancy, which is too long, and that usually 1 hour sessions with time to reflect post-session and come back with questions/suggestions are a good approach. - End sessions with 15 minutes to go. Check if the client has anything else they wish to raise before the session close (note it down and agree to discuss at next session if it's a significant issue), review what has resonated within the session, identify any action points.
End of Consultancy-focused Reflective Diary	

Learning Outcome 3 – Reflections Concerning Research Competency		
Date	Summary of Activity & Learning Objectives Matched	Reflection
2/11/2017	<p>Occasion: Identification of the topic for my Systematic Literature Review</p> <p>3.1 Conduct systematic review 3.2 Design psychological research activities 3.5 Initiate and develop original psychological research</p>	<p><i>Description</i> BPS Research Group Meeting (discussion of SLRs that need doing as part of a bigger project)</p> <p><i>Feelings</i> Today's meeting made things fall into place for me and actually have me quite excited about the systematic literature review now. David presented to us a few weeks back about how to go about an SLR, but I've been looking at that as 'dry theory', without any context as opposed to something I can actually <i>own</i> – today that changed. The BPS working group is focused on an area I'm interested in and care about...practitioner development. Not just my development, but the development of good practitioners in general and hence the field as a whole. That seems worthwhile and meaningful research to me, and I would like to do a project that can help people and the discipline.</p> <p>Anyway, when we started talking about practitioner development the idea of exploring the desirable characteristics came out, <i>that</i> jumped out and appealed to me straight off. It would be great for my own development to really understand what people are saying characteristics of a good sport psych are and the SLR approach will give me such a solid and comprehensive insight to what is known there. It's actually exciting! The big change in feelings therefore is that today I found the area I</p>

want to research and that suddenly makes all the methodological theory I've been looking at make more sense / become appealing.

Evaluation

This doesn't really feel like a 'good and bad' reflection. More just a recognition that research *has* to appeal to you. It has to interest and even inspire you. I'm glad I held out on starting my SLR until I found a topic I have passion about. Its great too that it will be part of a bigger project, I can admit that that external drive (i.e. I'm more likely to be part of a substantial offering to the field than just me alone) probably plays into an ego drive – but more importantly, I know I will be interested in researching this area and I'm hopeful I will get good support from the BPS group (e.g. feedback, idea bouncing / crystallization, etc).

Analysis

The best sense of this experience I can make is that I've learnt from my successes and 'failures' when it comes to research. At Bangor I collaborated with my supervisor and got a great outcome, at Loughborough the same. At Trent however, I went relatively solo – or at least failed to pick a project that my supervisor was really on board with. The thing I carried from those 3 experiences into LJMU therefore was *engage with others* when it comes to research. Don't be afraid to collaborate – in fact, actually seek to collaborate. More minds mean more ideas. It's better to have too many good ideas than too few, I can always trim back...like I did today. Through collaborating I've managed to find a research topic which I think it's interesting and which I hope will offer something worthy / helpful to the field. Might need to check back in on this enthusiasm in a year's time at programme finish, but today this is a positive step in my research journey at LJMU.

Conclusion

Collaboration in research is a great way of sharing, sparking, formulating and refining ideas. Feel today like I've had a really fruitful outcome from doing that. Looking forward to getting going with the SLR and learning about what I can add to my practice / growth and to the growth of the field in general.

Action Plan

		Get going with search word ideas! :D
December 2017	<p>Occasion: Background research and planning my SLR</p> <p>3.1 Conduct systematic review</p> <p>3.2 Design psychological research activities</p> <p>3.5 Initiate and develop original psychological research</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>I've spent the month reading around my SLR and getting what feels like the ingredients to get going. Reading the Fortin-Guichard et al (2018) paper I can see the lack of a systematic approach to their review...they have basically just talked over some prominent findings, but not really given a comprehensive view – I can improve on that. Having spoken with David, the idea of a Meta-Study seems a really good approach. My understanding so far is that that will mean I review the data, methods, and theory of research in the practitioner characteristics area – but then I'll synthesise it together too (which I'm understanding as the part where I offer my ideas/new ideas. Need to read up on Meta-Study methodology more, but I can get going on my search for papers in the meantime. In the regard, talking to Nick (my course peer) has been helpful when exploring how we can identify / create key words for the search. He seems to have gone quite narrow / specific to save time, but I'm tempted to go wider for a 'deeper dive' in the search. I know that might take more time, but I'd like to do it comprehensively.</p> <p>Finally, getting some reading advice from David was a good shout too, the Wampold & Budge (2012) paper is interesting as I haven't really thought too much about common vs specific factors in delivery. I was aware that the relationship is key, but I think that varies between therapies too? Maybes not. Will hopefully find out! The Gelso (2014) paper is interesting too, though couldn't really see its applications to my research yet. Might be a slow burner?</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Feel pretty satisfied now that I can justify my paper in terms of a review/collation being a helpful step forward for the field, but also why a meta-study will offer more in terms of providing insights regarding data, methods, and theory. Not entirely sure how that will look yet, but I'm sure that will come together with more reading and when I actually start to collect/analyse my data set.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Much of what I'm looking at and going through seems to be well signposted in David's Guidebook for conducting systematic reviews (Tod, in press). For example, he outlines a basic overview of the</p>

		<p>Meta-Study process for generating new knowledge (as per, Paterson, Thorne, Canam, & Jillings, 2001) in the first chapter, but in the second chapter he expands still further with some great insights on how to plan and prepare for a SLR. I feel I have now conceptualised and constructed my research questions and method, so next step is to conduct. My talks with Nick have helped focus me in further on my commitment to do a broad search and see what comes back.</p> <p>Analysis At this point I still feel pretty optimistic about this piece of research! Studying the area, working through the methodology guidebook, and speaking with David and Nick has helped be formulate my plan so that I feel ready to go. The only thing I did notice however is an extract at the end of Chapter 2 in Tod’s SLR guidebook, it reads: “...individuals may view systematic reviews as soft or easy publications. Their perceptions change once they embark on the process and realise the amount of work and attention to detail required. Ploughing through hundreds or thousands of hits in an electronic search, for example, can be soul-destroying, especially if you stumble across a previously unknown archive.” Guess those points might come, but not point in wishing them to when I’m in a good place to start. Going to get retrieving my data set and see where I go from there.</p> <p>Conclusion NA in regard to this reflection I feel</p> <p>Action Plan Again, NA at this time. Just get going now!</p>
February 2018	<p>Occasion: Early SLT research findings and implications for my practice</p> <p>3.3 Conduct psychological research activities</p>	<p>I’m not going to use Gibbs model for this reflection as I think it would actually stop me from reflecting effectively on what I want to try and capture and organize (in my mind) so I’m going to use my own reflective questions / structure instead.</p> <p>Having started extracting raw data (from my retrieved studies) into my data table I’m starting to notice things that could be helpful to me as a practitioner. Thought best to reflect on it more formally to capture</p>

	<p>3.4 Analyse and evaluate psychological research data</p>	<p>the key learnings for me, and to try to avoid imposing what is helpful <i>just for me</i> on the wider audience (i.e. projection).</p> <p>Hopefully by getting this down on paper I can share the reflections with my research supervisor so we can use the reflections to help guide further analysis and the write up.</p> <p>What am I seeing that could advance knowledge and understanding for the field?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First observation is that the ‘fixed characteristics’ research (e.g. Lubker and colleagues) is showing that things like race, gender, age don’t hold massive impact on people’s choice of practitioner. Especially not when compared with other more changeable things (like communication, knowledge and trustworthiness). This should give people hope, I think! - Next up is that the overriding key characteristics emerging are trustworthiness and the ability to build relationships and fit in – offering good advice. Trustworthiness emerges time and again, so I think that echo’s the important of ethical practice. - Soft skills, like showing empathy, communicating well, building rapport, all feature very strongly. That fits with the Wampold & Budge research (from counselling lit) which suggests that common factors are as important as active/specific factors. That’s cool to know in sport too. A good SPC seems to be characterized as much by how they are as what they know/do. That reminds me of / is backed up by Tod (2017) book chapter which says sport psychs are characterised by what they know, do and ‘are’ (qualities). That said... - Is there a difference between who we are and what we do? (i.e. who we label ourselves tends to relate to what we do, e.g. ‘being honest’). Does a trait influence behaviour, or is a trait something that we label a behaviour / grouping of behaviours? ...at present: this is something to have in my discussion - The frequency of many characteristics is skewed from the survey data which limits response options e.g. "fitting in with team," "useful knowledge," and "easy for athletes to relate to" will recur due to the CEF, or, the fact that they <i>are</i> prominent (though this is not the case in non-CEF studies, with the exception of ‘easy to relate to’). Not sure I want to include survey data as only the first paper (by Orlick & Partington was original themes – the rest are predetermined or seemingly picked out the air!).
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- It's great to start to be able to identify the prevalence of different characteristics, the question I'm think for the field though is *how* can these characteristics be improved? For example, Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2015) stated: "Furthermore, practitioners must ensure that they have adequate training with respect to employing genuineness, openness, and self-referent responses within their practice." (p.362). This is a good example of how the lit is stating it's important to work on personal characteristics, but not suggesting how. I'll bet most programmes teach knowledge (i.e. theory) and even practice (e.g. how to hold an intake session), but do they focus on how the person 'is' within that session? Are they even aware of the key characteristics, let alone how to develop them, and assess improvement?
- For me, the idea of covering this at Uni + stage 2 is important, but so too would be going into therapy yourself as a psych, as that should cover things like authenticity. What is the real you? Are you living it out? What's interfering, sabotaging, hijacking you? Is that something to resolve/overcome/remove...these are questions that might scope beyond the range of current supervision around 'best process'. It may be even outstrip people's comfort or boundaries of what the supervision role is? Also, few experienced psychs continue supervision. So where are they addressing things such as authenticity and any barriers to it? This ref also works with the previous point: "Researchers have previously argued that being able to listen to clients, SPCs must understand what they are doing, and also how they are doing it and have highlighted the importance of self-awareness training (Petitpas et al., 1999)." (p.363) This quote/reference works too: "Gelso and Carter's (1994) concept of a real relationship and within that the value of genuineness which is reflective of "the individual's ability and willingness to be what they truly are within the relationship – to be authentic, open and honest" (p.297)." ...again, how can people ensure they are doing that if they aren't checking in with a supervisor?
- Finally, desirable characteristics don't seem to change much over 30 years of research. That is, they seem stable /recurrent across time and relatively stable between groups (e.g. athletes, coaches, SPCs). That suggests that research in this area might well be done now! Or at least that we need to stop asking the same questions or looking at it in the same way (e.g. could we use different methods??)

What am I seeing that has implications for me and my practice?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The big stand outs for me have been around the importance of trustworthiness (Professional, Ethical), Empathy (Respectful, Supportive - of people and environments), Authenticity (Courageous, Presence), credibility (in the form of good knowledge) and being able to provide a good <i>practical</i> service. I know that might seem like a list of the ‘top characteristics’ but I think seeing them listed out really makes me stop and say, “Okay, so where am I in relation to those?”. So... - Trustworthy – I think I’m really clear with my confidentiality, which is a positive. But I think one thing I’ve noticed this year (mostly from my work in the U18s, and with Insights) is that some peoples preference will be a quiet, considered psych – not always a high energy “I’m here – let’s go!” persona. It struck me in my review with Dr Caddy when she said, “sometimes you want to know you can go home and relax, not have to worry about being or doing something”. That was like a lightbulb, and these findings are making me think about that in the applied practice sense. Sure, energy and enthusiasm also show up (high) in the desirable characteristics list, but I think I’m just going to be a little more mindful of deliberately dropping my energy from time to time. To ask a few more people “how are you getting on?” in a genuine, but perhaps less energetic way. I want them to know they can trust me, and that seems as much about an impression of the type of person I am as opposed to any promises about confidentiality. - Empathetic – I’d say this is good for me, based on client feedback and the training in UAR skills from ChMx. It’s not something I’m going to target to improve for now therefore, but defo something to maintain. - Authentic – think this is one to work on. I often feel like I can either be ‘fully there’ or holding back a bit. I know I hold back because I’m trying to build a fuller picture or am not quite sure I have something to offer. The U18 coaches help by setting a ‘offer ideas in’ culture, so that’s somewhere I can feel my authenticity growing – but there’s time (say like on the Warriors team bus) when I’m towing the line between being myself and being professional. I’d like to work on that being less like a conflict or more of a willing/mindful choice e.g. “I’m not engaging in that, because it wouldn’t be appropriate – but that’s fine and right and is actually therefore authentic”. I often just find myself in freeze mode instead a little bit (say like at the
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		<p>Pathway Management Meeting) where I was more Chimp than authentic. Something to work on...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credibility / knowledge – hopefully I’m continuing to build this all of the time. I am happy with the 1:1 and team consulting knowledge I have – but I enrolled on the PhD to keep improving that nonetheless. The title of Chartered Psych is also something I think will settle my chimp. Ridiculous really, because I’ll probably do 70% the same stuff, but knowing I’m chartered and with that extra 20% growth in knowledge hopefully I’ll have a 10% growth in confidence too – just ‘feeling more credible’ to give out advice when asked. - Practical service – think this is one I could improve on, but it ties into the last point. Hopefully through my PhD and career I’ll keep picking up interesting ways to work with athletes and helpful ideas / approaches to share with them. For now, it’s just helpful to remember that people are saying they like a practical service, so when I’m consulting, I can check in with people what areas they would like practical ideas and make sure we explore them in our work! (i.e. not everything can be a thought exercise, sometimes I’ll need to do things like breathing, or visualisation, or effective communication audit, etc). <p>Analysis</p> <p>Looking at this list now I don’t think the things that appeal/apply to me are a problem for my research – in fact the opposite. One of the issues my research is bringing up is that not many papers give practical ways of developing the desirable characteristics, so my reflections of how I would do it could be a prototype for ideas offered later in my write up. I guess my research is informing my practice, and my practice is informing my research.</p>
27/09/18	<p>Occasion: Presenting my preliminary SLR results for feedback to the LJMU PhD cohort</p> <p>3.3 Conduct psychological research activities</p> <p>3.4 Analyse and evaluate psychological research data</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>As part of my LJMU programme I was asked by my project supervisor to present an overview of my findings and research to date to my peers and to the BPS research group.</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I felt comfortable with the size of the audience and the context I knew I would be delivering (e.g. seminar style, familiar room, familiar people - with the exception of one or two lecturers). I wanted to explore what components would work for the audience, that is, what information and style of delivery</p>

	<p>would be appropriate for them. I knew for example that a percentage of the audience would be new to the content I was sharing and would likely have an interest in it (as neophyte practitioners), yet I also wanted the content to be rich enough to give an overview to the expert researchers would also be listening and could offer me feedback.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>It felt preparing and presenting my research was a helpful exercise for a few reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process helped me to consolidate where I was (in terms of my research journey/process, thinking and findings) - Helped me to question and identify ‘what is important?’ for the target audience (particularly as this group is the kind of audience I hope this research could inform/help i.e. aspiring practitioners and their educators) - A good opportunity to practice effective dissemination (ahead of doing it for real a few months later at a national conference) - A good opportunity for feedback on my presentation skills / style - A good opportunity for input from my peers and experts in the field <p>I received feedback from my lecturers that they thought my content on delivery style had been appropriate and impactful. In particular I found the ability to have a conversational style (due to the small room and audience size) to fit my own preference as it allowed for a flow of conversation and exchange – as opposed to a keynote style presentation with little or no interaction.</p> <p>I also sought and received feedback from my peers who described the session as insightful and informative to their own development. For example, one peer asked if she could take a photo of my summary slide for her own reference in her ongoing professional development.</p> <p>What was particularly helpful from the session with the ability to seek feedback from others on my research. One of the lecturers in the audience posed helpful questions around the practical implications my findings could spring. This was a new line of enquiry which I have not considered so was a very fruitful outcome for me from this venture.</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p>
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		<p>Overall, this was a relatively straightforward but worthwhile exercise. I found the experience of having to plan, deliver and review the session to be helpful in the development of my research and dissemination processes.</p> <p>Gathering new ideas and lines of enquiry from the audience was particularly helpful and well received and showed the benefits of sharing your research and opening yourself up to feedback in the pursuit of advancing knowledge and ideas.</p> <p>Conclusion Was happy with this particular instance of dissemination. If anything it was a good reinforcement of the principles of small group interaction I have used in the past (e.g. clarity of purpose, clarity of content, group engagement, open to input and feedback).</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take these principles forward into the dissemination of my research as the DSEP Annual Conference in December. <p>UPDATE: 7/12/18 I presented my research at DSEP this week and it seemed to go well – except for a few nerves at the start...I almost forgot what one of my slides was showing! Feedback from observers was that they didn't notice though so probably just overplayed in my mind. The audience seemed to receive the findings well and the best insight came during open questions when Dave Alcock asked me a question... “What level / capacity of role are the sport psyches’ in my research?” (e.g. interns, lecturers who do some applied work, FT practitioners, FT at elite level practitioners?). This is a great question as it's not something I had considered or included in my analysis and will take forward now. My plan is to analyse the data for this information and report my findings in the write up. Well worth doing the presentation for this input alone!</p>
April 2019	<p>Occasion: Participating in research as a participant</p> <p>3.3 Conduct psychological research activities 3.4 Analyse and evaluate psychological research data</p>	<p>Description (what happened?)</p> <p>- I was asked to participate in a research interview considering my career development. One of the questions related to ‘my professional philosophy and how I thought that linked to my use of the Chimp Model’; other questions probed my understanding of the difference to be between eclectic and integrated approaches to consultancy. In both instances, I found myself unable to clearly and concisely articulate my point of view.</p>

Feelings (what were you thinking and feeling?)

- This really struck a chord with me, as it made me reflect that I:

(A) wasn't 100% sure of my answer to these questions,

(B) was a little rusty in verbalising my core beliefs,

(C) I didn't have a good 'concise' blurb which I could explain how I work to clients ...an essential ability I would say!!

IT left me feeling that it was an area I wanted to re-invest some reflection and action. That is, to work to answer and improve my response options to these pretty central questions in service delivery!

Evaluation (What was good and bad about the experience)

- I've put in my own ethics application forms that a 'benefit' of participating in applied research can be the opportunity to reflect in and on action. This was certainly the case for me in this instance. This research involvement offered an opportunity to verbalise some pretty important considerations, but in a situation where I could really take my time and not feel pressured by a client facing situation. It has definitely made me aware of improvements I want to make!

Analysis (What sense can you make of the situation?)

- Looking at the bigger picture on this situation it's been important to recognise that the interview was about junior practitioners going through their training. Although I have been practising with the chimp model for around 10 years, one of the main reasons I enrolled on this programme was to reflect upon and improve around the essentials of applied consultancy – such as professional philosophy and the nuts of bolts of competent service delivery. I'm really glad that I had this experience therefore as it has showed a knowledge gap in some really fundamental areas. In their writing on professional philosophy in sports psychology service delivery, Poczwardowski, Sherman & Ravizza (2004) wrote about the hierarchical structure of professional philosophy outlining important components that make up an individual's philosophy and informs/drives their practice. I had read this paper back when it was first released, but as I have noted in my earlier reflections its concepts were clearly rusty to me and not something I visited for some time. Following this event, I went back and re-read the paper it was evident to me that certain parts of the hierarchal structure with a longer clear in my mind. For example, I was clear that principles of humanism (client led consulting), analytic theory (understanding that events in our formative year can unconsciously play out in our lives),

		<p>developmental psychology (e.g. stages of, or issues in, development), and biology could all feature in my practice - that's one of the strengths I feel the Chimp model offers me as a practitioner. However, I was also clear that sometimes using the chimp model is not appropriate, and that in these instances I must be making these decisions based on beliefs I hold ultimately leading me to engage a different model of practice and intervention goals. I wanted to go back and complete a review of my professional philosophy therefore - to refresh my thinking and understanding to be much clearer of what I stand for and believe, and how to communicate it.</p> <p>Conclusion (What else could you have done?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall, I'm happy that I did what I could've done in this situation. Putting myself forward for the research interview provided me with an opportunity to address an area sooner than I would have had I not done the interview. It could be debated that I should have addressed my professional philosophy long before this time, however my reflection is the professional philosophy is something which will continue to grow as you do as a person and hence never be a 'finished product'. I'm happy therefore that I have had the recognition that is something I want to at least crystallise better in my own mind and become more able to communicate with others. <p>Action Plan (If it arose again, what would you do?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue reflecting on your professional philosophy using the available literature as a reference - create a communication of your professional philosophy in written and visual forms - practice communicating of' to other people, starting with your supervisor and colleagues. And moving to clients. - get some feedback and continue to build your awareness of and trust in your professional philosophy
May 2019	<p>Occasion: Identifying research focuses and approaches for my 2 empirical papers</p> <p>3.1 Conduct systematic review</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>I've been working recently to try and narrow in on my final 2 research questions. I know I want to research into the chimp model, because it's a big area of my work and I am passionate that it has been used in professional sport for over a decade - but still there is no formal research into its use or impact. I spoke a few months back with Martin and started to get the idea of exploring why practitioners have chosen to use the Chimp model, what it actually is to them (because I think that is</p>

<p>3.2 Design psychological research activities</p> <p>3.5 Initiate and develop original psychological research</p>	<p>often misconstrued or misunderstood), and finally it would be great to hear how people have used it. The main thing for me is that I would like the research to have some real-world impact - I'm not just saying that because it's what universities want to say, but because I feel if there is an approach out there which can help other people then why can't we share it or at least increased understanding of it. For example this year in our LJ MU class meetings there are times when I feel that the chimp model could really help things make sense to other people - but again that is only my personal view, maybe other (Chimp trained) practitioners would disagree with me... Research could be one way to find that out.</p> <p>Last week however (May 2nd) I met with David and really tried to narrow in not only on my research question(s) but also the methodology of how I might go about my research. He sparked the thought in me that exploring the stories of why practitioners came to use the chimp model, how they use the chimp model, and even their stories of where it doesn't work could give a really rounded and rich understanding of the what, why, and how of practitioners applied practice. In methodological terms, I could do one interview with each practitioner but essentially ask them to tell their story, or a series of stories. For example, the story of how they came to find and use the chimp model; and then some stories of when they have used it both effectively and ineffectively (In their opinion). Hopefully research of this kind can provide good insights not only around the chimp model (I really don't want to wave the flag of glory and try and say this is any more than it is), but more importantly around why it has been helpful to practitioners and where it fits in their practice - that could hopefully help other people decide if it could work for them, or why what works for them does instead.</p> <p><i>Feelings</i></p> <p>It feels good to move forward with these pieces of research. I know I reflected on similar feelings regarding my systematic literature review, but I feel that having a connection to your research is essential. It has to interest you, and at best inspire you.</p> <p>I was unsure a few months back when speaking with Martin exactly how I would be able to conduct this research without it getting shot down by practitioners in the field who might just see me as trying to promote the chimp model. I honestly <i>do not care</i> what other people think of me, or my research, or the chimp model - but I would like to spend my time creating something helpful to others.</p> <p>I also feel like I could learn a lot from this research in regard to what other practitioners (such as Kate, or Steve, or Rich) think, feel, and do in regard to their practice with the Chimp model. There's</p>
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no way I could ever get such rich disclosures from a coffee conversation. Hopefully because it's a research setting, they will think about the responses and share some great anecdotes, plus I will really be able to delve into their answers and stories.

Evaluation and Analysis

The best thing about this experience has been narrowing in on exactly what I'm going to do and how I'm going to do it. A negative is that it is now May and I wish I had been able to arrive at this point a little earlier - that's a big challenge on this programme, getting all of your research and case studies done whilst you're actually employed full-time. It's been good to talk over on my ideas before now though, for example talking with Martin last year meant that I was at least clued into my area of interest and possible questions when I came to speak with David. His input was brilliant. I think it's his ability to really challenge the quality of what you are going to produce - is it actually meaningful? Could it be more? Who will care? And why? That's what I need from my supervisor really challenge to help me keep moving up a notch. The sport psych literature concerning what trainees want from their supervision is really more focused on practice supervision (e.g. Hutter et al., 2015) rather than academic supervision. But in other areas that practice and research are combined (like nursing – see, Yarwood-Ross & Haigh, 2014) there is clear evidence that PhD students prefer supervisors who are encouraging, reliable, knowledgeable, informative and sharing (Denicolo, 2004). So I feel like that's what is good at the moment. I'M coming in with innovative and hopefully interesting angles for research and David and Martin are offering me the knowledge and information to real shape it into something worthwhile.

Conclusion

Thing the key question here is not what could I have done, but more 'what do I need to do next?'. I'm on a tight timeline now for this programme / before applied work picks up again, so I need to pull together my ethics form ASAP and then look to start organizing interviews and data collection.

I'm pleased that I've managed to find a research area which I think can offer an interesting new line of data to the field, but also one which will engage and inform me on route.

		<p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start and submit ethics - Revisit qualitative methods in more detail. David is suggesting I could do a narrative analysis, but I feel really experienced with a thematic analysis. Think I need to read around NI to better understand what it is and why/how it could work for these projects?? <p>Update (31st May 2019): submitted my ethics form today so finally got a chance to write this addition. In essence I just wanted to reflect back that the act of writing a research proposal really helped to consolidate where I am going with this piece of research (ahead of data collection that is!). When I was writing the proposal, it became evident that my project was still focusing too heavily on the chimp model. That's okay if you're interested in it, but if you're not it isolates it and actually makes it not worthwhile reading my research. The big change therefore was to focus more on <i>practitioners</i>, their development, their reflections, their practice, their success, their failures – their stories. Think the really important thing now is for me to immerse myself in the narrative enquiry literature as to be honest I understand the basic premises but I'm not sure I would feel fully competent at narrative analysis yet. All said however, this feels like great progress and I'm bloody glad ethics is out of the way!</p>
June 2019	<p>Occasion: Revelations from reading around narrative approaches to research and reports</p> <p>3.2 Design psychological research activities</p> <p>3.3 Conduct psychological research activities</p> <p>3.5 Initiate and develop original psychological research</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Reading around narrative approaches to qual research has <i>really</i> got me thinking. How can a discipline like psychology remove all individualism from its research?? That's like the exact antithesis of what the discipline, or at least my approach to the discipline, stands for!</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I'm aware of the history of the need to make Psychology 'align' to the natural sciences + the introduction of the behaviorist movement and subsequent certainist / 'scientific method' bias to almost all journals. But reading around the underlying principles of narrative enquiry has really sparked my passion for sharing more research rich with detail – not deliberately devoid of it to try and subscribe to a narrow-minded positivist doctrine!</p> <p>I'm actually smiling having written that last sentence...if undergraduate me (sat in Brett Smiths classes) could see me now. ...I don't want to end up chanting from the tabletops like he did!!</p>

Anyway...I want to try and make sense *what* I'm actually thinking and feeling here. What has struck a chord with me? What have I noticed about myself and my beliefs from this? What do I believe about research? And what might I take forward from this reflection in my research and approach to research in general? Think I'll use those questions to frame the evaluation section hereafter...

Evaluation

What has struck a chord with me?

I think the single source of greatest inspiration was the forward in Oliver Sacks book (The man who mistook his wife for a hat), written by Will Self. When introducing Sacks' ability to write powerful case studies up in a reader friendly (even entertaining) way, Self writes: "this was an approach to neurology – compassionate, humane, and above all deeply immersed in the narratives of individual patients lives – that had been lost in the dry, quantifiable abstractions of contemporary medical 'literature'" (p.vii). *This is what I've felt about a lot of research I've read for years.* It's so conformist. So generalized. So devoid of any real detail about the people (for ethical reasons or not), that it actually becomes relatable at best, and unpalatable for the most.

From reading works like Sacks, and the exploring narrative approaches to research (e.g. Careless & Douglass, 2008; Smith, 2016; Smith & Sparkes, 2009), I come to appreciate that only narratives can give full weight to the experiential and existential character of my research which is ultimately about human experience (i.e. why and how practitioners work with the Chimp Model). Only narratives can adequately convey the 'who' as well as the 'what' of practice + experience. Of course, I could just do the 'what' via a thematic analysis, but I think that cuts out the practitioner and given this is all about practitioners how much of a shortfall that be? To quote from Will Self (Sacks, 1986) again, "Sacks, as I've said, sets great store in narrative, seeing it as a standard-bearer of the concrete against the dangerous abstractedness of the theoretical, and the desiccating tendencies of the empirically testable" (p. vx).

What have I noticed about myself and my beliefs from this?

Besides that since reading all this stuff my vocab has enlarged about 300%! ...I think that I've just come to find 'my area' of research. I've always had a preference for qualitative research, but here I've found a deeper understanding of *why* I relate to it. Far from 'it's easy to do and doesn't involve math's', its actually much more intricate. Much richer. Likely much less generalizable, but also

hopefully much more relatable! I don't want to waffle on anyway – because the important thing is that I've realized why I believe in qualitative research at a much deeper level and that has inspired me on to the analysis level of my research with much more confidence.

I guess even the way that I am choosing to individualize this reflection, with my own reflective questions, shows the way I favour idea creation. Who wants to follow a rigid, and therefore often inappropriate, structure? Sure, without a guide then it's open season and who knows that would happen. That's why I like that narrative analysis is still a *method*. It just more that it aligns with how I want to make sense of the world (in context) and represent that knowledge (rich, descriptive, and ultimately as just an impression – a construction, not 'the final word').

What do I believe about research?

I believe you have to make research that works for its audience. At the end of the day research that isn't helpful isn't worth doing. I'm still a realist therefore in accepting that sometimes people want research to help them make informed choices - maybe even to 'prove' the best course of action. For me, I've just changed the way I see that can be achieved. Surely if you're going to make informed choices then you need as much context and information as possible. In my line of research, where I'm looking at practitioners, their growth, and their approach, surely we need a good understanding of who these people are (within ethical bounds) before we can decide if what they think, feel, and do are relevant to us. It frustrates me a bit that the LJMU ethical board wouldn't give me permission to ask if participants would reveal their identity (like Sharp et al, 2015), but I guess that is a safeguarding consideration (hopefully), or (more cynically) another example of the ridiculous conformity which challenges the creation and dissemination of rich and interesting research.

What might I take forward from this reflection in my research and approach to research in general?

I think a really important approach will be to keep myself grounded when moving forward with these projects. What I mean by that is that I had my own reservations, even stereotypes of narrative research, before I had done this background reading. The risk I see therefore is that I produce a research paper which Joe Bloggs simply can't see the value in. "It's too fluffy", "it's too specific", "who cares about what that one person has to say, or about what you have to say about that one person's views?". These are all really good questions / challenges for me to have in my mind as I

		<p>move forward with the analysis, writing, and dissemination of this research. I think Tod et als recent (2019) paper is a great example of ‘towing the line’ between what is needed for publication, whilst also not adhering to the “desiccating tendencies of the empirically testable” to quote from Sacks!</p> <p>On a bigger scale, it will be really interesting to see if my work and sharing it can also help enhance peoples understanding of the narrative approach and why it might really fit with the ethos and needs of our field, but doing that WITHOUT seeming like a PhD student who has swallowed a million books and is now on their soapbox chanting about something the audience can’t grasp or don’t really care about anyway! :D ...Watch this space I guess!</p>
<p>June – August 2019</p>	<p>Occasion: Research Interviews informing my growth and practice</p> <p>3.3 Conduct psychological research activities</p> <p>3.4 Analyse and evaluate psychological research data</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>I’ve done 5 research interviews now with experienced practitioners concerning their development and stories of effective and ineffective consultancies. The data is producing some great insights from a research perspective, but it’s also giving me loads to think about and build on as a practitioner. Today was a great example when I was going back through the audio recording of one interview and a concept jumped out at me which I had read only yesterday in counselling case studies I’ve been reading to broaden my knowledge base.</p> <p>In essence the Sport Psych interviewee (Harri – Pseudonym) was telling the story of when an Olympic Performance Director once rang saying, “Harri, Sammy (the athlete) hasn’t shown up for the flight to the Olympics. She literally isn’t here. I don’t care what you say or do – but get her out to Rio today”. Harri later managed to track Sammy down and went to meet her. The athlete was adamant she was too nervous to go. She didn’t want to. Her mind was made up – and she was staying. At this point Harri spoke of how she lent on her deeper knowledge of Sammy, her knowledge that Sammy’s biggest drive was to be a great mother for her little girl. Harri basically said to the athlete, “if you stay at home, what example will that be to your daughter? To let fear get in the way of what you love and are great at?”.</p> <p>During the interview I remember thinking – ‘that’s pretty brave!’ . But I appreciated too that Harri had gotten to know her athlete, know her drives, her ‘higher purpose’, her buttons. All that comes from good history, good curiosity, a proper relationship (not just what they speak about in every practice handbook...an actual deep understanding of the other persons drives, desires, fears and triggers). Also – having the ability (skill + courage) to try an intervention like that.</p> <p>So anyway, yesterday I was reading Irvin Yalom’s stories from psychotherapy (part of my background reading to help with my narrative analysis) and he talks about how he asked the man in</p>

the case 'If Rape were Legal' "how would you daughter exist in a world like that? What you want her to be a 'a piece of meat' for people's desires? Or would you lock her up so she couldn't be got at, but consequently could see the world? Is that what you want for her? Is that the world you desire?". The client (Carlos) in that case said he of course wouldn't want that, and Yalom asks, "well then what does that tell you about what you *really* want?".

Feelings

Overwhelming feelings here are just ones of appreciation and humility.

Appreciative that I've got this opportunity to learn from others and connect with something that is really helpful to me and hopefully my clients.

Humble that I definitely have SO MUCH to learn! :D Listening to expert practitioners just makes me realise what else I could add to my skills and knowledge set. There's no point being overwhelmed by that – I just loop back round to feeling appreciative for the opportunity and insights...

Evaluation

So what is it than I was seeing across the two cases? (the sport psych and counselling cases). The first thing is the important of establishing and recognizing the drivers that people have at their core. So for example, in Yalom's case study the practitioner had moved from 'how will others in your therapy group feel if you uphold those opinions?', to 'how will you fell about yourself if you hold those opinions', to 'how will your daughter feel if you uphold those opinions?'. What the therapist is doing here is moving from driver to driver to establish which will resonate with the client. The comparison is so strong to the sport psychology case therefore as the athlete clearly didn't care what their team felt about them not going to the Olympics - their feelings of anxiety were far greater or more powerful than their feelings of judgement from their team. Likewise, their view of them self (e.g. I let the team down and I don't want to do that) wasn't helping them to go to the Games. In fact, it's possible that the person's worries about what other people think of them and their inability to cope with the whole situation was simply part of the anxiety mass which was leading them to avoid the situation all together. The key thing though, is that Harri and Irvin Yalom had an awareness of actually what really counts for that client.

One way I could establish this is when you're doing a history taking, don't just look at it as a dry information gathering exercise - look at who they talk about, how they talk about them, what do other

	<p>people mean to them? The importance they place on them? All of these will be good indicators of what, or who, Are the key drivers of the persons thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. That gives you great leverage as a consultant. If you are able to identify, or help the client to identify, there true core values then you are much more likely to be able to help them integrate /align with them.</p> <p>A challenge arising from this reflection though is whether I feel I've got the skill and 'courage' to challenge a client in this way? Challenging people on areas they have stated are important to them is something I've been working on over the last year. For example learning from Patrick at Leading-Edge, or the personal work I've done around speaking up and having a voice in RFU Management Meetings. I just think my reflection from this is that you need to have a really solid awareness of what is the key or core triggers for a person before you get to a 'crisis' event otherwise you are never going to be able to call on it/call it out to help them keep perspective what is important to them. I'm not saying I have to have magic answers, but I am saying that it would be helpful in my history build and ongoing casework to try and understand who and what is really important for a person so as I can reference that when needed.</p> <p>On a really practical level, I could also take advice from the answer Harri gave when I asked her if her challenge of the athlete was spontaneous or something she feels she uses quite a lot in her work...she answered that it was something she has developed over the years, especially having watched Steve be so challenging in his approach to consultancy. She talked about how in her earlier years as a sports psychologist she was all about development and positivity, I'm letting the athlete lead - what that over time she became more confident in calling things as she saw them which can often mean saying the uncomfortable things which everybody is thinking but nobody is saying.</p> <p>To help with all of this I also like Yalom's line around, "I waited for several minutes as I assessed my options". To me that sounds like Schön's (1991) principle of reflecting in action. Yalom didn't want to collude with Carlos about discussing if rape is a natural desire, so he held his reply. Choosing instead to think about what drivers would help Carlos decide if that suggestion is appropriate. In essence, don't challenge a person's views with your own – instead think of ways <i>powerful and relevant to them</i> which enables them to challenge their own views. ...highly skilful, but a great concept and clearly worth some practice!</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p>
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Without overdoing the word count here I guess this example is exactly what I meant about great things coming up out of my research for my practice. When Fifer et al (2008) interviewed esteemed sport psychologists for their insights of ‘what works with athletes’ they stated: “There is no substitute for the knowledge that is gained by experiencing the world yourself, but learning directly from those who have gained valuable expertise is the next best option” (p.357). For me, I can see that my interviews, analysis and support-reading are really helping to make me a better psychologist. That’s been a strength of the whole programme to be honest. I wasn’t reading a whole load of literature since finishing my MSc and that’s a shame because I’ve remembered now what it can do for your thinking, your ideas, your reflection, and your confidence. It was like when reading Ronnestad & Skovholt (2003) again the other day – I was like “that’s me!” and “ah, so that would be a good target for me”. Research starts to really inform your practice and development as a practitioner and person.

With regard to how I’m using these interviews to do that. I guess much of what I’m doing is modeling. Ronnestad & Skovholt do talk about modeling, and how it is an important learning process in practitioner development. Defined broadly, modeling includes activities such as watching supervisors and professional staff work, hearing how supervisors and professional staff conceptualize cases, and observing the professional behavior of supervisors and professional staff. So my interviews about applied work are great for that! Especially learning from practitioners’ successes *and* setbacks. To a greater extent, I’m critically assessing and evaluating practitioners’ models of practice now and seeing where they sit in relation to my own beliefs and approach.

Finally, research shows that most experienced professionals trust their professional judgments. That is, most feel comfortable about their work, feel competent, and that they are able to establish good working alliances with their clients. They also feel they can challenge the client if necessary (like Harri!). This provision of both safety and challenge have been found to be key features in the work of master therapists (Sullivan, Skovholt, and Jennings, 2004) and it seems like that is what I’m hearing about from my participants (at least Harri and SP) and what I’m reading in the literature.

Conclusion and Action Plan

Key thing for me to is keep reflecting on what is emerging from my research (which I’ll naturally do as its part of my analysis) and then to try and make a plan to deliberately practice areas (this could be part of the ChMx 2020 Plan). I think that is the way that I’ll transfer my research to practice with best

		effect. It will also be interesting to share my findings with other practitioners to see what they think, and also how they might go about applying it.
21/8/19	Occasion: Analysis...feeling a little lost! 3.3 Conduct psychological research activities	<p>Description + Feelings I've been reading around how to conduct a narrative analysis again recently (e.g. Smith, 2016) and started feeling pretty overwhelmed with it all. For example, should I split my data? (e.g. practitioners' journeys and how they came to use the Chimp model / practitioners' stories of how the chimp model looks and works in practice); how do I analyse data where participants have told more than one story? does my research actually offer anything new or repeat what has been said? Why didn't I just do a thematic analysis!!</p> <p>I decided to lean on two resources of support: (1) to go back into the literature and remember <i>why</i> I choose narrative analysis in the first place (I know it resonated with me originally so I felt I needed to refresh that passion); and (2) I felt I needed I guiding hand / some assurance on my research process and value, so I arranged a supervision call with David.</p> <p>Evaluation Having re-read Papathomas (2016) book chapter on narrative analysis I felt that I reconnected with my reasons for wanting to conduct a narrative analysis. I do think it fits my research questions most appropriately (i.e. rich descriptive insights of practitioners lived experiences) but equally importantly it fits my beliefs of what valuable research is. As Papathomas (2016) writes more eloquently than I could!...</p> <p>Narrative gives us meaning and meaning makes us human. Despite all this, sociological and psychological research communities have for a long time, to a greater or lesser degree, turned their backs on this most basic of routes to knowing our world. The dawn of positivism and its associated empiricist beliefs gained credence with advances in the natural sciences and, as a result, the social and human sciences have jumped on for the ride – forgetting that they should have been heading in a different direction. Such is the power of social construction, narrative ceased to resonate as a worthy object of scientific study. Narrative became marginal. As argued by Bruner 'we have been taught to treat such "said" accounts as untrustworthy, even in some odd philosophical way as untrue' (1990, p. 16). Following in the footsteps of scholars in their parent disciplines, sport and exercise sociology and psychology researchers are once again turning to narrative. It's a fraught journey and resistance is strong but the</p>

	<p>results are insightful and exciting. As boundaries are pushed with innovative methodologies, narrative researchers in sport and exercise threaten to return the social and human sciences to fields that are more social and more human. In doing so, they may also be able take narrative from marginal back to cardinal.</p> <p>The important question for me next was then “now remembering why I chose to do narrative analysis... How can I do it best?”.</p> <p>Smith (2016) has a great book chapter which offers seven steps to conducting a narrative analysis. The truth however is that I didn't find it particularly helpful in actually steering my first steps of approaching this new methodology. I took therefore to a call with David over which he gave me some great advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Break things down into small chunks (when you feel overwhelmed) - Use a structure framework (e.g. beginning, middle & end) to help identify a plot in stories. There is also the LOCK framework by Scott Bell (which made a lot of sense when we discussed it). Also remember to look for the moral of the story - people often tell stories for a purpose – what purpose is this story serving? And for who? - Remember that nobody has ever investigated the chimp model in regard to sport psychology. (My takeaway from this advice was: I don't have to build the whole castle, just put another brick in the wall). - The important thing is to start to explore and understand your data. From there can see what is available and interesting for the write up. (My takeaway from this advice was: remember the best way to eat whale...Is one piece at a time). <p>The helpful takeaways, from both my re-engagement with the literature and with my supervisor, are that it is normal and okay to feel overwhelmed with research at times. Narrative analysis in particular is relatively new in sport psychology circles and because of its position in the relativist paradigm there is no ‘set of rules’ for how it ‘should’ be done. That can mean you feel are little lost at times – but forging your own understanding is that it is all about.</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p>
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		<p>There are many things that trainee sport + exercise psychologists want from their supervisors – but when it comes to research, I have experienced first-hand here that often it can be as much about a sound board and for some reassurance as opposed to any ‘steadfast’ answer or magic bullet.</p> <p>I can see that because I immersed myself in the transcription of my interviews for the past few weeks – I almost got lost at sea (a sea of data!) and could really see my way forward or back to land. That’s all very metaphorical – but it felt that way. I kind of became isolated and felt like I was drowning in my data and ideas and uncertainty.</p> <p>I’m glad that I’ve learnt how to address such challenges this year though. At the start of the course I remember writing in my POT that when I struggled in the past, I could have a tendency to shut down my communication with others – not increase it. But that’s changed substantially this year. Mostly because I’ve seen first-hand the benefits it can bring – plus I’ve matured to see that burying your head in the sand isn’t a constructive approach!</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The one thing I could have done during this period was to have stayed in touch with David a little more. I know why I didn't - because I felt that if I could get through my interview transcriptions then we could reconnect when I was ready for analysis. I have now done that - so to some extent my plan <i>was</i> in place and sound. <i>However</i>, what I hadn't realised was that by isolating myself (albeit with a task focus) I would inevitably come to feel a little ‘at sea’. My learning is therefore not just relevant to research, but the reinforcement of a principle in general - Don't isolate yourself for too long - no matter what your intentions are. Keep a soundboard. Share your progress, obstacles, thoughts, feelings and otherwise. At the very least it will help you to identify problems and solutions earlier.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>I have agreed to hold weekly supervision calls regarding my supervision from this point forward with David.</p> <p>I already have regular supervision course for my practice in place with Dr Anna Waters and Prof Steve Peters.</p>
Nov 2019	Occasion: Analysis Reflections	Description + Feelings

<p>3.4 Analyse and evaluate psychological research data</p>	<p>There's been some really interesting patterns emerging from my research at both the theoretical and practical levels. For example, the way practitioners' story of how the Chimp model helped different schools or theories to make sense or "fall into place" for them and their clients has really resonated with me. I remember feeling quite conflicted when I started out as a psych that you "should be this or that". But instead now I'm seeing a trend of how practitioners talk about integrative models actually being a <i>good</i> basis for a few reasons. Assimilation in particular makes sense, we need a foundation to build idea upon, and that is <i>not</i> just lassies faire pick it out of the air approach. Its dynamic and adaptable – meaning it can grow. That's really important because it lines up with findings in other fields, like Ronnestad & Skovholt (2003) who found that practitioners who develop throughout their career are those who tend <i>not</i> to fit the 'true believer' (i.e. one model) typology. Overall this is helpful for me because it puts things like practice models in their place, but also puts my affiliation to the Chimp Model in place in my own head. That is, it's a tool that helps me integrate theory and build my knowledge, not limit it.</p> <p>Which I guess leads me onto practice...</p> <p>At first listening to and analysis the interview scripts (including the reading that pushes you onto) was just priceless for getting ideas. For example, the stories around how practitioner held tension with clients in really quite skillful ways. I've reflected about that previously (the importance of becoming skilled at the balance between support and challenge, but a BIG recognition from this set of studies is just how much of what practitioners are doing is <i>skill based</i>. Meaning everything from listening, to questioning, to termination, to referral – it's all takes experience, reflection and where possible targeted development. Another participant for example talking about teaching too quickly before forming the relationship – or more specifically – doing so because there wasn't a relationship...that's a trap I can see now that I have fallen into before. No doubt we do it because we fall onto what is comfortable for us and we want to feel that we are offering something – to prove our value to others and ourselves in many ways. But what we are really doing is missing the real relationship – the bond – true connection – real purpose. They have to know you care before they care what you know. I've heard that in sport psych literature for years...but I'd say the penny really dropped this year and it was from hearing my peers...people I trust, respect and <i>know</i>...say that its important. Sharing what happens when they haven't done that and sharing what happens when they have. The difference is stark!! It's like through doing this interview I've fast-tracked 100 learning lessons which I would have had to make myself, much the argument that Fifer et al made back in 2008...we can learn from others</p>
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who have made the mistakes. The key difference this year I figure is that I know these people and it almost makes their stories and insights more real, or relatable.

A key thing I feel that I need to watch out for in my write up therefore is how to convey people's story's in accessible and relatable ways; whilst remembering that the audience don't share the same existing relationship with the interviewees that I do. I think rich/extended quotes will help with that, that is, to offer extended quotes were people can immerse themselves in the interviewees narratives themselves. I appreciate however that a write up has its word limit! I'm not worried though, if there's one thing I've learnt over the past 2 years it's that I just need to get my ideas down onto paper – unfiltered. Dump it all down and then start to cut it back and shape it in accordance with the structure and flow needed in a publishable paper. It's like an example of feedback I had last week from David when he advised I might need to consider a line in my draft which said, “far from a mindless cult, CM practitioners chose to engage with the model selectively”. He was right in helping me recognize that that was more a vent of my own thoughts and feelings into the write up but that's the advantage of free-writing and then going back to consider what is really being said and why. Whose agenda is it...my data...or my own? You certainly come to learn a lot about your own beliefs, bias, concerns etc when researching an area near to your own practice!

Evaluation

The big breakthrough of late has been completing the narrative analysis and seeing how the stories practitioners tell really line up with the literature around integrative approaches. For me it's taken my understanding of integrative models of practice from seeing them as something 'half-in' or lassies faire to something actually logical, practical and helpful. It was helpful for example to read Lafferty & Tod's book chapter which put the whole traditional debate around models/schools of practice into perspective, and in doing so I could look past the judgements cast by opposing schools and instead to the real stories of people using approaches, their why and their how of service delivery. It's been great! Hopefully it can be of interest and use to others too.

Analysis

I think making sense of this I just need to keep my write up clean and to the point. Report what the participants stories are and what they might mean / be influenced by. A key part of that will be

		<p>remembering to use the Chimp Model stories as a <i>lens</i> into the wider agenda of models of practice adoption. Recent supervision has helped bring any (accidental!) reporting bias / projection to mind so as I put ‘pen to paper’ I’ll just keep in mind the notion that my findings could be representative of other models of practice. Will be interesting to see if they are from future research!</p> <p>Conclusion No significant conclusions here except the recognition that I feel much more settled in my own understanding of why I adopted the Chimp Model since doing this study. Obviously, I didn’t expect to be significantly different to the 10 participants of the study, but I didn’t really know what they would say and I certainly didn’t expect to crystalize my own understanding of the adoption and impact of a consulting model this much. It’s funny really, they say sometimes you don’t know what you don’t know. This study has certainly helped me appreciate a big chunk of that!</p> <p>Action Plan Crack on with the write up and avoid any projections / pontifications. Sure DT will be a good sounding board and peers in my PhD group / field when asked how it reads to them.</p>
End of Research-focused Reflective Diary		

Learning Outcome 4 – Reflections Concerning Dissemination Competency		
Date	Summary of Activity & Learning Objectives Matched	Reflection
4+5/9/17	<p>Occasion: RFU Coaches request for a presentation on ‘Psychology and Talent ID’</p> <p>4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits</p>	<p>I enjoyed the experience of presenting my first ‘dissemination of knowledge’ in this role (and to this group therefore). There is a good body of research (Collins et al) investigating PDCEs and also some work conducted in Rugby around similar factors. To my mind, the essential caveat is that the devil is in the detail (individual differences, context, environmental and a whole array of psychosocial factors play roles in the dynamic process of human development. The group agreed with this observation and agreed that putting people and processes in place to make the most of each player and situation is key. We are going to meet again to continue reviewing these aspects in Oct 2017.</p>

	<p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p>	<p>With regard to preparing the information I opted for a pre-session ‘overview document’ (to give people chance to read in advance and formulate opinion and questions ahead of the session). I circulated this by email and invited feedback. I was genuinely open to feedback and was also realistic in that feedback could be varied or non. At least I would gauge the audience, interest, and any Q’s arising.</p> <p>Feedback raised confirmed the groups agreement around PDCEs and my points around psych profiling not being a reliable Talent ID tool. There was one question asking if there is any evidence for emotional intelligence as a factor in sport performance/performer development – I returned the 2016 systematic review on the topic. It did open my eyes to the challenge of sharing information which will inevitably be interpreted through a lenses of current (/historic) context and understanding. In short, people interpret information uniquely. I knew this and was happy that we could build shared understanding through discussion at the presentation/discussion group day.</p> <p>Presentation day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce myself to the group - Circulate ideas + generate thought - Look for input + experiences ‘in the field’ - Action point to next steps (towards Position statement) <p>Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Felt comfortable talking in front of the group (usual adrenaline, Best mindset) - Feedback from the group was that the pre-release sheet helped prime their thoughts and questions. Would do again. <p>Group agreed that this is a helpful first step and that taking the research and field experience into a ‘working group’ was a logical and desirable step – staged approach appears a good idea.</p>
8/09/17	<p>Occasion: Presentation of psychological research, principles and practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buxton Opera house, general public (750+) - Presented segments on Albert Bandura, Sigmund Freud and practical applications, including 	<p>Description:</p> <p>An evening with Professor Steve Peters was a charity evening open to the general public and held at the Buxton Opera House. The theme of the evening was Optimising Human Performance. As part of the Chimp Management team, Steve had asked me and 4 other mentors if we would present on stage with him in a Q&A format, posing to be eminent psychologist of a given time period. I was asked to play Sigmund Freud and Albert Bandura. Asides this involvement, I was responsible for a Q+A at the close of the evening, responding to any questions (around 15 individual cases) from the public.</p>

	<p>responding to 1:1 Q+A at the end of the evening.</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>Feelings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excitement to present in conjunction with Steve, at a location as unique as the Opera House, and to present in front of Harriet (my partner) for the first time. - Adrenalised around how the presentation would go and what it would be up being! (Steve had only given me the finalised roles the day before and we weren't meeting to discuss and 'rehearse until 3 hours before the auditorium would fill with 800 people). - Confidence, that I would do my best, learn from the experience and deal with any slip ups. <p>Evaluation (good and bad):</p> <p>I enjoyed the experience greatly – learning a good deal and having fun. Committing to do the slots meant I had to do the work. And my research into Freud and Bandura helped me crystallise some learning with reference to my current work in sport. For example, the importance of 'talking' from the experiences of Freud and his concepts of manifest and latent content which helped remind me the importance of the manifest concerns of athletes (e.g. thoughts and behaviours) but also of the importance of listening about past or current relationships and how they may be working or not working on or for the athlete now (latent). This mirrored reading from Anderson (2000) in relation to intake in Sport Psychology that I had also recently read.</p> <p>This was a generally positive experience, so I wouldn't say there was 'bad' as such. Learning opportunities I identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation is key (time organization, self-reading, mindset on the night) - The mindfulness skills I had been working on as part of the case study proved helpful in the wings as a distraction approach, but it was especially powerful when combined with my 'grade A hits' (acceptance and commitment-based belief work). This was a helpful insight to the performance psychology I may practice with clients. NB: I actually reference this experience when working with a client and the self-disclosure appeared to have good resonance. <p>Analysis (make sense of what happened)</p> <p>The evening was enjoyable and bolstered my confidence in my ability to present to public audiences. It also gave me good insights into an original approach to presenting scientific knowledge to large scale audiences in at appeared to be a well-received and hence effective approach (i.e. the Q&A fashion, with elements of humour).</p>
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		<p>Conclusion / headlines As previous.</p> <p>Action Points None at this time.</p>
23 Oct 2017	<p>Occasion: U18 Development Camp – Group session (Leeds Mercure)</p> <p>4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits</p> <p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p> <p>4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological and other applications and developments</p>	<p>Description Group session for the U17s and U18s at the North development camp. Following minimal input from the coaches (they were happy for me to drive the agenda) I chose to do an introduction to psychology for the U17s and an introduction to the Chimp model for the U18s.</p> <p>Feelings I was feeling pretty excited ahead of the U18s session. I felt I had a well-constructed session with a great hook in the £5 give away task at the start. I was a little nervous about presenting in front of the coaches for the first time, but that was only because I wanted to do a good job so didn't see it as too much of an issue.</p> <p>Evaluation The hook at the start of the session definitely made people sit up and engage, which was exactly what I wanted! Will definitely use that again! I think simplifying things and trying to move away from PowerPoint (i.e. using paper and pens on the two walls) worked really well and feedback from the players was that the session was helpful and entertaining – which is what I wanted to achieve. In that regard I think as success of this session was having realistic objectives, namely to at tone of 'none judgement' and normalizing a whole host of thinking and feelings which I know are common at youth level sport. A limitation of the session was that one feedback form said, "I would have liked more time on ways to manage my mind", so I could look at a few practical tips in future sessions. However, I think I need to remain realistic of what is achievable in 30 minutes with a big group such as that. It's good that that player is engaged enough to want to learn more. Getting them thinking was my objective! I could always do a 'practical tips' session with them at the next camp.</p>

		<p>On a practical note, the room was probably too small for the group as it got really hot in there – so that’s something I could look into for future camps, and if that is the only room then I’ll need to open the windows and keep sessions short and sharp.</p> <p>Analysis Overall, I would say this was a good first group delivery with England. Engagement in the room was good and the feedback from players and coaches was good. The U18s seem willing to engage with psychology. The skill is definitely in making the sessions non-threatening for them to speak up though. Once they do get going, they have some great questions and insights to share! For future sessions remember to keep things practical when I can, it’s not unusual after all for athletes to favour psych’s who give good practical tips and advice (Orlick & Partington, 1987).</p> <p>Conclusion Other than checking the room a little earlier I’m happy with this delivery. Takeaways for me are around keeping sessions for young people quite reflective as opposed to ‘teachy’ where possible (get them thinking and talking and maximise engagement), but also don’t be afraid to offer direct advice or tangible tips when asked. They are only young after all and don’t have all the answers!</p> <p>Action Plan Ring Penny ahead of camps in the future and check what space we have. Is it big enough for the group? Is the session you are planning suitable to the environment you have?</p>
12/4/18	<p>Occasion: Bath University Undergraduate Lecture</p> <p>4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits</p> <p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p>	<p>Description Was asked to present a session to final year Sport Science students at Bath Uni about my experiences as someone who studied sports science and is now an applied practitioner. I thought it would be a good opportunity to share the findings from my SLR and to sense check if they make sense / are helpful to pre-training practitioners (i.e. they haven’t started Stage 2 yet) and to draw on some of the approaches I’ve observed in teaching sessions at LJMU and England Rugby this year.</p> <p>Feelings It actually felt pretty good doing this session. There wasn’t too much pressure as I knew Rachel (the programme leader) well and didn’t think an undergrad Sports science class was too intimidating! My</p>

	<p>4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological and other applications and developments</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p> <p>4.5 Provide feedback to clients</p>	<p>prep helped a lot with that too as I felt the session structure and content were strong before I headed down to bath.</p> <p>On the day I had the usual adrenaline before starting, but nothing undesired or unhelpful.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>The group seemed to engage with my content pretty well and I'm glad I included some exercises (e.g. MentiMeter voting, case studies, Q&A). It was interesting that only 8% of the group wanted to go on to Sport Psych careers though, so I'm glad I planned it for a sport science as opposed to sport psych audience!</p> <p>It was really interesting to ask for live feedback from the audience round what they thought the key characteristics of a good practitioner are <i>before</i> I showed my SLR findings. The overlap was SO clear! I guess that also validates my recognition that much of what the research has found re characteristics over the past 30 years is the same. It just shows it's time to stop researching that area I guess, or at least to ask new questions.</p> <p>There was some nice feedback at the end of the session (collected via MentiMeter) in which one person said they liked how humble I am about my work in prof sport. I don't know if my characteristics research primed them / me on that, but it's a nice point to keep in mind when I present in the future. It's always been something that I think Steve is good at, being self-effacing during talks. Who wants an arrogant of glory-grabbing psych??</p> <p>A different person gave feedback however that they felt pressured when I pointed at people to give input. I shared that with Harriet (my GF) and she said "yeah, I'd hate that – definitely don't do that to people who are scared of big groups enough without that!". I guess I hadn't thought about that too much, especially coming from a rugby environment this year where players often speak up – though I know there are quieter / shyer people there too.</p> <p>My learning from that feedback therefore is not to 'force' people into contributing in the room – it's not necessary really and the last think I want to do is make people uncomfortable in my sessions.</p> <p>Analysis</p>
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		<p>I'm glad I did this talk as it helped me practice sharing my SLR findings and to grasp whether they are actually interesting to practitioners. It's also helped me recognize a few pointers about how I present, and in particular about considering how my talks may feel for audience members with social anxieties.</p> <p>It's been good to put myself back in 'BSc mode' and remember what it was like back then and how little they actually know!! I guess I'll say the same about where I am now in another 10 years.</p> <p>Conclusion All the points have probably been made in evaluation and analysis, although the final point is just to do more talks like this if the chance comes up as it was good learning experience away from my usual context of sport.</p> <p>Action Plan Consider what your talk is like for people afraid of group interaction – is it friendly and safe for them? Explore how you could improve that aspect moving forward.</p>
20 July 18	<p>Occasion: BBC Radio live interview</p> <p>4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>Description Was called today pretty last minute to see if I would do a live interview for BBC Radio during their sport news section concerning Geraint Thomas' potential Tour De France win. The BBC had rung Chimp to see if Steve would interview, but he couldn't due to contractual term, so I was put forward for it. I only had 30 mins to prep for it, which seems a long time, but I was definitely pretty nervous!</p> <p>I managed to get a quick supervision call in with Steve and he gave me some great pointers. The main thing was to have 2-3 points which I really wanted to stick to / get across and to not get too distracted by the questions. For example, Steve helped me to realise that Geraint, like most athletes, is a <i>professional</i>. That means he knows his job and he knows what comes with it. That's a hugely important principle not just for this interview, but for working in sport as a psych full stop. Do the athletes know what their sport entails? ...the highs, lows, challenges and opportunities. Once I had that angle I felt settled for the interview. Also, I knew that they would likely ask me "what is Geraint thinking" so I had prepared a line around 'not being a mind-reader, but that typically people would want to do their best in any situation'.</p> <p>Feelings</p>

	<p>I was definitely full of adrenaline before the call! There's just something almost unavoidable about getting adrenaline before live radio to 2+ million listeners! I took a big breath though just before being connected and deliberately spoke as slow as possible without wanting to sound like a robot!</p> <p>The call went super quick, and afterwards I felt really proud of myself for giving it a go. It would definitely have been easy to say no!</p> <p>I felt a bit awkward listening back that I didn't answer the guys questions quite as directly as you could (I felt more like a politician's answer!). However, my family and Steve said the interview sounded really professional and that was the overriding tone I wanted it to have. I probably won't get any radio slots answering so uncontroversially, but I felt it was important to represent our profession professionally and not sensationalise the events or my opinion about them.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>Great to experience a formal interview of that type. It was strange just being left on 'hold' whilst listening to the show before the sport section and definitely got the blood pumping! The important learning though was about picking general professional principles and getting them across as opposed to entering into too much personal opinion. I'll never know if that's the type of interview the BBC or listeners want to be fair, but Chimp Management were happy with it and I certainly didn't have to worry afterwards about what Geraint Thomas or Team Sky would say about it either – which I think is a good test / benchmark</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p> <p>No doubt the more of these things I do the more comfortable I will get with them. Compared to my interview about Tyson Fury and the special for CNN, this felt much more rushed. I didn't really have a choice with that though so just want to absorb the concepts and learning for future instances. If Steve hadn't been available, what would I have said? Probably 80% the same, but with a little less sport-specific insight. I guess that's something else I can take forward from this – always have a chat with people about that world before commenting on it whether possible – a little bit a contextual knowledge can go a long way. Besides that, just keep it professional and don't get pulled into offering judgement or personal opinion on people or events...sound bites can get around!!</p> <p><i>Conclusion</i></p>
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		<p>Great experience and something I should put myself forward for if the opportunity arises again.</p> <p>Action Plan Pick and convey 2-3 key points Keep it professional in tone, non-judgmental and supportive Remember to speak slowly, it'll still be fast to everyone else!</p>
25/9/18	<p>Occasion: RFU Pathway Staff: 'Group Learning' session</p> <p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p> <p>4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological and other applications and developments</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p> <p>4.5 Provide feedback to clients</p>	<p>Description Following the 3is training course I completed at LJMU, I put together a summary session (on Group Learning) for the coaches and support staff (e.g. S&C, medical) at England Rugby. This had come off the back of a few discussions I had had with coaches who wanted to know how to engage athletes in different ways during 'classroom' sessions (e.g. preview or review meetings).</p> <p>It was really easy structuring the session thanks to the resources I took from the 3is programme (e.g. pedagogical ideas + information, images, activities, etc). In particular I found it helpful to create a Session Planner for the coaches, which in turn used to inform my practice / creation in this session.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting I asked for feedback (1 thing I did well in the session, 1 thing I could improve) from the group and thought these two suggestions for improvement were worth further reflection:</p> <p>A. "Where is the evidence for the slide about how much people take in? I've heard it banded around a lot - but is it that universal / reliable?"</p> <p>B. "Great ideas - but isn't there a place for just teaching people directly and with repetition?"</p> <p>Feelings I was glad to get the feedback as it's the kind of challenge I had invited and encouraged. Aside that the only feelings I had with regard to this were that I felt a bit silly when first reading feedback A as I realized I didn't actually have the supporting research! ...more on that in evaluation below.</p> <p>Evaluation and Analysis Creating the workshop helped consolidate my knowledge about group learning and provided a great opportunity to practice it with a group. In particular it was helpful to try the 'small to large' activity at the start, which is something I recognized as important from my Bath lecture in April (i.e. that not</p>

everyone will be confident to speak up straight away). That activity seemed to work well and it also gave me a great feel for the knowledge in the room before setting off.

In terms of the feedback outlined above:

Feedback A: this was a really helpful pointer from Gordon as it just struck me directly with the learning “don’t pitch what you can’t defend!”. I had lifted the image from the slides of the 3is programme and now I’ve looked into it further it turns out that the Cone of Experience (Dale, 1946) is not based on any scientific evidence! Obviously that’s helpful for me to learn about that concept in general as I’ve definitely heard other people hold it up as fact; but more importantly it taught me not to include any ‘research’ or ‘facts’ that I haven’t really checked out and could defend myself.

Feedback B: Jim’s question was another good one and he later forwarded me and the others coaches a newspaper article stating that ‘traditional methods help children more than current approaches’. The first thing with all of this was that I didn’t feel I had to defend anything. This was good challenge from Jim and his points were well worth exploring.

I read the article he shared and checked out the background. There is indeed good support for rote learning in education when all you need to do is recall information or sequences (e.g. times tables). That’s something we already promote for strike plays or lineout calls – so no debate there. The issue however I’ve learnt is what happens then when players have to make decisions? Do they really understand the full complex picture of events? Can they process multiple sources of information? Do they even have the cognitive and problem-solving skills to overcome decision making challenges? All of those skills are supplementary to the basic ‘knowledge’ it seems Jim talking about when he asked, “can’t we just teach them straight?”. The whole body of research and literature concerning enquiry-based learning addresses that very point. For example, Delf (2017) outlines that helping people learn is as much about helping them learn *how* to think, just not what to think. I think my main reflection on this feedback therefore is that you have to understand what you are trying to achieve in the classroom to then choose your methods. If it’s pure memory – then direct instruction, rote learning, and tests can be great. If it’s about more deeper understanding, complex decision making, shared understanding and helping people improve their thinking skills *beyond* pure

		<p>information recall – then it seems a ‘more knowledgeable other’ (Vygotsky, 1930/78) doing a ‘chalk and talk’ lecture might not be best. Context is essential!</p> <p>Conclusion Good learning provided by sharing information, ideas and insights with a group of coaches and inviting their feedback / challenge on the session. Definitely learnt not to reference / promote ‘evidence’ I can’t back up! Also helped me delve deeper into pedagogical philosophy, principles and practices than I would have otherwise.</p> <p>Action Plan Feedback to Jim and Gordon about your findings and reflections. Be mindful of promoting ‘research evidence’ you can’t substantiate</p>
12 Nov 18	<p>Occasion: RFU Psychology Department Proposal</p> <p>4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits</p> <p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p> <p>4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological and other applications and developments</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p> <p>4.5 Provide feedback to clients</p>	<p>Description I was asked by the Heads of the Professional Rugby Department at England Rugby to present an overview of the services I have been providing in the Pathway, and to offer my opinion of whether a centralized ‘psychology department’ would be a good idea and possible.</p> <p>Feelings I felt comfortable with my content ahead of the session, having met with Dean (Head of my department) a few weeks ago to understand what he and the Board needed to hear from me. I was slightly perturbed today though when they called to ask where I was 2 hours before my start! Turns out Dean had miscommunicated the format to me and that I had been invited to join from 9am, not 11. Hey ho – spilt milk. I felt my session went well, although the post-it note exercise probably wasn’t necessary (Did I really draw on their feedback anyway??). One thing I did have mixed emotions around was listening in to Kate Hays talk about the EISs approach and general philosophies and practices etc. – more on that hereafter...</p> <p>Evaluation Thought this was a great thought exercise to actually have to summarise and to many extents justify my work. At times the session felt a little bit like a pitch to the board, and that’s definitely how I felt</p>

when Kate stood up and started talking about the EISs models, practitioner depth and so forth. In truth it was just interesting to hear that as a 'fly on the wall' as I'm not sure I would get the chance otherwise!

What was really impressive with the clear energy and enthusiasm each practitioner had for their area. Everyone tells a good story at the very least, though it's clear we are all operating in quite different ways due to very different contexts (e.g. sizes of teams, numbers of delivery days, different philosophies of practice).

Analysis

I guess my key reflections from today are:

- There is more than one way to skin a cat. Every practitioner pitched a good overview of their work and each approach seemed valid for the context they're working in.
- It's interesting that Women's/EIS are using Spotlight as their main tool. Be good to speak with some athletes and see how they are really finding it? I'm just not sure it goes deep enough? I guess you can go deeper when required.
- The RFU doesn't seem to have a plan re integration – and I'm not even sure it's a reality after today. We could definitely share ideas better if we had a Lead pulling it together, but with the current budget restrictions how could you take 3-4 days a year off a Psych who has only got 15 days total with their team??
- I'm comfortable with the approach we are taking in the Pathway as I think it fits the development remit we ultimately serve. I guess that's also why Kate is using a more performance focused approach with the Women's as perhaps they feel they need to deliver more 'now'.
- The case study approach seemed to communicate what I'm doing with The NPP quite nicely. I'm not sure how else I could demonstrate the impact we are having across the pathway? It reminds me of the chat I had with Nicky up in Newcastle – you can show all of the 1:1 or group contact time you want in an annual review – but how do you know it's made any difference? I think the NPP Buckets format has helped improve that this year, but I've been greatly supported by Dean and his understanding of psychology in that regard. If it were

someone like Mark who only deals with numbers, how might I have shown impact of the programme to him?

Conclusion

I'm happy with today overall. I prepped well and tried my best – can't ask for more than that from myself. I'll look for some feedback from Dean and Nigel next week, although Dean was happy today. Will be interesting to see what the RFU do decide re psychology moving forward. Definitely wish I'd been there in the 'glory days' of bottomless budgets!

Action Plan

I think it'd be worth exploring how I could enhance the 'measurability' / 'impact rating' of my work for those who do have a positivist standpoint. One for a Chimp team day I think.

UPDATE: 7/12/18:

I revisited Keegan (2016) to see what he and the associated literature advised around tracking progress in interventions. I think my key reflection is just to ensure you establish exactly what the client aims and objectives for the service are - as Keegan puts it, "the aims of the game" (p.48). For example, if the RFU set narrow parameters "just help us create world champions", then it is down to me to communicate what I believe the psychological reality is (i.e. the performance and personal issues frequently overlap and interlink meaning I may find myself dealing with performance enhancement, talent development, psychological well-being, clinical and subclinical issues (e.g. recognise and refer), injury rehabilitation, life skills and character development or otherwise (e.g. Henriksen, Alfermann, & Lavellee, 2004; Stambulova et al., 2006). By attempting to identify, articulate and evaluate the client's expectations, the chances of me simply 'missing the mark' when it comes to co-creating and delivering meaningful outcome objectives is vastly reduced. Too many extents, it seems that when I met all of those people in the room that day, they would each have had their own agenda and their own impression of what needs to be done. The reality is that were I ever to take a Lead role I would have to do quite a degree of consultancy to identify what each party wants, whether that is achievable within the scope of our practice, and then communicate my strategy so that the client expectations and my intentions were aligned or known otherwise.

<p>Sept / Dec 18</p>	<p>Occasion: Presenting my preliminary SLR results for feedback to the LJMU PhD cohort and at the DSEP Annual Conference</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings 4.5 Provide feedback to clients</p>	<p>Description As part of my LJMU programme I was asked by my project supervisor to present an overview of my findings and research to date to my peers and to the BPS research group.</p> <p>Feelings I felt comfortable with the size of the audience and the context I knew I would be delivering (e.g. seminar style, familiar room, familiar people - with the exception of one or two lecturers). I wanted to explore what components would work for the audience, that is, what information and style of delivery would be appropriate for them. I knew for example that a percentage of the audience would be new to the content I was sharing and would likely have an interest in it (as neophyte practitioners), yet I also wanted the content to be rich enough to give an overview to the expert researchers would also be listening and could offer me feedback.</p> <p>Evaluation It felt preparing and presenting my research was a helpful exercise for a few reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process helped me to consolidate where I was (in terms of my research journey/process, thinking and findings) - Helped me to question and identify ‘what is important?’ for the target audience (particularly as this group is the kind of audience I hope this research could inform/help i.e. aspiring practitioners and their educators) - A good opportunity to practice effective dissemination (ahead of doing it for real a few months later at a national conference) - A good opportunity for feedback on my presentation skills / style - A good opportunity for input from my peers and experts in the field <p>I received feedback from my lecturers that they thought my content on delivery style had been appropriate and impactful. In particular I found the ability to have a conversational style (due to the small room and audience size) to fit my own preference as it allowed for a flow of conversation and exchange – as opposed to a keynote style presentation with little or no interaction.</p>
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		<p>I also sought and received feedback from my peers who described the session as insightful and informative to their own development. For example, one peer asked if she could take a photo of my summary slide for her own reference in her ongoing professional development.</p> <p>What was particularly helpful from the session with the ability to seek feedback from others on my research. One of the lecturers in the audience posed helpful questions around the practical implications my findings could spring. This was a new line of enquiry which I have not considered so was a very fruitful outcome for me from this venture.</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Overall, this was a relatively straightforward but worthwhile exercise. I found the experience of having to plan, deliver and review the session to be helpful in the development of my research and dissemination processes.</p> <p>Gathering new ideas and lines of enquiry from the audience was particularly helpful and well received and showed the benefits of sharing your research and opening yourself up to feedback in the pursuit of advancing knowledge and ideas.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Was happy with this particular instance of dissemination. If anything it was a good reinforcement of the principles of small group interaction I have used in the past (e.g. clarity of purpose, clarity of content, group engagement, open to input and feedback).</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take these principles forward into the dissemination of my research as the DSEP Annual Conference in December. <p>UPDATE: 7/12/18 I presented my research at DSEP this week and it seemed to go well (except for a few nerves at the start...I almost forgot what one of my slides was showing! Feedback from observers was that they didn't notice any blips though).</p> <p>Overall, the audience seemed to receive the findings well and the best insight came during open questions when Dave Alcock asked me a question... "What level / capacity of role are the sport psyches' in my research?" (e.g. interns, lecturers who do some applied work, FT practitioners, FT at elite level practitioners?). This is a great question as it's not something I had considered or included in</p>
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		my analysis and will take forward now. My plan is to analyze the data for this information and report my findings in the write up. Well worth doing the presentation for this input alone!
6 Jan 2019	Occasion: U20s Camp – Session 1 4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings	<p>Description Just watched my video back from today’s ‘Session 1’ with the U20s.</p> <p>Feelings I was excited to get going with this one and had confidence in the session structure and my resources (timeline, bingo bros, slides, etc.). I felt a real spring in my step this year, compared to last, and that’s likely because I’ve put myself forward much more this year after feedback last year that players would have welcomed more psychology.</p> <p>Evaluation What was good?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The timeline definitely helped orientate the group. It gave a ‘real’ sense of how much group work we’ll actually do (only 3 hours) and that time is pretty precious from now until the JWC. - The All Blacks story was an easy way to hook the group and a good few players had a strong idea about Red/Blue, so hopefully that was a good choice for promoting further applied discussion from this group. Aarons question for example around ‘is red head always bad’ was great for helping them understand the nuances of emotional states – <i>what works for you?</i> - The Bingo Bros call out worked a treat when Ben D came up and couldn’t think of anything to say! That perfectly illustrated freeze in the room and I felt comfortable playing on it in the room. Also think the act of getting the lads up was well received (e.g. people clapping and having a go) – something to keep, therefore. <p>What was bad?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swore twice on the video. Both times were when I was giving examples of Red Head thinking, so they were contextual – but not sure I need or want that in my delivery really. Watching it back I could definitely give the same examples or equivalent without swear words. Definitely

helpful watching the video therefore as wouldn't have noticed that. Action point to be more language conscious next time.

- Did I speak too fast? That's been something I've worked on managing in the past (say for keynotes) but watching this video I think it's either *too much* talk (in terms of getting the players thinking rather than listening) or just being a bit too eager to contribute. Probably a bit of both. I think the energy level I'm bringing is good, but next time just drop it one gear so that people have more time to process what I'm saying / encouraging them to reflect upon – they can't do that if its tommy gun presenting. That's something Physio Kate fed back to me last year with the U18s so it's something I want to watch out for more mindfully.

Analysis

As a first session of the programme I'm happy with how this went. I prepared what I hoped was a well-structured session and gave it my energy, the feedback came back positively from players (e.g. Tom W, Tom H, Cam) and from the coaches + Hass. There pointers were that it was inclusive and set a good tone for what's to come. In that regard I hit my objectives of orientating the room and conceptualizing our challenges/objectives as per the frameworks of enquiry-based learning (Pedaste et al, 2018).

On critical reflection I think I could lower my contribution a notch next session and remove any bad language. I also need to build on the Bingo Bros early take-up now and make sure the leverage it creates around people not wanting to look daft in front of the group is well support so that no one feels too uncomfortable or out of sorts on Tuesday.

Conclusion

Think I covered the bases on this one really. Good preparation, seemed to hit my objectives, engaged observers and feedback, and reviewed tonight. Quick turnaround now before Tuesday but got some good pointers below...

Action Plan

- Remember to be enthusiastic but not overly – keep to one or two points and slow down so people have chance to think about them.
- Be mindful of swearing. Target is no more instances in camp.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build on the Bingo Bros concept tomorrow around training – be visible so people know they can grab you if concerned or not getting it. <p>UPDATE: 8/1/19 Ran my second session yesterday with the group. Seemed to go really well at the time and having just watched my video back mi glad I didn't swear once, and my talking percentage was way down from Session 1 – much more enquiry-based learning going on in small groups. Was great at the end when Steve (the head coach) drew from points made in the session to tie the content right back up to our whole philosophy of play – that really shows the content is relevant and helping give people a shared language. Hass's observational feedback was positive too – he thought I pitched the session well and the concepts are clear. Will take more of the same into the next camp.</p>
30 Jan 2019	<p>Occasion: U20s Camp – Session 3 (pre-Ireland)</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Third group session with the U20s. We used it to review learning to date – utilising a quick knowledge primer (a small group quiz) and then loads of big group sharing and finishing on what we needs to prime for the rest of the 6Nations (what will help us on and off the field of play and what).</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>Really enjoyed this session as the lads were on good form (buzzed due to game week I'd say) and knowledge retention and idea sharing seemed really sharp. They've definitely grasped the language of red-blue which seems to help them share + discuss good practical examples and obstacles from the games so far – be interesting to see what they can transfer into the France fixture.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>This was a good session about just facilitating a group to reflect. That's what I would take out of it really – that not many teams review games or events at the psychological level. For example, the coaches have talked to each player about <i>their</i> game, and there's been some undirected talk about pressure to beat France – but I feel like I helped them take that head on today. It was good to hear Marcus talk about his learning from the Ireland game, as a lot of players would have been thinking about that game and not sure how they could have influenced it – but the reality was they couldn't. Not sure that honesty / disclosure would have come out without tonight's session – so it's just good support for holding sessions like thin in the future.</p>

		<p>There were a few times when I could see a few players not on task in the break outs, but I think I have to accept few people can concentrate for a whole session – especially a group this age. Keeping the sessions short and pretty quick pace seems a good idea therefore – although I’m reflected now that I should cut off good chat amongst the majority just to feel like I’ve not bored the few.</p> <p>Analysis If I did this session again I would keep the same format as I think it allowed for honest conversation and good reflection and learning amongst the squad. I recognised from watching my recording though that a few lads were ‘off-task’ and I remember thinking about them during the session. On reflection now I’m just going to carry on for future sessions as planned and not adapt unnecessarily for a few lads – that’s professional judgement at the time obviously though I member my tutor on the 3is stating that a teachers role is sometimes to tell disruptive kids to be quiet to protect the learning of others. I’ve got no problems with doing that either, so I’ll consider it in the future if needed.</p> <p>It was also good to see how interested / involved the coaches were by the end of the session. I doubt they often get such rich discussions with the players on a whole like that so it’s good we could facilitate it to happen – will see what they think during our meeting tomorrow.</p> <p>Conclusion Glad about the session and overall how I facilitated the room to good reflection, discussion and action planning. Excited to get more ‘game data’ after France.</p> <p>Action Plan N/A</p>
15 March 2019	<p>Occasion: Parents Session with Richard Shorter</p> <p>4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services</p>	<p>Description As part of the RFU Pathway delivery programme, I co-presented to the parents of the under 20s with Richard Shorter.</p> <p>Richard is one of our pathway-partners, who has a day job as a Church Minister but who also works at promoting understanding, insights, and support for parents in sport.</p> <p>I just found this session really interesting because I felt I was there to deliver the ‘Hard facts’ around what the pathway is like for a young player (in terms of camp time, some obstacles, the official</p>

	<p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>psychological support we put in place for players) but the way Richard facilitated his half of the session really got me thinking about how to better engage parent audiences.</p> <p>Feelings I felt the way Richard used a music quiz really engaged his audience. I also really liked the manner in which he got the parents on board by not seeming to ‘lecturey’ or, ironically...parenting! The whole thing had a real feel good vibe about it, which isn't necessarily the same outcome I think I would have arrived at if I presented the session myself.</p> <p>Evaluation The best thing about this experience was just seeing how somebody else engages an audience, particular parents. I do think that Richard has a slightly different slant on things from me because he is a parent himself and he definitely lent on that throughout and it seemed to offer him a level of “I really <i>do</i> know it's hard because I have three of my own” which I just wouldn't be able to achieve.</p> <p>However, I think the way he used a music quiz, for example REM's everybody hurts during a round which was all about the pain young players and their families can endure through sport. Each round would open up a rich level of discussion amongst tables to try and work out what the theme of the round was and where that related to them. It really got people talking about things, which if you presented them to dryly or academically, then there's no way people would open up or engage with the content as much. It reminds me of the session we did at LJMU when Martin was trying to help people understand that how you communicate research or sport psychology principles to an audience is just as important as what you communicate.</p> <p>I think other good thing that Richard did was to take his time and not rush into too much heavy content too soon. For example, the session was well framed using Don (RFU Head of Regional Academies) to open with a brief overview of the Pathway, so that parents who are perhaps less familiar with it could orientate themselves. But the mainstay of the session focused on the parents, it got them talking, sharing experiences, laughing and some even crying about the experience of supporting their children. It was really quite powerful.</p> <p>I was glad by the end of the session to have a better understanding for some of the challenges that the parents themselves face; and I think it was reassuring for them to hear about the support that is available during camps for players and the red flag service when they're away from camp.</p>
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	<p>Analysis</p> <p>Reflecting on this session I think it's just been helpful to see more creative ways of engaging different types of audience. I'm usually quite creative in the way I do present sessions, but I've don't know why I would have felt like I needed to present a dryer type of session to parents? Having just stopped and actually thought about that, it's probably because I would want to reassure parents of the standards and practices that we have in place for their children. However my reflection now is that actually parents to express <i>themselves</i>. They want to be heard, to talk, to share. True it was then nice for them to hear about what is available for their children...but a parent session from what I saw today should always focus wherever possible <i>on the parents</i>. Seems stupid saying it now – but that’s a big recognition for me from this session.</p> <p>A few months back I watched Richard present the session to the under 18 parents and that was great too (the one where you use the Jenga and had all the parents round shouting different bits of advice). The common thread that I learned from watching him is to get people talking about real experiences. To normalise how hard it is to be a parent of a teenager who sometimes doesn't say a thing, and at other times is crying on your shoulder. I guess a reality for me is that I haven't had the experience yet as a parent, so it is worthwhile going to a few more parents talks and picking up good real-life examples so I can better relate to parents when presenting content myself.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Not sure there's much else to be done on this one, however I think a good action point is to stay connected to Richard so we can continue to bounce ideas along route.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>If I was responsible for delivering a session like this myself (solo) in the future, I would reference this experience to remember that a parent’s session isn't about “let me show you what I'm doing with your children”. A session for parents can/should ultimately help and support <i>the parents</i>. A good way of doing that is to get them talking and sharing experience, and from there you can identify the challenges they are facing and show empathy for them. After that, if appropriate, you can show how your work is helping their children/them – but remember to relate to them as people first! Empathy in action.</p>
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<p>23-25 April 2019</p>	<p>Occasion: U20s Camp - Session 5</p> <p>4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>Description</p> <p>Fourth session of the winning edge programme yesterday. We used the photo sharing activity which I had borrowed from Patrick's workshop earlier in the year and the personal-disclosure mutual-sharing literature in sport psychology. We also did some tasks which explored what factors are that will contribute to a good World Cup - which sparked some interesting discussion and reflection amongst the lads. Some good takeaways for me to...</p> <p>Feelings</p> <p>I felt having the senior players involved in this session was really good. I'm glad I integrated them well because last year they seemed a bit at odds with the group, but this year they were much better integrated. It was great for example having someone like Fraser offering his insights from last year as the lads really listen to him. I think the learning for me there is just around making sure I continue to integrate players in the future. That's one of my regrets from Warriors: how I didn't integrate new players better - but I didn't really have that awareness at that time, so I'm glad it's improved here.</p> <p>I felt a bit nervous having introduced the new photo sharing idea, but I think it's a good example of the scaffolding principle that I've been reading about in teachers research. True, it's not like I'm showing them how to think or learn, but I am creating a platform for them to share more than they likely would. Tom's story about his parents fostering was really interesting and that set the tone perfectly for others to take the exercise seriously / at face value.</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>A particularly good moment of this session came when one of the lads said, "surely a good World Cup is only if we win it". I'm obviously used to coming across that kind of outcome focus in one-to-one work, and in sport in general, but in a group setting like this it was really interesting to hold back and see how the group approached it. I think a really good thing that happened when I look back on it is that I didn't jump in. I remember recognising that earlier in the programme - that I was almost too eager to fill the space. However in this session I felt I bit my tongue and soon enough the players had engaged in their own discussion around the point. That's great progress for me, and I think it shows that the group have grown in the confidence and ability to debate important topics.</p> <p>The outcome they came to was also pretty inspiring: agreeing that they're just going to focus on getting themselves in the best place possible and giving every single game the best shot possible. I</p>
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don't think I need to reference too much sport psychology literature to argue the case for a process driven team having a higher probability of success. In a nuance however, I did like the point that Joe made about not using a process focus as an excuse. Instead it means a hell of a lot of hard work and task focus in the face of adversity.

On reflection for me, there's definitely been group sessions in the past when I felt like as the psychologist people don't think you want them to talk about winning or in fact sometimes the opposite - that people think you're only going talk about positivity and 'we'll win whatever attitude'. It's striking me now that perhaps the reason this instance has resonated so much to me is because the outcome is so similar to the way I would approach the competition myself??? Of course I want to go and win, but I would make sure I put all of my energies and focus on the things I control towards winning. This is a good recognition for me because it's making me think... How would I feel if the lads chose to approach the competition in a different way???

...Reflection on that question is: (A) that it's good to have reflected on this because I wouldn't have noticed this point from this session otherwise!; and (2) that if a team wants to prepare in a certain way then me going against it is not going to help them, in fact it's likely only to detract (because it will create a certainty). So, my recognition here is that in future preparation/support of people/teams if they do choose to go to a competition with a different mental approach than that which I or research would advise, then I just need to get on board and support their endeavors (after helping them to understand their choices and the possible consequences). At the end of the day if someone chooses to do it one way and they want me to support them, then as long as it's not illegal or unethical then I need to get in their corner and support them. There is more than one way to skin a cat 😊

Analysis

I think the best thing about this session is the percentage to which it was client led. Brown & Fletcher (2017) reviewed the effectiveness of sport psychology interventions and found that the group level interventions are often most effective when players or coaches are enabled to lead. To that end, I think the point that we identified and discussed today really came from the bottom up. They were real life psychological challenges and opportunities, which I'm glad we have been able to facilitate the group to identify and consider.

For me clearly there has been some learning around being aware of how to manage myself in the future if clients choose to go a certain way which might not be my own preference. I have been

		<p>working on my professional philosophy of late and I definitely want to work with empowerment and a client-centered nature, I have to accept that their choices will be their own inherently.</p> <p>Conclusion Feedback from this session has been really positive from the lads. We got some great learning points and action points to take forward into the JWC, and the coaches were happy that the lads appeared to hit the agendas which they (the coaches) had identified with pre-session.</p> <p>It was definitely worth priming Tom to speak first in the bingo Bros activity as his poignant story really set the tone.</p> <p>I've noticed more in this session that it can feel good when clients align with your own views/perspectives, but that's just something for me to be mindful of in the future if I'm feeling countertransference in sessions as it could be because the client is acting incongruously to my own values/approach to life which is fine – but just something for me to manage my response to. An appropriate method would be to remind myself that I'm there to support the client to work towards their goals, so I can share ideas and help them reflect – but I cannot make their decisions for them.</p> <p>Action Plan Really happy with the session to be honest, just to be aware of the previous point around groups/people choosing to go with an option I might not myself.</p>
20-22 May 2019	Occasion: U20s Camp – final session 4.1 Promote psychological principles, practices, services and benefits 4.2 Provide psychological advice and guidance to others and facilitate the use of psychological services 4.3 Communicate the processes and outcomes of psychological	<p>Description Held the final session of the U20s programme on Tuesday. It was really good fun to be honest and I think the lads pitched it really well. I'm going to use this final reflection to capture a few thoughts from the session, the feedback and my time with the 20s as a whole.</p> <p>Feelings I guess my overriding feelings were happiness (that the programme seemed to have gone and culminated so well) and pride (in the effort that the lads put in – they've all shown that all the way through really, but it's still always nice to see and acknowledge it). I was a little bit nervous before we started because there's that element of less control when you aren't solely leading a session – but I think we had done some great preparation ahead of the session, plus I think one thing I've learnt this year from the NPP camps is just how able these lads are. For example, I've seen Alex, Joe, Tom, and</p>

<p>and other applications and developments 4.4 Prepare and present evidence in formal settings</p>	<p>James all step up and do some great things around the NPP or U20s camps so I was pretty confident they could help pull this session off – plus I knew no matter what there would be some great experiential learning...for example if one had frozen a little or not projected their voice - it would all have been good learning and experience for them.</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>In terms of what went well, I think helping the LG group to lead was a big success of this session. I'm not sure the session would have been quite as creative if I had of left them to it though! I learnt that mistake last year when a group were given some responsibility for a meeting, but I didn't meet them beforehand and it just ended up a really dry hour with one players talking whilst the rest of his group look frustrated, caught in the headlights, or fast asleep! That's definitely been learning moments leading to new learning outcomes for me (Hutter et al, 2017).</p> <p>Another thing I'd like to reflect on is why I'm so happy the story share is continuing? I've been reading Huttel et al (2015) paper on what trainees want in supervision and there was reference to a supervision model (Loganbill et al, 1982) which talks about practitioners wanting to understand their emotions and motivations for/within consultancy. Why am I happy about them choosing to continue the story share then? I guess my primary reason is that I'm just happy they have found an approach which has resonated with them. It's great to see them sharing and listening to one another about things which often have absolutely nothing to do with Rugby! (e.g. family members, challenges, family pets, great holidays, role models – all sorts!). When I'm reflecting on this now, I guess that really shows my humanistic roots – the fact that at the middle of every consultancy – I want to see and know the <i>people</i>, the <i>person</i>. ...Besides that, it's obviously nice when you take a risk and it pays off (What Hutter et al 2017 referred to as 'experimenting'). I wasn't sure how they would respond to telling personal stories to one another. Would they do it? Would they be honest enough? Would they care?! ...I think the reason I'm so happy for them is because it's also a spillover of another emotion – its appreciation. I have actually grown to appreciate this group of people more, in terms of giving them more credit for able they are to care for one another. That's something I've observed on a more general level across the 2 years with England Rugby – the young players, whilst sometimes classic impulsive, stubborn, cocky, irrational little chimps – are also caring, troop based, and ultimately sentimental humans, with plenty of good chimp traits shining through. I'm glad they kept the story share therefore because I figure it shows more about them than what might first meet</p>
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the eye or external impression. They are young men looking to connect and understand others. I'm really glad that the feedback (re encouraging team cohesion) has really enabled them to do that.

Analysis

I guess the best way to make sense of all of this is from the players feedback (That's about the most objective data I could have!). The themes which jump out (perhaps due to frequency) are that the sessions were well structured e.g. short and sharp; relevant and meaningful content; and the props/resources such as the bingo bros were really well received. With regard to Bingo Bros and the Journey Roll, whilst another risk, I think they added a degree of light-heartedness or "banter" as one player fed back which made the sessions more approachable and content more adaptable/accessible. When I was in the act of writing my report up, I wasn't sure whether to involve those aspects. I thought, "does this look professional enough to pass my assessments?" but then I reflected "Yes. It's what I did, and the group said it worked!". My analysis therefore is to keep finding creative ways to deliver psychology to clients – that's something after all which many of the 'greats' in our field have advocated before (Fifer et al, 2008).

There were a few suggestions for how to improve the sessions which I will also take on board. For example, one player suggested/asked if I could do more at the U18 level. That's undoubtedly something I've been pushing for (more delivery support for the U18s) within the RFU, but ultimately, I have had to respect the direction of my Line Managers this year who chose to prioritize my time into other areas. I accept that is just a reality of working within the constraints/context of a large organization and also within the boundaries of my own capacity – I certainly couldn't have delivered much more than I did this year for the RFU!

In another suggestion for improving the delivery programme further one lad asked if we could bring in seniors to talk about their experiences/insights/skills etc. I think that's a great idea and I know when we have taken the NPP players into the senior camps this year to help them familiarize themselves with the environment, many of them say the highlight is sitting with the seniors at lunch and asking questions or the same at the side of the pitch during training. Perhaps it doesn't need to be one of the (unlikely to be available) first team players? It's something I'll float with the PRD next year and see where we could take it.

Conclusion

		<p>I've really enjoyed delivering this programme this year and I'm especially happy that I committed to doing it in keeping with my service targets with the RFU and from my own reflections of not feeling I contributed enough last year. On over all reflection I think it's been a good year for showing how innovate, enquiry-based learning sessions can facilitate learning and cohesion within a team. There are some enhancements I could add to the programme were I to run it again next year; but overall, I've really enjoyed engaging a group of young men who ultimately <i>want</i> to be engaged.</p> <p><i>Action Plan</i> As previous really. Consider bringing in more guest speakers (if possible). Would also need to start fresh with regard to identifying the learning outcomes and not just assume that we roll the same programme!</p>
End of Dissemination-focused Reflective Diary		

Consultancy Case Study 1: A Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment Based

Intervention to Address Post-Injury Related Return to Play Anxiety

The following report outlines a Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment (MAC) based intervention with a male Rugby Union player experiencing post-injury return to play anxiety. The report is structured around the core components of Keegan's (2016) model of sport psychology consultancy which guides the delivery, appraisal and development of my practice.

Introduction to the Client and Practitioner

The individual involved in this case study was a male 19-year-old professional rugby union player, hereafter referred to by the pseudonym 'Andy' to maintain a level of anonymity (Gilbourne & Richardson, 2006). Andy has granted permission for information discussed in this case study to be shared for my assessment. Andy is a professional Rugby Union player with age grade international honours. Andy and myself have contact in my capacity as National Governing Body (NGB) psychologist for his sport.

As a practitioner, I am contracted to the NGB to provide psychology-based services to any athlete or coach nominated within their national programme who initiate a request for support. These terms are approved by both players and coaches' contracted clubs and the NGB. Terms of the contract stipulate that I am not obliged to report an approach for support to any stakeholder (except in incidents of perceived risk), however I am expected to explore what the applicant may consider 'reasonable reporting' back to related parties (e.g. club, NGB). To this end, I commence interactions with athletes or coaches by asking them to read an information and consent form¹, which outlines their rights to confidentiality and invites them to also discuss what degree of reporting, if any, they would find appropriate. The informed-consent form also references my practice philosophy

¹ See Consultancy Contract Report (p. 273-274), for a copy of my Informed Consent to Engage in Psychological Skill Mentoring Form.

and boundaries, outlining that the relationship on offer is one through which the athlete or coach can explore multiple aspects of their psychological wellbeing and, or, performance. It outlines the client-led nature of the support and that they hold authority and ownership over their own development, with me working to assist them as requested.

To build on this description of my practice approach, it has been stated that knowing one's own assumptions and being able to declare them can substantially strengthen practice by stimulating consistency between assumptions, analysis techniques, conceptualisation of needs and the way interventions are implemented (Hill, 2001; Keegan, 2016; Orlick, 1989; Poczwardowski, Sherman, & Henschen; 1998; Poczwardowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004). Explicitly therefore, I am aligned towards the construalist world view (see, Keegan, 2016), holding that psychological reality is not objective and generalisable but constructed uniquely by each person. I consider each human being as unique and so too their circumstance and requirements. To work with this socially and psychologically constructed dynamic reality, I acknowledge working with a practice style which itself is value-laden and context sensitive (Poczwardowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004; Young, 1992).

Further, I believe in the possibilities inherent in the pragmatic assimilation of ideas and approaches from a diverse resource pool. That is, I consider myself to practice from an integrative theoretical orientation, broadly understood to involve combining or blending theories and methods from multiple models (Bond, 2002; Friesen & Orlick, 2010; Ravizza, 2002; Tod, 2014). Within this practice orientation, I endeavour to remain open to exploring theories, methods and techniques originating in various schools of thought so as to have a broad knowledge base to inform the discussions I have with others, ultimately placing them at the centre of their own choices and growth. In the present consultancy case study, for example, I formulated from my philosophical position that a 3rd wave cognitive-behavioural intervention was a possible match the client's needs. In other cases, however, I may feel that a less cognitive and more relational or systems based approach would better

match a client's needs. Such decisions are hence enabled by the flexibility of an integrative philosophy, yet are driven by the mechanisms of the intake, needs analysis, and formulation elements that follow.

Intake Process

Contact was made by Andy via email in the first instance, requesting if we could discuss possible psychology support relating to his return to contact rugby following injury. We arranged to talk via video call, an option chosen by Andy as it offered us the soonest opportunity to talk 'face-to-face'. During the call, I followed a semi-structured approach with the aspiration of building rapport and understanding, through progressive questioning and discussion. Based on the humanistic model of approach and congruent consulting principles of collaboration and affinity from the outset (Hill, 2001; Rogers, 1957), I was curious to listen to Andy's story, to develop an informed picture of the working alliance that may be formed, and to invest in the relationship.

I checked if Andy had received the information and consent form via email, and we explored his questions around my role with the NGB and the access he would have to my services. We also confirmed his preferences regarding confidentiality and reporting before he consented to continue with the call. Andy's preference was that our engagements would remain confidential, with no reporting to coaches or inclusion of their opinions at this time. He held moderate concerns about coaches negatively judging players who work with psychologists; though his primary reason for excluding third parties was that he felt to have the fortitude to address his own issues, calling on resources – such as myself – for help where needed. Reflectively, I have found an information sheet to be a helpful aid in describing important professional and ethical considerations at the beginning of consultancy. In my experience it invites the practitioner and recipient to quickly consider and discuss key agendas on which a consulting relationship may be formed or rejected (Keegan, 2016).

After the establishment of key ethical and delivery principles, conversation remained free-flowing and athlete-centred. In keeping with core components of due diligence at the intake stage (see, Keegan, 2016; Taylor & Schneider, 1992) I used opportunistic and appropriate probes to explore Andy's family, social, medical and athletic history. My preference of seeking to understand and empathise with clients' life stories meant I was in no rush with this opening engagement and exchange. The relationship, or 'working alliance' (see, Anderson, 2000; Katz & Hemmings, 2009), has been promoted as one of *the* most significant contributors to successful consulting experiences (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015; Tod & Andersen, 2005). To that end, I fundamentally believe that good consulting relationships are built on empathetic understanding and genuine interest and investment – traits which the consultant can bring to the relationship (Nesti, 2004; 2010; Rogers, 1957, 1979; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Sharp et al., 2015). I have experienced instances when a client's preference has been to get down to business as soon as possible. This was not the case with Andy however; he is engaging as a character, and I built on the opportunity to establish rapport and understanding in one another: I of Andy and his story, and Andy of me and my character, intentions and approach.

We established an informed picture of Andy's life journey throughout his 20 minutes of disclosure. During this dialogue I was regularly reflecting in the moment (Schön, 1987) and whether the intake process may naturally progress into a need's analysis. Though intake and needs analysis can be understood as two unique stages of consultancy, it has been noted that they may often intersect (see, Keegan, 2016). As our conversation continued, I exercised professional judgement and made the decision to inquire into Andy's reasons for making contact. That is, what he might consider as the aspirations of our working alliance.

Needs Analysis

Andy disclosed he had endured a string of three significant injuries over the past year, the last having ruled him out of competitive rugby for six months. He was now

entering the final stages (approximately six weeks) of a graded return to play protocol.

Andy shared he was therefore seeking support to return to contact games “focused on what needs to be done, not on ‘what is going to go next?’” (paraphrased from Andy’s intake and case notes).

Andy expanded that he had accepted playing rugby has associated injury risks and that he now wanted to be calm on the day he returned to contact and to have control over where he put his energy, described by Andy as his mental focus and physical effort. Andy expressed that he was happy with the speed at which he was being re-introduced to physical aspects of training, but that at present he didn’t feel like he would be able to enjoy his return to contact rugby without help to manage his mind on the day. He described that moments of worry would “come and go” and that anything I could offer him to manage his mind on the day would be appreciated.

On reflection, the advantages of operating within an integrative philosophy is the broad variety of methods you can employ when endeavouring to match your client’s needs (Poczwadowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004). A caution however is that whilst such practice philosophies can offer multiple service approaches, context will often only offer *seconds* in which to ‘choose your route’. Thinking back to Andy’s need analysis, I didn’t feel I had a full enough picture of his perspective to offer an informed opinion at this point, so chose to spend a little longer exploring *his* perceptions of his needs, aspirations and expectations. Reflecting on this moment, I believe my heuristic decision to continue asking questions was founded on my core belief in the power of individuals to identify their own opinions, needs, opportunities, obstacles, and otherwise. I consider my role as to help them explore such areas and offer opinion when invited or when feeling it is authentic, to myself and the working alliance, to do so. I asked if it was OK for me to ask Andy questions, so as to build a fuller picture of what was going on for him and in turn to help us both identify what might be helpful. This felt like a gear shift into a more practitioner-led consulting

style, however I was putting Andy at the centre of the decision-making process and in essence staying true to my client-centred approach (Ravizza, 2002).

Utilising my cognitive map, informed by the 5-P's formulation framework of Butler (1998), Andy and I explored his presenting problem and associated predisposing, precipitating, perpetuating, and protective factors. For example, we explored what Andy was experiencing; what was influencing it/him; what he had tried (if anything) currently or previously in regard to psychology; how he would describe the ideal outcome of us working together; and, if he had anything in mind he would like to try or explicitly avoid. Andy was clear that he wanted to focus primarily on his return to contact sessions in six weeks. He recognised that there was a "bigger picture" agenda of the risk of re-injury, which I supposed could be a dynamic mechanism of his anxieties. Yet, Andy was clear to assert that his current rehabilitation was going well and that he didn't want to spend time focusing on the agenda of re-injury. Instead, Andy was explicit that he would welcome ideas from me of how he could manage his mind to be task and enjoyment focused when he did return to contact rugby.

We arrived at a point of summary, which I invited Andy to organise and share within the session, and which I then paraphrased back to him as a means of clarifying understanding (Lukas, 1993). I fed back that Andy was appearing to ask for support in developing strategies to manage anxiety patterns he had experienced before and foresaw experiencing again when he returned to contact rugby. I added that he had asked me to lead the way in offering some suggestions to him, that he was mindful we were on a relativity restricted timeline (6 weeks), that he had not tried any strategies of mind management before, and that he was willing to commit to working hard if it was a matter of developing a skill or otherwise. Andy confirmed this summary as correct and joked that it was "good to hear it put so simply". Lukas (1993) suggests that the practitioner's job is to convey to the client that they will and have been *listened to*, and that the psychologist themselves is

working to understand. Andy's approval of my playback appeared to attest to achieving the goal of listening to understand.

We concluded the intake and needs analysis call with the agreement that I would digest the information in the form of a case formulation, run my ideas past my supervisor and get back to Andy at the next opportunity. I also invited Andy to reconnect with me after the call if he wanted, acknowledging that things can often emerge in our thoughts after a discussion has ended. Again, a heuristic decision at the time, but reflection has helped me to recognise it as a benevolent, if instinctual, approach to ensuring Andy remained connected and empowered in the direction of our working alliance.

Case Formulation and Support Strategy Selection

To paraphrase Keegan (2016), a case formulation has been described as creating a working model of the core issue: the client's situation, needs and challenges. A case formulation is also generally considered to be framed by a particular theoretical position or philosophical approach (for a cognitive-behavioural example see, Nezu, Nezu & Lombardo, 2004). For me, I endeavour to build an understanding of each distinct client and in turn the formulation built is also unique. I am influenced by my experience and learning to date however, and in particular by principles of humanism, behaviourism, psychodynamic theory, neuroscience, and from the integrated perspective of the chimp mind management model (Peters, 2012). I understand there are fundamental incongruences between the philosophical foundations of many of these approaches. However, I uphold a perspective of pragmatism, seeking to develop formulations which appear to best fit their purpose.

For Andy, much of what he had described during intake had appeared within normal, perhaps even expected, ranges for a person in his circumstance. I normalised with him, for example, that a state of apprehension around risk taking behaviour is broadly considered as *healthy* brain functioning, but perhaps not *helpful* in Andy's narrative of wanting to return to and enjoy his rugby. Importantly however, I did not consider Andy's

presentation or requested support to fall outside of my professional remit or competency. Satisfied that I was operating within my professional boundaries in supporting Andy, the questions now stood - for what, and how?

Andy's lucidity at intake appeared to offer a clear *what* in the formulation. He had declared the goal of our alliance to be helping him identify and develop strategies that would assist him to manage his mind and direct his behaviour during his return to contact rugby. Explicitly, Andy had requested strategies to manage what he was calling his "overactive mind", a state which he had related to unwanted or unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviours. I postulated that an alteration of Andy's relationship to, or experience of, these internal states would be a primary mechanism of any change he may enjoy. Further, I deduced that the opposite of an overactive mind, would be a calm mind, which led me to the possibilities inherent in mindfulness training.

More explicitly, Andy had promoted the desire to be task and enjoyment focused when returning to contact training, and this pursuit of a calm mind and valued goals rang true to objectives of Mindfulness Acceptance Commitment (MAC) based approaches to sport psychology consulting (Gardner & Moore, 2004, 2007, 2012, Moore & Gardner, 2001). Indeed, since its inception in 2001, a number of studies (case studies, open trial, and RCT) have demonstrated the efficacy of MAC and closely related interventions for the enhancement of emotional management, athletic performance, and overall well-being (Gardner & Moore, 2004, 2007; Gross et al., 2016; Lutkenhouse, Gardner, & Moore, 2007; Marks, 2008; Schwanhausser, 2009; Wolanin, 2005).

MAC based approaches can be understood to broadly fit within the acceptance-based behavior therapies (Moore, 2009; Roemer & Orsillo, 2009). Central to MAC is the premise of skill development in 2 core areas: (1) non-judgemental, moment-to-moment awareness and acceptance of internal states such as cognitions, emotions, and physiology (as per the common definition of mindfulness; see, Kabat-Zinn, 2005); and (2) an ongoing commitment to actions and behaviours that are based on personal values (i.e. value-driven

behaviour) (Gardner, 2016). Furthermore, two of the recognised mechanisms and fundamental skills for non-judgmental awareness and acceptance of internal states are decentering and cognitive diffusion. In essence, to decentre is to take a figurative step back from our beliefs and thoughts, while cognitive diffusion is the ability to regard thoughts simply as thoughts (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Moore, 2009; Shapiro et al., 2006).

I theorised therefore that if Andy were able to develop his skill to disassociate from, or alter his relationship with (see, Chiesa, Anselmi, & Serretti, 2014) his internal states and meaningfully commit to value-driven behavior, his service goals might be realised. Additionally, I postulated that a MAC based intervention would be characterised by advantages of timely use (no cognitive restructuring or exploration of deeper mechanisms of Andy's anxieties would be needed), relative simplicity in principle and practice, and it had good anecdotal and research-based evidence for use in similar contexts.

Consequently, I hypothesised that a MAC based approach may be of interest and use to Andy in his current circumstance. I was happy to share this opinion as per Andy's instruction and accepted that in any case the final choice regarding forward action would be his. I recognised that the act of sharing the rationale and decision-making process with clients has been found to increase engagement and even adherence to actions compared to simply dictating a course of action (e.g., Reeve et al., 2002; Rogers, 1957, 1961). By sharing my working model with Andy, if he liked it, we could co-construct a service delivery plan and commence. If he did not relate to the formulation, we would collaborate to review his expectations and formulate a new model of support.

In a final step of the formulation process, I exercised a degree of professional judgement in deciding to send Andy information regarding MAC based interventions; specifically, Gardner and Moore's (2017) published overview of mindfulness-based and acceptance-based interventions in sport and performance contexts. This was an innovative approach in my practice as I would not typically ask athletes to read academic-based literature in journal format, albeit a concise three-page synopsis. However, on this occasion

I felt that the article could provide Andy with a summary of the MAC principles and a means by which to form his own opinions, questions, or to refuse the idea outright. Andy responded positively to the information, enthusiastic about when and how we could progress.

Planning the Support Programme

Reconnecting on video call, Andy asked how the development of MAC-based skills could be achieved. I was comfortable with this invitation to offer suggestions as I had invested time into exploring anecdotal and peer-reviewed articles around such practices and was happy to discuss, adopt or adapt this knowledge with Andy to match his needs (e.g. Baltzell, 2016; Gardner & Moore, 2004, 2007).

We agreed on the idea of using mobile technologies in the form of a mindfulness-based application - Headspace. Headspace is endorsed as being easily accessible, user-friendly, and helpful, with its inclusion of guided meditations ranging from two to 60 minutes, a personal progress page (which logs your meditated minutes), and informative accompanying video infographics to illustrate key concepts of mindfulness, such as decentering and cognitive diffusion (Mitchell & Hassed, 2016).

An added advantage of Headspace is its free installation, which grants free use of its basic course (for examples of the Basic Course content, see Appendix A). The basic course is designed to teach the fundamentals of meditation in 10 minutes over 10 days, which met Andy's circumstance given he only had five weeks remaining until his return to contact. Promisingly, a randomised controlled trial by Howell and colleagues (2014) reported that just 100 minutes of meditation over 45 days was necessary for significant change in meditative skill and well-being markers. The basic course would see Andy complete 100 minutes in 10 days.

In another innovation of practice, I decided in the moment to offer to complete the basic course over the same period as Andy. This heuristic decision was driven by my values of investing myself authentically and committedly into the working alliance (Nesti,

2004). I also reflected, in vitro, that I would have a better understanding of the learning journey Andy was going through and that ‘buddying up’ could lend to us engaging in enhanced review and learning opportunities.

We agreed to complete the basic course, and to use mobile messaging and a mid-point (day five) video call to share our experiences of the journey. We also agreed that at the end of the programme we would take stock of what we had learnt and where Andy thought he was in relation to developing the skills he had requested to manage his mind on his return to playing rugby.

I postulated that if Andy's mindfulness training was going well (by his account) after 10 days, I would introduce the topic of values and value-driven behaviour at the review session. My rationale for choosing to wait until that time was to avoid overburdening Andy and ultimately to follow his lead on whether he felt ready to progress from mindfulness training to the acceptance and commitment components of the intervention.

Delivery and Monitoring

Over the first 10 days of mindfulness training Andy and I kept regular contact. The use of mobile messaging enabled us to share our experience and opinions relevant to the daily meditation sessions. Andy shared that he found the imbedded videos really insightful and that, whilst it took some getting used to, he felt his ability to be more mindful was progressing. For example, Andy shared he had never considered the idea of thought happening to us, or around us, as opposed to by us. He used the metaphor (given by the Headspace app) of thought being like a busy main road, which he could now step away from and find some peace and quiet should he prefer. These markers of enhanced awareness and choice suggested that Andy was developing his psychological insight and skill repertoire. By day seven of the programme Andy was sharing examples of moments in day-to-day life when he had mindfully disassociated from worry states. There was an instance, for example, when Andy's bus had been delayed, meaning he would arrive late to

an interview. He shared this story with a lot of joy because instead of worrying (as he felt he would have previously), he chose to meditate for 5 minutes before undertaking helpful actions on the remainder of his journey (e.g. accepting what he could and couldn't control, preparing an apology, reading up on his preparation notes). This was encouraging in terms of early monitoring for impact, because Andy was clearly engaged with the process and reporting benefits from the practices.

At day 10 we held our planned review session. Andy reported a desire to continue mindfulness training because he felt his self-awareness and self-regulatory skills had improved over the first ten days of practice. He considered mindfulness to be a skill-based practice, meaning it wasn't something he wanted to "let slip" after a good start. I drew on my knowledge of MAC literature and the education-acquisition-practice model (Boutcher & Rotella, 1987) to suggest building in applied components to the next block of training. Specifically, I asked Andy to choose a task which he completes every day during which he could practice the skill of being mindful (that is, focusing his full attention only on the task, experiencing thoughts, feelings, and sensations but not judging them). Andy chose the tasks of brushing his teeth and unloading the dishwasher. He also challenged me again to complete the tasks in conjunction with him, which I accepted. I was reflective at this point that Andy and I had established an enjoyable, but seemingly productive, working alliance. We agreed to continue to share updates through mobile messaging and hold our next session via videocall after the approaching weekend.

It is pertinent to note that during our video calls I would also be consistently cognisant to 'check-in' with Andy around his general health, mind state, and circumstance. I was aware, for example, of how his training was going, the support the medical and coaching team were giving him, and activities he and his girlfriend or housemates were enjoying. We were focused on the delivery framework proposed, whilst I also used our calls to remain aware of Andy as a *whole* with capacity and willingness to flex my support

offering if needed. Still, Andy was happy with the intervention and its emerging benefits, and so too therefore was I.

Thirteen days into mindfulness training Andy had progressed from daily 10-minute Basic Course guided meditations to shorter five- or two-minute scripts. When we discussed the reasons for Andy adopting shorter scripts, he felt they offered him scope to uptake mindful practice across life contexts, with greater flexibility and utility than longer meditations. For example, he began applying mindful practice within his daily rugby training and non-rugby routines. From my perspective, these adaptations – now driven by Andy – were positive aspects of monitoring the impact of the intervention as we went. Specifically, Andy was able to reflect on his development and the steps needed to enhance or maintain his developing skill base. We co-assessed through discussion that he was progressing well, and, as per my delivery plan, I took to introduce the values identification phase of our work together.

Andy's identification of his value-set emerged inductively through open discussion. We explored his reasons for playing rugby; the feelings it gave him; what he constituted as a 'solid performance' through to a 'sublime performance'; what he thought a 'great professional' thought, felt and did; and, the values he thought made, or could make, him proud to live by as a person and player. This direction and content had emerged seemingly implicitly from either me or Andy in an unstructured format. Interestingly, Andy shared that he had never discussed, or dutifully considered, such topics before; but that the conversation and output were a revelation to him. Though I had experience of the power of connecting people with value-driven-behaviour before, the conversations with Andy had helped him connect with and even confront his own value-set identification. He started talking about role models in his life and how he admired the way they interpreted things, spoke out, or behaved. The powerful factor in Andy's case, was that his enhanced state of mindfulness appeared to make him more aware of *himself* in this process. That is, he constantly drew reflections back to himself and the values he upheld and would like to

uphold thereafter. In truth, I can't state whether this values identification activity would have been so effective for Andy without the enhanced state of mindfulness. What was clear however, from Andy's verbalised reflections, was that he had created a shortlist of three core values (enjoy it, work hard, stay humble) and reported being 'more excited than ever' about returning to rugby in a fortnights time.

The week prior to Andy's return to contact presented him with 3 days of very physically demanding training. This was part of his planned (physical) protocol. Andy chose to complete a two-minute meditation on the morning of his running session and to write 'smile and work hard' on his arm tape. When I explored his reasoning for this idea, he replied: 'because I want to anchor myself back to what is only really important for me. I don't mind other people knowing that that is where my focus is right now either' (message extract). Andy shared his intentions to work hard and enjoy his return to play with his club's medical staff and coaches, all of whom he fed back to me via message, were supportive.

On the Friday of Andy's penultimate 'return to contact' training week, we shared a videocall. The week had been physically demanding on Andy, but he was upbeat and perhaps, more noticeably, excited. He shared stories of 'mini-wins' throughout the week, where he had better managed his thinking patterns; 'letting them go' or 'tuning in to what was important much quicker than before' (session note extracts). He had really enjoyed the week, which was great to hear. Perhaps more importantly, Andy was speaking in a narrative which told of an athlete seemingly comfortable in their circumstance, if not 'in control' of it.

Andy committed to taking the same processes into his first return to contact session. He undertook to 'just remember to *be there*. To enjoy it. To smile if I mess up, or go well, or whatever. To just do my best' (paraphrased from Andy's consultation and case notes). I chose to write these statements down as Andy shared them over our call. I wrote them into a text message and sent it to him at the end of our session as a reference, should

he want it. Athletes have fed back to me previously that a reference point such as this can be a helpful physical cue to prompt a course of thought or action. Likewise, I also consider praise to be an essential, and often all too under-employed tool in the support of others (Dweck, 2007; Elliot & Dweck, 2013). I took this opportunity to praise Andy (as I had many times before) for all the effort he had put into the processes of getting himself in such a great place: physically and psychologically. I was pleased for him that he felt as good as he did, and I was authentic in sharing that recognition with him.

Intervention Effectiveness and ‘Closure’

A message on the evening of Andy’s return to contact session declared it as ‘a real success’ (message extract). Andy shared that the ability to get in a great mind state and focus on the session was exactly how he had wanted it. This seemed the ultimate confirmation of a return of reward for the efforts he had put in, and, that the intervention had met its stated objective.

On a videocall debrief session the day after his return to contact training, Andy shared insights into how he had applied mindful and values-driven being throughout the day and contact session. I can reflect now that the combination of mindfulness training and ‘values-work’ was an ideal fit for Andy. He evidently hadn’t had or sought the opportunity to capitalise on either before, yet his current investment was rewarding him with a greater sense of self-identity and control – as identified through self-report. I also asked Andy to review his journey in our working alliance from the first time we spoke, to where we ‘are now’. This practitioner-initiated but client-centred task was essentially to help Andy review his own journey and empower him to reflect on his own stages of growth. We had fun recalling the early mindfulness training and Andy drew our attention to how a disclosure I had shared about applying mindfulness during a real-life event had really helped him to invest in our work together - a good reinforcement for me regarding the use of *relevant* personal disclosure in practice (see, Way & Vosloo, 2016). By the time we had arrived at the contact session section of his story, the review had all but completed itself.

Andy remarked, ‘so yeah, I guess I’ve got some skills now to help me with where I started out’.

On reflection, there was a considerable moment of silence at this point of the call. I was unsure whether to lead or listen. Was this the end of our consultancy in this instance? The closing, or ‘termination’ (Keegan, 2016), of consultancies is certainly an area I will look to read around, reflect upon and develop in my professional practice. I decided to be authentic and follow my instinct with Andy. I explained that this situation was relatively unique for me, as the service provision was open-ended in all contractual practicalities. I shared that in many instances of practice however, when the athlete achieves their desired outcomes they (or whoever is paying the bill!), will often be saying ‘thanks, we’ll leave that for now and I’ll get back to you if I need anything else’. Andy felt that was the right thing for him at this time too. He invited me to keep in contact over the coming weeks and asked if I would be available and willing to work with him again if he wanted support further down the line. The contract was in place to provide such support, so we agreed we would catch a coffee at the next national camp and ‘check in’ (Anderson, 2000). If Andy did want to reconnect at the camp and look at a new area of development, a new needs analysis would begin, with the opportunity to use our relationship to openly explore the options available in the next case formulation.

Summary and Reflections

This case study depicts a MAC based intervention for a male rugby union player. Implementing an athlete-centred collaborative consulting approach, the objective of meeting the athletes request to upskill themselves to manage ‘return to play’ anxiety was achieved. Through open and ongoing dialogue from the beginning to completion of the consultancy, we were able to conserve a close alignment between the expectations of the athlete and the service being delivered. Importantly, such orientation of services to meet a client’s subjective perception of whether their situation is improving, or whether their needs and expectations are being met, is a recognised approach to measuring impact and

satisfaction in service delivery (cf. Keegan, 2016, see also, Elliot & Shin, 2002; Gibson, 2010; Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker, & Groggaard, 2002). Whilst the clients request for total confidentiality precluded triangulation of third-party involvement in this intervention, the consultation was considered, structured, communicated, delivered and evaluated *with* the client, and positively received.

In relation to the consultancy approach, little literature exists around how to make best use of video call and app-based technologies in consultancy (for app-based mindfulness technologies see, Baltzell, 2016; for video calling in consultancy see, Keegan, 2016). In this instance however both tools proved practical, convenient, and effective. To all extents, Andy was an ‘ideal’ athlete to work with, especially when considering how important the athlete coming open and committed to the working alliance can be (see, Sharp, Hodge, & Danish, 2015). For example, Andy was honest, hard-working and favoured the use of technologies. In future working alliances this may not be the case, and I reflect that if such an instance arises, I will remain committed to delivering safe, ethical, individualised and coherent approaches to consultancy.

Finally, I have found the act of writing this report to be both challenging and rewarding. Documenting case notes is different to conducting constructive reflective practice (Anderson, Knowles, & Gilbourne, 2004; Cropley et al., 2007, 2010), which is, in turn, unique from academic report writing. The combination of these processes has been really insightful. It has helped me to identify that much of my practice is underpinned by implicit decision making and professional judgement; whilst I also endeavour to follow explicit ‘best practice’ approaches from within the field. Perhaps the most helpful process within this first report is to have had to reflect upon and better establish my consulting philosophy and core values. I consider this awareness as an ongoing growth area for me and one which I look forward to advancing through exploration, reflection and supervision.

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An Overview of the Headspace Meditation Basics Course

The Headspace Basics Course is made up of 10 sessions, which can be set for 3, 5, or 10 minutes duration.

Headspace advise that both beginner and experienced meditators take the time to work through these sessions as an introduction to mindfulness meditation and also as opportunity to get used to Headspace's style of teaching.

Basic Course Content Examples

Introduction Video

1 minute 20 seconds introduction to mindfulness as a concept and exercise. Advice includes looking for a regular time in your daily routine to meditate, how to prepare for meditation, and the benefits of committed practice.

Meditation Script

NB: this content is taken from Meditation 1 of the Basic Course but is typical of the content and structure of guided meditations across the Headspace application.

- Introduction to the session and instructions for getting comfortable.
- Deep breathing.
- Awareness of the body and physical senses.
- Awareness of the environment and sounds.
- Return to awareness of bodily sensation: noticing areas of tension, discomfort, relaxation, and ease.
- Reassurance that the mind wondering is okay, but to gently return focus to awareness of the body.
- Focus on the breath and associated movement.
- Reassurance that the mind wondering is okay, but to gently return focus to awareness of the breath.
- Counting the breath, from 1 up to 10 and back down – to prevent the mind from wondering.
- Reassurance that the mind wondering is okay, and normal, but to recognise when the mind does wonder and gently refocus to awareness of the breath.
- Letting go of any control and allowing the mind to be free to do as it pleases.
- Returning to awareness of the body and physical sensations, such as contact with the floor.

- Returning to awareness of the environment, including sounds and sensations.
- Opening eyes to complete the meditation.
- Checking-in for differences in feelings of the mind and body.
- Reassurances that if the mind wandered during this exercise, that is normal, meditation is a skill and takes a little time to improve.
- A final check-in for positive feelings of taking time for yourself, to allow the body and mind to unwind.
- End of 10-minute meditative session.

Infographic Video

Released after Session 3 of the Basic Course, this 1 minute 15 seconds video reinforces central tenants of mindful practice. One acknowledgement is that meditation isn't about stopping thoughts or eliminating feelings; it's about changing your relationship with thoughts and feelings and learning to view them with perspective. A metaphor of letting thoughts and feelings pass by like busy traffic is offered, promoting both cognitive diffusion and decentring, while the skill of mindful refocusing to the present is encouraged.

Consultancy Case Study 2: An Integrated Approach to Developing a Professional Rugby Union Players Confidence and Effectiveness in Contact Situations

The following report outlines an integrated intervention with a male Rugby Union player to develop their confidence and effectiveness in contact situations. The report is structured around the core components of Keegan's (2016) model of sport psychology consultancy which guides the delivery, appraisal and development of my practice.

The client discussed in this case study was a male 21-year-old professional rugby union player, hereafter referred to by the pseudonym 'Tom' to maintain a level of anonymity (Gilbourne & Richardson, 2006). Tom has granted permission for information discussed in this case study to be shared for my assessment.

Intake Process and Needs Analysis

Contact was initiated by Tom via an email to the self-development consultancy (Chimp Management Ltd, ChMx) with whom I am employed. I had supported players from Tom's club previously and it had become established practice for the club to signpost players who were seeking psychology support to ChMx. Following a phone call to briefly establish that Tom's support objectives were within my professional remit, we met in person to conduct a combined intake and needs analysis.

The intake session was explained to Tom as a confidential and non-binding opportunity for us to acquaint with one another, explore Tom's goals and expectations of psychology support, explore my services and approach, and, ultimately to decide if the relationship should proceed. The intake session fee was a fixed rate set by ChMx which Tom's club paid. Tom and his club coaches had agreed our sessions could be held in or away from the club and that communication of what we discussed remained at Tom's discretion. Tom described his relationship with his teammates, coaches and club positively and that the coaches were supportive of us working together.

Prior to the intake session, Tom completed informed consent and client information forms. The client information sheet collects basic and medical information and is

administered as standard by ChMx. Tom's responses suggested no cause for medical concern or referral. The consent form outlines the client-mentor relationship offered by ChMx and pertinent ethical and applied considerations (e.g. data storage, rights to confidentiality, supervision of my practice, complaints, and termination of services). Tom signed and returned all forms prior to the intake session.

At the opening of the intake session, Tom and I paid diligence to agendas including confidentiality, revisiting Tom's responses to the client information sheet, and exploring how our working relationship might materialise. Thereafter, through a conversational-style unstructured interview we explored Tom's personal background, including: his education and upbringing, key family and social relationships, current living arrangements, key professional relationships, and his playing history. We established that Tom had attended boarding school attaining top levels grades across the board of study whilst beginning to play rugby. He described a loving relationship with his mother and that his father was also supportive of him, though in more practical rather than emotional terms. Tom reported having no siblings, no girlfriend and living in the Rugby Clubs academy housing with 3 other players. Tom had plans to move into his own house later that season.

Within the rugby club, Tom identified well with Mark (pseudonym), a coach who had coached Tom at Academy level and who was now responsible for coaching the First Team defence. Tom regarded Marks involvement with the First Team positively as they had a good working relationship and Tom felt able to approach him. Tom shared that he was less confident in approaching the clubs Head Coach (HC). Tom emphasised HC had the final authority on agendas including team selection and club contracts. Of all people at the club, Tom felt HC was the person he most needed to impress with improved physicality in contact situations.

Throughout the intake interview, I was sure to demonstrate genuine interest and empathy in Tom's personal story and felt we built rapport through this interaction. It has been found that the act of being listened to and the ability of the practitioner to

demonstrate key relational qualities (e.g. warmth, empathy and positive regard) positively enhances the client-practitioner relationship - a key determinant of success in therapeutic alliances (Bedi, Davis, & Arvay, 2005; Bedi, Davis & Williams, 2005; Norcross, 2002; Norcross & Wampold, 2011; Messer & Wampold, 2002; Rogers, 1957; Wampold & Budge, 2012)

On establishing a fuller picture of Tom and his personal circumstance, I moved to clarify his goals, expectations or reasons for seeking help (see, Tryon & Winograd, 2002). Tom explained that he wanted to make a big impact in the approaching season; his first with a senior contract. He wanted to contend for First Team selection and he had identified his opportunity to do so in two distinct areas: attack and defence. Tom justified that he was naturally talented in attack, something I held to be a grounded opinion having researched Tom's performance data (e.g. game statistics and highlight footage) prior to our meeting.

Tom subsequently highlighted defence as his biggest development area, exemplifying "making big hits" and "dominating my opposition in contact situations" (paraphrasing Tom) as areas his coaches would be looking for him to perform well. I asked Tom to provide examples of dominating his opposition in contact situations to ensure I had a full understanding of these probable focus points of our work together. He offered, "clearing out at the breakdown" and "getting turnovers where I can". I was comfortable with such terms from my own involvement in Rugby Union as both player and psychologist.

Next, we explored Tom's perceptions of his historic and current ability to make big hits. Tom's examples were predominantly of times he hadn't been effective in the tackle area, confirming it as an area of low ability and subsequent low confidence. I noted at this point that I would seek further evidence through stakeholder analysis or video evidence of Tom's actual ability, or at least his growth potential, when the opportunity arose. One thing that Tom made clear was that the size and standard of the opposition this season would be bigger and better than any he had faced before. He was also clear that HC favoured and

promoted an aggressive style of defence and that he subsequently favoured physical players in his team selection.

Tom's interview further established that he could often experience concerns about getting injured in contact situations. He described the mechanism of this concern as unwanted thoughts and feelings he could experience before a game, especially when playing a reputedly physical team or a notably sizeable opposition player. Tom described that such fears had met varied realities. Sometimes teams and players were as physical as he had pre-empted; other times his fears had seemed ill placed and a waste of energy when the reality had been quite manageable.

At the summary of the intake session I asked Tom to take stock of everything we had discussed and to summarise for me what he considered a successful outcome of engaging in psychology mentoring could be. This approach of enabling the client to clarify their thoughts and take ownership in the direction of the consulting relationship leant heavily on my client-led consulting preference and also towards a goal-oriented focus perhaps more commonly associated with cognitive-behavioural approaches (Hill, 2001). Tom answered he would want to be clinical in his defensive game. He wanted to make big hits and turnovers whenever possible. Above all, he wanted to compete for a place in the First Team. Tom seemed focused on what his needs were, and I too felt much clearer. We drew the session to a close with the opportunity for Tom to ask questions and the promise I would forward him a case formulation to consider.

Case Formulation

To paraphrase Keegan (2016), a case formulation is described to simply involve creating a working model of the core issue - the client's situation, needs and challenges. For Tom, I identified cognitive, behavioural, developmental and possibly analytical components to his 'story'. Acknowledging my analysis is inseparably influenced by my integrated philosophy and approach to psychology, I worked to build a bespoke formulation of Tom's story and needs. I acknowledge that there are fundamental

incongruences between the philosophical schools of humanism, behaviourism, cognitive psychology, and psychodynamic theory; yet, I uphold a perspective of pragmatism, seeking to develop formulations which appear to ‘best fit’ their purpose.

Figure 1

An Example of the Custom-Built Case Formulation Tool Used in the Present Case

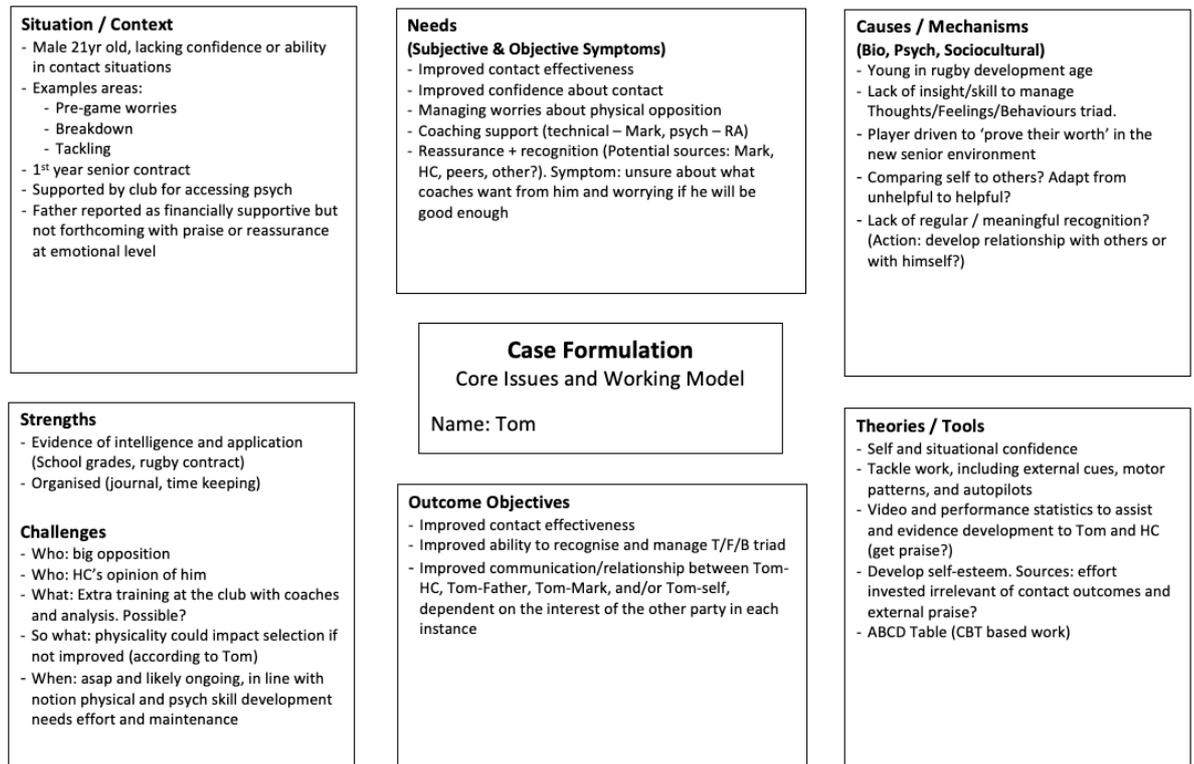


Figure 1 presents a framework used to guide Tom’s case formulation. The framework, influenced by the advice of Keegan (2016) and Nezu, Nezu, and Lombardo (2004), prompted me to consider agendas including: context, needs, causes, mechanisms, strengths, challenges, theories, and outcomes. Through this reflective process the following core issues and working model were theorised.

First, with regard to context, Tom presented as a 21-year-old male reporting a lack of confidence or ability in game specific contact situations. Tom’s self-reported symptoms had behavioural (e.g. ineffective completion of tackles, ineffective competing for the ball at breakdown situations) and cognitive-somatic (e.g. thoughts and feelings of worry prior

to matches) components. Contextually, Tom had entered his first year of a senior contract and reported having the backing of his club in seeking psychology support.

With regard to needs, Tom identified his own needs as threefold. First, help to improve his effectiveness in contact situations. Second, help to improve his confidence about contact situations. Thirdly, help to manage worries he could experience about sizeable or reputedly physical opposition. I considered these aspirations to present an interplay between cognitive, behavioural and emotional components; lending nicely to a key premise of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy that how we think (cognition), how we feel (emotion) and how we act (behaviour) all interact (Trull, 2007).

Though not a need which Tom identified himself, I drew from Tom's disclosure that his father had not been forthcoming with praise or reassurance; an indication that this was something Tom had sought. Seeking recognition or reassurance from parents is widely considered a normal and functional human behaviour; though in adults excessive reassurance seeking can associate to depression and interpersonal rejection (Star & Davila, 2008). I drew from Tom's interview his language of being "uncertain of what was expected [of him]" but that he hadn't presented with any symptoms of a risk of depression. Exercising professional judgement, I hypothesised that Tom was a young man seeking guidance on how to progress and who would likely respond well to encouragement and recognition on his journey. Further, if any cause for concern for Tom's mental health were to materialise, I would follow my established procedure of escalating my concerns to my supervisor.

Turning to the causes or mechanisms of Tom's challenges, I explored first the established biological and developmental realities of his situation. Tom was at the entry point of his professional rugby career, meaning that whilst he was substantial in his physical stature, his training years and opportunities to play at the top domestic level were still few. I hypothesised that Tom was driven to prove his capability to himself, coaches, teammates, and significant others, though in career terms he still had time to develop his

contact skills and the psychological skills to manage his thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. As an example, there is perhaps fair reason for a 21-year-old to be mindful of playing opposition who are truly enormous in relative terms. Tom's pre-game fears could therefore be considered rational, if not reasonable; but his inability to manage their impact on his physical preparation (e.g. sleep, appetite, heart rate) was proving unhelpful so they maintained prominence in Tom's formulation.

With regard to Tom's emotional challenges, I noted his interview disclosure of occasionally feeling low in self-esteem. According to Smith, Mackie and Claypool (2014) self-esteem can be understood as an individual's overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. For Tom, low self-esteem appeared to manifest particularly when comparing himself to others at the rugby club. Aware of Tom being a young man entering a senior environment, I acknowledged he would be joining a squad with many well-established and respected professional rugby players and coaches. If Tom were drawing comparisons between himself and his seniors on aspects including physical development, status, or social (e.g. peer or coach) approval, then it was reasonable to assume Tom may be perceiving a mismatch. Campbell, Eisner and Riggs (2010) reported a person's self-esteem to be contingent on both internal sources such as independent thinking, productive projects, and moral commitments, or on external sources such as fame, wealth, physical appearance, or the approval of peers. I posited that Tom's comparison of himself against others could well be the mechanism of his diminished self-esteem.

When asked how he might improve his self-esteem, Tom believed that if he could make improvements in the physical aspect of his contact game he would have no reason to be shy or self-conscious at the club. I cross-checked with Tom if there were any other factors that could impact his self-esteem, or specifically that could make him feel shy or self-conscious at the club, and he didn't believe so. He wanted to be able to walk into the club with his head held high, whether following a game in which he had been physical or going in to do the work to be physical. I noted that 'doing the work to be physical' could

offer a *productive project* and *moral commitment*, two internal sources of developing self-esteem (Campbell et al., 2010).

On a separate psychosocial agenda, I hypothesised that Tom could face challenges in the importance he placed on the opinion of HC. In one respect, I accepted the importance of HC's opinion in relation to Tom's selection opportunities and even his professional security. Most people work under a boss and would be wise to work to influence their opinion favourably. I also questioned however if Tom was experiencing transference of his father's role/image onto HC, leading Tom to adopt 'child-like' behaviours he had shared during intake, such as feeling shy when HC entered the training environment or avoiding going into HC's office despite feeling the need to know what HC expected of him. Once again exercising professional judgement, I decided my analytical theory could be visited and explored with Tom *if* his relationship with HC, or HC's influence on Tom, developed into a significant factor in his progress.

A final challenge identified in Tom's formulation was the need to clarify his relationship with Mark, or perhaps more so the relationship Mark saw he could have, and the support he saw he could offer, to Tom. Undoubtedly, Mark appeared a promising contributor to Tom's journey, we just needed to establish what Mark was willing and able to contribute. I noted that I would need to address the terms of approaching Mark with Tom.

Before communicating again with Tom, I took my intake, assessment and formulation to supervision. This was an opening to consolidate and verbalise my professional judgements and seek critical feedback and reflection opportunity (Eubank, Nesti & Cruikshank, 2014). Supervision helped me appreciate the importance of reclarifying with Tom what his expectations and permissions were for involving coaches in his support plan, including how we might report his plan and progress to the club. I was content that I would encourage and respect Tom's lead in this regard and that his support plan could adapt accordingly.

Narrowing my focus towards an integrated approach to Tom's support programme, supervision also helped me consider how Tom would be able to recognise and celebrate progress on his journey. I was left to reflect on what progress markers for Tom's development might look like. How would they be agreed? Measured? Reviewed? And acknowledged? The role of my supervisor in this instance was that of a critical friend (Deuchar, 2008) helping me to explore the options and considerations that might dictate a successful outcome for my client and his stakeholders.

Following supervision and review of my case formulation, I began to map a provisional support programme to discuss with Tom. Importantly, I did not consider my formulation to be 'correct' or 'final' as ultimately, I intended to give Tom's own experiences and opinions primacy in our next meeting, supporting him to have the definitive say on the direction we would take. On sharing the case formulation with Tom, he stated it resonated well with him. He advocated the strong performance focus of the challenges summarised, whilst also concurring with the self-esteem, cognitive-behavioural and relational dynamics identified. Tom next met with Mark who advocated the project, worked on creating success markers with Tom, and committed his involvement as technical coach in the process.

The Support Programme, Delivery and Monitoring

In keeping with the support programme Tom, Mark and I agreed, a 10-week intervention began 7 weeks prior to the commencement of the rugby season. Ten weeks was agreed by all parties as a realistic timeframe to clarify and conduct cognitive and behavioural interventions with review points on route. Mark would oversee a 'Feel-to-Real' programme for Tom focusing on graded exposure to and acquisition of improved tackle and breakdown skills. Feel-to-Real was a term coined by Mark to emphasise a 3-phase programme: (1) acquire the feel for the skill, (2) rehearse the skill until it becomes automatic, (3) practice executing the skill in real contexts.

Phases 1 and 2 of the programme were completed during Tom's normal training days so others in the club could see the work he was investing. This approach was agreed based on my formulation that part of Tom's self-esteem could be developed by increasing positive social recognition. Indeed, Tom self-reported throughout the programme that he felt good working hard in front of his peers and that their supportive comments about his effort and improvements had motivated him. Curious if Tom was demonstrating an externally sourced pattern of motivation, I asked Mark at Week 2 how Tom was applying himself when peers were not present. Mark was impressed with Tom's application in *all* sessions, so we actioned to formally praise Tom for his personal drive and application at our first coach-athlete-psych (CAP) review meeting at week 3.

Video analysis for feedback and review was also incorporated into the Feel-to-Real programme. A Performance Analyst tracked markers which Tom and Mark had agreed including body height, foot positioning and power application. The Analyst subsequently overlaid training footage from one week to the next, enabling clear identification, reinforcement and recognition of Tom's development.

In conjunction with Tom's contact skill development, he and I invested in complementary cognitive-behavioural components. Tom had read *The Chimp Paradox* (Peters, 2012), which offers an integrated working model of bio-psycho-social concepts. Tom was keen to use this model to better understand himself and his approach to rugby and life. We used the Chimp Model to explore Tom's understanding of neuroscientific and psychological principles focusing on developing emotional recognition and regulation, recognition and adaptation of thinking patterns, behavioural adaptation, and relationship development with others and self.

A particularly prominent component of our work together was Tom's uptake of the concept of cognitive plasticity, which refers to the belief that thinking processes and established cognitive content can be altered with effort and persistence (Hill, 2001). We invested time in developing Tom's recognition of logical versus emotional thinking

patterns; exploring his helpful and unhelpful learnt beliefs and behaviours; and in defining his core beliefs and values. In applied terms, Tom identified and modified his definition of success in regard to tackling; replacing his old aspiration of ‘making a big hit every time’, with the more attainable aspiration of ‘following my process and giving full effort every time’.

Further, through reflective discussion, Tom came to recognise that he had always based a degree of his self-esteem on the opinion of others but that often other people’s opinion could be superficially swayed or generally unpredictable, unduly damaging his self-esteem. We worked together to form a set of core values which Tom would endeavour to hold himself to and judge his own merit against; hence stabilising his source of self-esteem. Indeed, Tom maintained that external praise would now always be welcomed, but only as what he called ‘icing on the cake’ and no longer as a frail foundation of his self-esteem.

In addition to values and belief work, visualisation was introduced to Tom’s programme by Week 4. Specifically, Tom employed internal-imagery, meaning he would visualise himself approaching and engaging in contact situations from the first-person perspective. This was introduced to improve Tom’s pattern recognition of effective decision making in real game scenarios which Mark provided weekly on video extracts. An additional aim of visualisation was to progress Tom’s focus from internal cues (such as body positioning and foot placement) to more external cues such as opportunities to make a tackle or turnover and the subsequent areas he would target on engagement in contact situations. I challenged Tom to decide when and for what duration he would practice visualisation, as to empower him to take ownership of his own goals and programme. Such ownership of personalised goal setting is well established to support adherence and engagement in intervention programs (Baker et al., 2001; Levack et al., 2006). Tom reported visualising daily throughout weeks 4-10 of the programme and Mark recounted

that conversations he and Tom were holding in relation to effective decision-making suggested Tom was really invested in ‘living-out’ the scenarios and cues he was studying.

By Week 6 of the intervention, Tom’s club had commenced pre-season rugby fixtures which Tom had been selected to feature in. HC had been interested by the video footage of Tom’s development (requesting it fortnightly) and had told Tom personally that he was impressed with his improved effectiveness in defence training sessions. This was promising feedback for Tom and good stakeholder analysis of the impact of the intervention to date.

Relatedly, during the Week 6 CAP meeting Tom presented what he had learnt and developed on both physical and psychological terms over the programme. He reported feeling more confident in his tackling ability; more knowledgeable of how and when to enter contact situations; more excited to enter contact situations; more self-assured in himself in general terms; and, more grounded in his perspective of what it meant to add value to the club.

During the final 4 weeks of intervention, Tom and Mark met weekly to review Tom’s game footage, decision making, tackle and turnover execution, and subsequent work plan for each week. Tom and I also held fortnightly videocalls to discuss any arising matters, thoughts or feelings. These sessions were now predominantly led by Tom on his own agenda. I had adopted the role of a thinking partner, helping Tom to continue to grow his own approach to managing his cognitions, behaviours and emotions independent of support.

Intervention Effectiveness and Termination

At Week 10 of Tom’s programme the first team selection sheet of the league season was shared with the squad. Tom hadn’t made the First Team, but he already knew this as HC had met him one-to-one the day before to offer huge praise and encouragement for his progress. HC felt that Tom simply needed more game time now to develop his

application of the skills improved over the past 10 weeks. Tom had been assigned as Captain of the clubs Second Team and would play for sure.

Aside from HC's positive recognition that Tom had improved considerably, there were other markers which he, Mark and I reviewed at our final CAP meeting. First, the Analyst produced a highlights montage of Tom's journey from Week 1 to 10, which clearly demonstrated Tom's technique development but also the work rate and effort Tom had committed to the journey. The video was good-humouredly overlaid with the theme song from Rocky Balboa, which Tom appreciated as a testament to his work rate, and the closing scenes showed impressive tackles and turnovers Tom had made in live training and game situations in weeks 7-10. It was a timely and succinct reminder of what he had achieved and how he had attained it.

However, perhaps the most promising marker of Tom's psychological growth came from the way he processed and summarised HC's selection decision. Tom referenced the skills we had covered in his one-to-one sessions around working with reality, perspective, and his own guiding value-set. He acknowledged that if he were in HC's position, he would have made the same call at this point. He summarised that he had worked hard to develop his defensive weaknesses, and that bolstered with new skillsets he felt confident and committed to making the most of the year and his career.

At the close of the consultancy I wrote an email to Tom's coaches, including HC with Tom's permission, explaining that our support programme had reached completion of its 10-week framework. I invited Tom and the coaches to offer feedback on my service directly, or anonymously if they preferred. HC responded with thanks and all parties remained particularly praising of the effort Tom himself had contributed. The consultancy was mutually agreed by all parties to have found its end and ceased on the final payment of consultancy fees by Tom's club.

Summary and Reflections

This case study presents an integrated intervention to help a Rugby Union player develop their confidence and effectiveness in contact situations. The mainstay of the intervention was an integrated methodology combining skill acquisition and cognitive-behavioural approaches. Success of the intervention was confirmed via triangulation of behavioural video analysis, stakeholder analysis and client self-report over a 10-week programme.

Throughout the programme there were also many moments of key learning and reflection for me as a practitioner. Firstly, I developed a further appreciation of the value of supervision. The act of sharing my formulation and provisional support plan made me formalise and verbalise workings which to some extent were implicit or developed through professional judgement. In particular it was helpful to explore the potential impact of Tom's stage of development, his relationship with his father and coaches, and his apparent search for assurance in the rugby environment. Most importantly in that regard, supervision helped me to recognise the importance of not following my own agenda in support of Tom. He had not come asking for relationship support or therapy. His immediate needs had been declared as performance-focused and supervision helped me to keep that focus whilst affording diligence to parallel agendas in an appropriate way and environment.

On review, the structure of Tom's intervention certainly appeared one of its key strengths. A clear plan enabled for clear communication, measurement and termination of the service. I can reflect that perhaps too easily in sport psychology consultancy there could be danger of working loosely with clients on unsubstantiated agendas for unspecified periods of time. The danger of such an approach would be to risk a lack of direction and a loss of motivation or trust on route. In the present case, the process of conducting a thorough and informative intake, needs analysis and formulation set a clear direction for the consultancy; while measuring impact and keeping communication lines open throughout ensured the programme remained relevant and timely. I also considered it an

advantage being an external consultant to the club, as I felt in no way indicted in selection politics and Tom welcomed the opportunity to speak freely with an impartial and trusted source.

An area for improvement, or at least where I might operate differently in similar future cases, would be to offer a follow-up evaluation of Tom's progress periodically following the intervention. Meyer, Whelan and Murphy (1996) found support for the efficacy of cognitive behavioural interventions for the enhancement of sport performance but warned that follow-up evaluations are needed post-intervention to assess any meaningful maintenance of psychological and performance changes. Indeed, since the termination of Tom's programme I have considered often how Tom is getting on and whether his skillset is continuing to serve him well. I was however clear at the termination of Tom's support programme to assure him and his coaches that a line of communication remains open between them and I, should they wish to use it. In that regard I can accept that the ultimate choice to reconnect or not, remains with the client.

A final reflection from my learning during Tom's support is on the importance of enabling a positive and productive training environment for athletes to explore their potential. The work conducted by Tom and I; Mark and Tom; Tom on his own; or otherwise, would not have individually created the change which Tom achieved. However, integrated into a multifaceted but collaborative approach, the results were hugely positive. The capacity to work with the athlete, his coach(es), and through his environment made a significant impact on the effectiveness of this intervention in my opinion.

Finally, in 2018 the English Rugby Football Union (RFU) will trial a rule change which lowers the height of a legal tackle (RFU, 2018). The decision was made in an effort to lower the sport's most frequently encountered injury: concussion. Undoubtedly many players, young and old, may consequently need to revisit and even retrain their approach to the tackle area. Hopefully examples such as this case demonstrate that it can be done with time and effort invested on and off the field of play.

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Consultancy Case Study 3: Reflections on Supporting a Professional Athlete Through A Family Bereavement

The presented case study reports ethical, practical, and reflective experiences garnered in support of a 26-year-old male athlete. In keeping with the authors ontological (relativism) and epistemological (constructivism) perspectives, the report is written with influence of the narrative approach. That is, elements of storytelling in the first person. Recent research has promoted the notion that sport and performance psychology consultants, like other people, make sense of experiences through stories (Tod et al., 2019). Our stories constitute the way we make sense of the world - *our* realities (Smith, 2010). In this light, the first-person narrative is used deliberately to factor for the personal experience and reflective learning of the author through this consultancy and its reporting.

Importantly, the client at the centre of this case has granted permission for our work together to be shared as part of my PhD assessment and continued learning and development as a practitioner. Efforts are made throughout to protect the client's anonymity, for example by assigning the pseudonym of Jon and providing Jon opportunity to read and feedback on the report prior to its submission. Subsequently this case study places less emphasis on Jon's personal story, and greater focus on four principal considerations prevalent within the consultancy. The four focuses: ethical decision making and competency in practice; honing and delivering support; managing self as person and practitioner; and, evaluation of the consultancy, forge the structure of the report and its narrative. A reflective summary concludes the account.

Part 1: Ethical Decision Making and Competency in Practice

When a sports coach called out of the blue and asked if I could support an athlete whose mother was dying of a terminal illness, I knew there were important ethical and professional considerations afoot. When commenting on ethical considerations in sport psychology service delivery, Tod (2017) posits that sport psychologists must always

consider two principle notions relating to professional ethics: confidentiality and competence.

Confidentiality was easily addressed on the call; the coach would have confidential privilege to me and my supervisor. If I worked with the athlete, the coach wanted no reporting on the specific content, only to know if Jon was getting what he needed from any forward relationship. Jon and I could discuss this later, at intake.

Competence presented a more complex example of professional judgement and decision making in action. According to the practice guidelines of British Psychological Society (BPS, 2017), professional competence is upheld when psychologists work within the recognised limits of their knowledge, skill, training, education, and experience. To ascertain if I was competent to offer support services to Jon I reflected in-action upon three sources of information: the needs of the client; my training and experience in the area; and my professional philosophy.

The coach explained that Jon had enquired if I would speak with him. I had previously presented at his club and he considered me as someone he could open up to. Additionally, there was no embedded psychologist at Jon's club and he and the coach were unaware of other support options available. From the coach's perspective he felt Jon had been 'putting a brave face on' around the club and might benefit from an external and professional support avenue at this tough time. From the coach's information, I was comfortable to continue exploring the prospect of supporting Jon.

Reflecting on my professional competency, I had training and experience of counselling skills and experience of supporting bereaved athletes. I was nonetheless also reflective that a trained and experienced bereavement specialist might present an alternative, and possibly better fit, to the client's needs. They could, for example, have more experience of supporting athletes such as Jon. Such contemplations are likely not uncommon in reflective practitioners considering if they have the skills needed to meet a client's needs (Cropley, Miles, Hanton & Niven, 2007; Cropley, Hanton, Miles & Niven,

2010). Nonetheless, applied practitioners must also commonly make decisions in the moment (Martindale & Collins, 2013); so, at this junction I was greatly informed and steered by my professional philosophy and model of practice².

Explicitly, I place the person (the primary client) at the centre of any consultancy in a fundamentally client-led approach. As such, there was only so much inference that could be drawn from talking with the coach. Jon's own views, needs, and direction were paramount also. It could be, for example, that Jon wanted to talk about a performance issue, a home life issue, or not to talk at all. The only way to know would be to invite Jon to talk himself and conduct a needs analysis and case formulation accordingly (Keegan, 2016).

At this point I was further guided by my professional philosophy. In offering a hierarchical structure of the consultant's professional philosophy, Poczwardowski, Sherman & Ravizza (2004) suggest that stable elements, such as personal core beliefs and values can influence and inform dynamic factors, such as decision making around intervention techniques and methods. Operationalising this concept, I wanted to offer as much choice (a core principle of my philosophy) as possible to both Jon and the coach in order to facilitate their empowerment (a core value of my philosophy). In practical terms, this meant recommending that the coach offered Jon two sets of contact details: my own, and those of local counselling services. I hoped this would empower Jon to explore the options available to him and ultimately to have agency in his own self-direction.

I recognised too this could mean Jon not contacting me at all, which I discussed with the coach and he conveyed would not be a problem. Jon could decide what he wanted to do. All the coach and I could do at this point was express our willingness to support him in the best way possible. The coach would explain to Jon that if he did contact me, he could talk in confidence and obligation free (the club would cover any fees), about what he

² See Figure 1, Reflective Practice Commentary (p.473), for a visual representation of my professional philosophy and model of practice.

felt he needed and wanted from consultancy. From there Jon and I could mutually decide if the match was right between my competency and his needs.

I later took the consultancy request to supervision. Combined with reflective practice, supervision is considered an essential aid to the development and execution of ethical and competent practice in sport psychology (Cropley et al., 2010). It was encouraging to identify that what I had covered with the coach was demonstrative of competent practice, considering and remaining within my professional boundaries (Poczwadowski, Sherman & Henschen, 1998). It was also interesting to discuss my reasons for wanting to take the case on; fundamentally deduced to my core value of care for others.

In a reflective line of self-imposed scrutiny, I questioned whether I might also be taking the case on for the less altruistic reward of enhancing my own experience of supporting bereaved peoples. My supervisor offered a reassuring perspective that learning from experience is both acceptable and essential in your development – a point echoed in both traditional (see, Rogers, 1957) and contemporary (see, Tod, 2017) literature. I reconciled that my core reason for offering to support Jon was that I felt willing and able to support him, and that learning through that experience was still congruent to my values and philosophy as a person and practitioner.

Part 2: Honing and Delivering Support

During our first meeting, we completed a client-led interview-based formulation of Jon's support needs. Jon described wanting someone to talk to about things that were going on in his life. He wanted somewhere to vent, verbalise, and process his thoughts and feelings; but free of concern of how it might impact others' feelings (such as his family) or others' treatment of him (such as his teammates). He spoke about his mother's poor and deteriorating health, about his aspirations to continue playing his sport, and about how he had previously had a counselling relationship but felt they had never really understood his life as a professional athlete. In regard to a service outcome, Jon simply felt that talking

with someone could help him process the burden of various roles and responsibilities in his life.

To many extents, Jon's existing personal insight and resulting direction of our work made my needs analysis and case formulation simple. Jon was primarily, if not exclusively, asking for a safe relationship in which he could speak, be heard, and make sense of his life. Such needs appeared to align most closely to the nondirective counselling model of sport psychology service delivery (Hill, 2001). Specifically, the priority of a counselling framework is the formation of a safe relationship, or the so named working alliance (Bordin, 1979), through which the client can bring about effective change or enhance their well-being (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2013). In sports counselling, the focus is no different, prioritising the individual's personal needs over sports performance (Hinkle, 1994). Based on the client's needs, I posited to support him with focus on two primary objectives: (1) facilitating a safe therapeutic relationship through which he could express his thoughts and emotions; and, (2) empowering him to self-determine the direction of our work together and explore his innate coping abilities and strengths.

Mirroring the counselling literature, the relationship formed between client and practitioner is widely considered as the foundation of effective sport psychology service delivery (Cropley et al, 2007; Petitpas, Danish & Giges, 1999; Poczwardowski et al., 1998; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015; Winstone & Gervis, 2006). Though different models of effective client-practitioner relationships in sport psychology exist, two commonly accepted components of all therapeutic relationships are the working alliance and the real relationship (see, Gelso, 2014; Horvath, Del Re, Flückiger & Symonds, 2011; Wampold & Budge, 2012). In definitional terms, the working alliance component summarises the working agreement on the goals, practices, and the emotional bond between client and practitioner (Bordin, 1979); while the real relationship is understood as, "the personal relationship existing between two or more people as reflected in the degree to which each

is genuine with the other, and perceives and experiences the other in ways that befit the other” (Gelso, 2009, pp. 254-255). From my first session with Jon, through to my last, building and maintaining a real relationship with him, so as to better enable our working alliance, remained my central focus.

To achieve this end, I drew on skills from counselling training and principles discussed in the sport psychology and counselling literature (Andersen & Speed, 2010; Katz & Hemmings, 2009; Longstaff & Gervis, 2016). For example, founded within the humanistic approach to counselling, the facilitative conditions are those that enable clients to grow and develop and include: the practitioner being genuine (congruent) within the relationship, holding the client in unconditional positive regard, being empathetic to the client’s situation and demonstrating warmth (Rogers, 1957). Such approaches are not unique to ‘classical’ counselling settings however, appearing also in the applied sport psychology literature (e.g. Andersen & Speed, 2010; Katz & Hemmings, 2009; Murphy & Murphy, 2010; Watson, Hilliard & Way, 2017). For example, sport psychologists discussing their use of counselling skills in applied practice suggest that empathetic-listening alone can compose some 80% of their session time (Longstaff & Gervis, 2016).

With Jon, consultations meant actively listening to his story, paraphrasing to demonstrate listening and understanding, and showing compassion through verbal and non-verbal communications (e.g. empathetic facial expressions or tones of voice). At the bottom line, I wanted Jon to know that I was attending to his feelings and emotions. Presenting authentically, or *genuinely* as per Rogerian terminology, was also an essential component of my work with Jon. As advocated in the literature of sport psychology and sister disciplines, by presenting genuinely (i.e. not concealed behind defenses or pretenses) practitioners are able to be seen as ‘normal people’ by athletes, which in turn can enhance their trust in the practitioner and encourage open and honest disclosure (Longstaff & Gervis, 2016; Petitpas et al., 1999). Authenticity hence sits as a guiding principle in my professional philosophy; although it was not difficult to uphold with Jon as I genuinely

cared for and empathised with him. For example, at times Jon would describe events and his torrent of emotions, often looking to me to assess my judgement of what he was saying. In such instances, as in all instances that I was consciously aware of, I endeavoured to demonstrate the unconditional positive regard I held for him. Often that simply meant reassuring Jon that he was being heard, free of judgement, and that our relationship was a safe place for him to openly discuss, express, and process his experiences. Powerful feelings relating to life and loss are normal; so normalising rippling emotions was a key facet of our work together. To all extents non-judgemental listening simply and powerfully enabled Jon to continue disclosing and processing his experience.

One unique factor which also appeared to strengthen the real relationship between Jon and I was the terms of the working alliance we agreed early on. In session 1 for example, I explained to Jon that as my employment is based on a fixed-income, supporting him would make no difference to my financial compensation, and as such I was genuinely there to help him decide if our relationship could be beneficial to him. Such transparent disclosure and regard for him as a *person* as opposed to a client made an early statement about the emotional bond on offer. Katz and Hemmings (2009) have previously argued that practitioners often neglect to agree the bond that they share with their athletes. However, through a client-led practitioner-fostered approach it was emphasised that the working alliance between Jon and I would be a safe, professional, purposeful and confidential relationship. He could set the agenda, pace, regularity, and logistics of sessions. Ultimately, I believed in Jon's worth and potential as a person and aspired to help him find his own way of coping through events that life was presenting him.

In a challenge to the client-led principles I endeavored to encourage, Jon would occasionally ask for advice on situations. That is, "what do you think I should do?" questions. Such questions can pose a conundrum for practitioners endeavouring to empower athletes to self-directed action. Do you offer a suggestion and limit the opportunity for clients' self-discovery? Equally, could refusing to answer a client's request

for help risk the value they place on the relationship with you? A practitioner's professional philosophy and support strategy are an essential guide for decision making in such instances (Keegan, 2016; Poczwardowski et al., 1998, 2004). For example, believing in client empowerment and autonomy, I chose to explain to Jon that it seemed he was trying to make sense of his situation and options and that I could play the role of helping him to talk through and organise his thoughts and feelings, so that he could decide on courses of action himself. Jon would begin discussing his issues and explore his options; invariably he would arrive at a self-directed position of action or acceptance. As regularly as I felt necessary, I would revisit my reasons for following that approach through with Jon: unconditional positive regard and a self-directive stance.

When it comes to measuring success in therapeutic relationships, it is not typically an exact science. For example, a humanistic framework of sport psychology service delivery might often focus more on how the practitioner is *being* as opposed to what they are achieving (Hill, 2001). Nonetheless, an effective sport psychologist will ultimately be judged by their capacity to help clients attend their issues and achieve their goals (Cropley et al., 2010; Tod, 2017; Tod, Marchant & Anderson, 2007). To assess such progress, I would regularly check-in with Jon to ensure he was getting what he wanted, needed, and expected from the consultancy (Keegan, 2016). For example, after seeking such feedback Jon explained that talking regularly and unreservedly was hugely cathartic for him and had been long overdue prior to our working alliance.

Likewise, Jon had requested ongoing sessions via his club, explaining that our work was very helpful to him. Such feedback was good commendation of our work together and the information his club needed to continue the support he wanted. Jon had also continued his sport during the final months of his mother's fight with illness; something he had targeted as a goal of our working alliance, and undoubtedly an area in which he needed support to process and communicate his reasons along the way.

Following session four, a different source of evaluative feedback of our work emerged. Jon had embarked on a conversation with his father which he subsequently described as, “something I never thought I could have done”. He referenced the openness, stability, and steady pace of our relationship as one of the main influences on him finding the innate skills to talk with his father. I took this as a massive endorsement of Jon’s own capacity to grow and cope. It also gave me the indication to continue empowering him as much as possible in our work together. It is ultimately a social cognitive theory that people model the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1986); but it is also recognised that clients can internalise the behaviours observed in the therapeutic relationship, contributing to their growth as a person (Barney & Anderson, 2005; Wampold & Budge, 2012).

When reflecting on my continuing support of Jon I resolved that his needs were being met through four primary mechanisms. First, the stability of our relationship – that is, that it existed, was available, and trustworthy. Second, the consistency of my approach as a practitioner - explicitly, that I managed my own emotional presence to remain attentive, empathetic, and supportive of Jon’s needs. Third, that Jon was encouraged to explore feelings, thoughts, and experiences, which he had trust in the relationship to do so. And fourthly, that the relationship we had created provided a healthy reference from which he could identify helpful strategies or resolutions explicitly or implicitly. It was however, on point two of these mechanisms that I recognised the need for personal supervision as the consultancy continued.

Part 3: Managing Self as Person and Practitioner

Through the mainstay of our work together, some nine sessions in total, Jon and I explored whichever agendas he brought to consultation. Discussion would journey through expressions of pain, anger, sadness, inspiration, frustration, guilt, detachment, and acceptance. Jon would raise things that were salient for him and I would employ reflective and empathetic listening skills, letting him know that he was being heard and understood.

It was during reflective practice after session four however that I came to recognise I was experiencing significant countertransference emotions of my own.

Defined as, “the therapist’s internal and external reactions that are shaped by the therapist’s past and present emotional conflicts and vulnerabilities” (Gelso & Hayes, 2007, p. 25); countertransference is considered to be triggered by a client or the consultancy focus, but to fundamentally relate to the therapist’s unresolved issues and not merely their normal reactions to emotive prompts (Gelso, 2014). The incidence of countertransference has been observed and discussed in relation to sport psychology (e.g. Winstone & Gervis, 2006), however detailed practitioner accounts remain relatively limited. Most importantly, it has been argued that a lack of practitioner-awareness of countertransference can be detrimental to the consultancy process (Strean & Strean, 1998; Winstone & Gervis, 2006); whilst awareness and management of countertransference can give the practitioner valuable insight into client dynamics and enrich the therapeutic bond (Gelso & Hayes, 2007; Racker, 1957; Strean & Strean, 1998; Winstone & Gervis, 2006).

In my experience, I had moved from Rogers’s (1957) promotion of empathising by seeing the client’s world ‘as if’ it was your own, towards experiencing real unprocessed emotions and experience of my own. For example, I would project forward imagining a time without my parents and experience a strong and diverse mix of emotions. I had become hypersensitised to the risk of family bereavement, something I had not faced or considered duly before. At times, it felt like I had begun to grieve my immediate family in advance of the bereavement taking place. During self-reflection I noted that such strong feelings were disproportionate to a caring stance for Jon and were instead manifestations of my own emotional vulnerabilities – true countertransference.

The literature in psychotherapy and sport psychology has supported the importance of self-awareness and countertransference management (Ellis, 2001; Giges, 1998; Hayes et al., 1991; Leahy, 2001; Rowan & Jacobs, 2002; Winstone & Gervis, 2006) and its applicability in all psychological settings (Hayes, 2004). Specifically, self-awareness is

considered vital for effective professional practice in avoiding the acting out of countertransference (Petitpas et al., 1999; Winstone & Gervis, 2006; Van Raalte & Andersen, 2000). For me, I recognised that the best place to take my thoughts, feelings, and emotions would be formal supervision. Supervision and personal counseling have been recommended as a means through which to raise practitioner-awareness of countertransference (Pocwardowski et al., 1998; Rowan & Jacobs, 2004; Winstone & Gervis, 2006). I hoped that through open discussion with an experienced supervisor, I could access their skilled challenge and support and exceed the limits of my self-knowledge (Anderson, Knowles & Gilbourne, 2004).

In supervision I was helped to explore aspects of both self and case management. For example, I was encouraged to talk about my feelings and work through them, as opposed to repress them (Strean & Strean, 1998). To all extents, I entered a period of brief-therapy of my own. Indeed, although developing self-awareness through personal therapy is not expected, or widely practiced, by sport psychologists (Winstone & Gervis, 2006); I personally subscribe to the notion of having adequate arrangements for managing and developing the self (Pocwardowski, 2017).

Research into the management of countertransference suggests five main areas of focused development for practitioners: self-insight, self-integration, empathy, anxiety management, and conceptual skills (Van Wagoner, Gelso, Hayes, & Diemer, 1991; Hayes, Gelso, Van Wagoner, & Diemer, 1991). However, based on the responses of 33 countertransference-specialists (i.e. published psychologists), Hayes et al. (1991) identified self-insight and self-integration as the most important factors in practitioners successfully managing countertransference. Self-insight is understood as “the extent to which a therapist is aware of one’s own feelings and understands their basis” (Van Wagoner et al., 1991, p.412) and self-integration as the therapist’s sense of self and security in him/herself (Winstone & Gervis, 2006).

During reflective practice (both self-led and in supervision) I came to reflect upon the causes and manifestations of my own emotions, and, how I would manage such experiences both in and away from the consulting room. For example, introspective acceptance of mortality, recognition of personal coping resources, and investment in family relationships became a commitment of self-integration; whilst a focus on the essential components of continuing to meet Jon's goals and needs (as aforementioned under the support delivery section of this report) became the reinvigorated professional focus and commitment.

Specifically, through supervision and self-directed reflection, I would tune into what I wanted and needed to continue to be for Jon. My twin-objective support strategy still stood. I could and would continue to facilitate a safe therapeutic relationship through which Jon could express his thoughts and emotions; and, I could and would continue to empower him to self-determine the direction of our work together and explore his innate coping abilities and strengths. Through a sound original support strategy and ongoing supervision and reflective practice, I was able to focus on what Jon needed in our sessions and prevent any countertransference experiences from intruding negatively into the therapeutic relationship (Gelso, 2014; Winstone & Gervis, 2006). Ultimately, Jon's session time was about *him*, not me; and I worked hard away from consultations to keep that balance in check.

Part 4: End of the Voyage, But Not the Journey

Twelve weeks after Jon's mum passed away, we held our final session. We had met monthly over that three-month period; as directed by Jon. Our sessions had primarily continued to focus on the range of thoughts and feelings he was experiencing. Our penultimate and final sessions however focused less on Jon's emotions, and more on the adaptive coping processes and resources he considered to have developed.

Jon had built a strong and varied support network across his sport and non-sport social circles. For example, Jon spoke of the enriched relationship he, his father, and his

sibling were sharing since his mother's passing. Her death, he reflected, had pulled his family ever closer and he felt that his own communication skills were enabling them all to engage in supportive and cathartic conversation. Likewise, Jon shared examples of how his close friends were proving a welcomed source of support and distraction as he required.

On reflection of his coping skills, Jon remarked in our final session that he felt the ability to own and discuss emotions was one of the biggest takeaways from our work together. This form of relational modelling and internalisation could be considered a marker of success in our work together (Barney & Anderson, 2005). For me, the development of a social support network of family and friends was simply a good indicator that Jon had formed helpful coping resources and strategies independent of our relationship.

In our final session Jon communicated that he felt to have received and taken what he needed from our relationship. This form of autonomous decision-making was something I had keenly promoted throughout our working alliance and so it was genuinely welcomed at the end. We had discussed the 'what next' steps for Jon. He felt he was in a good (as possible) place, with a good support network, and coping strategies. We agreed, without expectation, that Jon had the agency to contact me in the future if he so wished. The tone of that final meeting was of mutual gratitude and genuine unconditional positive regard. In reflection, I likely couldn't have felt any more congruent to my core professional philosophy at that time.

Following our final session, I contacted Jon's coach – as agreed with Jon – to inform him of the completion of our work together. Managing the expectations of all stakeholders in a consultancy arrangement is essential (Keegan, 2016). Contractual necessities and professional courtesies aside, it was a chance for me to ask for final feedback from the coach regarding my overall service. Expressing his gratitude for the service provided him and Jon, the coach referenced that from his perspective Jon had appeared to cope very well during this tempestuous period. In particular he admired Jon's

transparency around days he felt emotional when entering the club, or in instances where the coach could see that Jon was doing his best to focus on sport issues when his thoughts might rightly have been elsewhere. Respectful of confidentiality and Jon's autonomy in all of these instances, I simply remarked that I was happy Jon had gained what he needed from our relationship. The coach committed to keeping a supportive eye on Jon over the coming months; a reassuring recognition of yet another supportive figure in Jon's network.

Summary reflections

In many ways my support of Jon proved a huge learning curve for me as a person and practitioner. From the outset, my personal core values and beliefs about what is important in service delivery enabled me to engage with the client ethically and authentically. This experience offered significant validation to my professional philosophy, which is young in crystallisation, yet proved an essential guide to subsequently adopted models of practice, intervention goals, and techniques (Poczwadowski et al., 2004). Thereafter, the counselling model of applied practice, centralised around a therapeutic working alliance, fit well to the needs and expectations of both the primary client (Jon) and the sponsor (his club).

Tod (2017) has spoken of effective practitioners being characterised by a medley of what they know (knowledge), what they do (skills), and who they are (character). In absence of performance data or triangulated observational input throughout this consultancy, ongoing self-reflection and self-regulation of my 'being' and 'doing' was an essential source of feedback and direction in support of Jon. For example, monitoring if I was delivering my support strategy as planned, and if that approach was working for Jon - in accordance with his feedback - was an ongoing process from start to finish. Likewise, Jon, his coach, and I had set clear expectations regarding the practicalities of the provision from the offset, which enabled Jon to trust and commit to the real relationship and working alliance.

Perhaps no incidence within this consultancy tested and developed my processes of self-awareness and self-development more than my experience of countertransference. Considered to occur in approximately 80% of therapists' sessions (Hayes et al, 1998), countertransference reactions should not be considered as untypical – although continued research in the area is wanting. In this instance its occurrence was irrefutable and ultimately vastly enriching. I am thankful for the opportunity to have supported Jon, and to have grown as a person and practitioner in the process.

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Consultancy Contract Report

This report includes:

Description	Page Numbers
An initial report on the 'status of psychology' at England Rugby, which I was requested to conduct in July 2017 and return suggestions of where my services could advance the situation.	267-269 NB: retracted due to copyright
The contract I subsequently agreed between England Rugby (the client) and Chimp Management (my primary employer).	270-272 NB: retracted due to copyright
The Client Information and Informed Consent Form I used in support of athletes across the England Rugby contract.	273-274
The 'mid-point' service report I produced for the client 12 months into my role.	275-276
The service summary report I produced for the client at the close of my 24-month contract.	277
Two sources of feedback from the client.	278-279 NB: 1 source retracted due to copyright

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Informed Consent to Engage in Psychological Skill Mentoring

Your Name:
Address:
Email:
Mobile:
In case of emergency, please contact:
Name:
Contact no:

The Practitioner

Robbie Anderson is a Graduate Member of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and Trainee Sport & Exercise Psychologist under supervision of Professor Steve Peters (Chimp Management Ltd) and Dr Martin Eubank (Liverpool John Moores University).

Robbie holds a BSc (Hons) Sport Science degree, an MSc Psychology, MSc Sport and Exercise Psychology and is currently undertaking a PhD in Sport & Exercise Psychology.

Robbie specialises in supporting the wellbeing and performance of individuals and teams and cannot offer diagnosis or treatment of clinical level ill mental health.

Explaining the Service

Psychological skill mentoring is designed to give you a relationship through which you could develop multiple aspects of your psychological wellbeing and performance. It's a little bit like having a rugby coach to share ideas on your tactical development with, or an S+C expert to help you explore your physical status, objectives, and ways of working. You are ultimately in charge of your own development. This means you can ask as many questions as you like, and ultimately hold the power to making any advances in your psychological development. I will work with you to offer as much input as you like along the way.

If the situation arises where you or I consider that your needs and my expertise do not match, I will encourage us to discuss this openly and to explore the possible alternatives to fulfilling your personal requirements.

Assurances

Whenever we talk, I will uphold the content of our conversation as confidential. This is to assure you that you have a safe place to share ideas, concerns, and otherwise. The only time this would ever not be the case, is if I deem that you or someone you know may be at risk of harm. This may appear unlikely to you, and you can be assured I would always look to discuss my concerns with you first whenever possible.

You having trust in our relationship is of paramount importance for me. As such, you may wish to consider who you *would* like me to be able to speak to on your behalf. For example, coaches, parents, team-mates and other key people will commonly ask after you (often with very good intentions) and I will not share comment, unless you grant me informed consent to do so. Hopefully we can talk this over at the start of our work together, and even review its status from time to time.

Also, in relation to better understanding the demand for services I supply, the RFU ask me to speak with players around what information you are happy for me to share with them. To be clear, I never disclose any information – even that you have contacted me – unless you give explicit permission for me to do so. This is something we will discuss when we first talk therefore so we can both be clear and comfortable of how reporting to the RFU will work in relation to you.

I will store all of your information (e.g. contact details, session notes, development plans, etc.) digitally and on a secure system. I will never share any of your information with any third party. For your reference, I keep session notes for 5 years so you and I can revisit them if ever needed. After that time, they are deleted.

Finally, for your peace of mind and my own continued development, I engage in ongoing supervision with Professor Steve Peters (Chimp Management Ltd) and Dr Martin Eubank (Liverpool John Moores University). As such I may discuss aspects of the topics we cover with them, as to help me stay at my best in supporting you. If you have any questions in regard to my supervision, what I may discuss with my supervisor, or any other aspects of what I have explained to you in this document – please do ask.

Summary

Robbie Anderson is bound by the British Psychological Society’s code of ethics, which is based on the principles of respect, competence, responsibility and integrity.

If you ever have any questions, concerns, or feedback relating to the services provided by Robbie, you can speak in confidence with his Supervisor, Professor Steve Peters, available via: stevepeters@mindfielduk.net

Athlete Consent

Prior to signing this document, please feel assured that you can contact me (Robbie Anderson) with any questions you may have.

I am available on: 07890 076 374 or robbieanderson@rfu.com.

Having read this information, I consent to participating in psychological skill mentoring with Robbie Anderson according to the above statement of service and confidentiality.
Athlete Signature:
Date Signed:
Mentor Signature:
Date Signed:

NPP Psychology Contract Audit

Aug 2017 - Aug 2018



The outlined service was delivered via 208 contracted days of delivery, approximately 4 working days a week.

Days breakdown:

2017 - 81 Days: Prep days: 5 / Aug: 15 / Sept: 15 / Oct: 19 / Nov: 18 / Dec: 9

2018 - 127 Days: Prep days: 5 / Jan: 18 / Feb: 19 / Mar: 18 / Apr: 15 / May: 13 / June: 18 / July: 4 / Aug: 17

Objective of Service

To engage with the players and stakeholders of the National Performance Programme to support their personal and performance development.

2017-18 Service Priorities and Outcomes:

1	Establish, develop and maintain working relationships, with a primary focus on the personal and performance support of the NPP group (Including: NPP Players, National Coaches, Academy Managers, and other key stakeholders). Outcome: Achieved and documented in monthly NPP Psychology Updates to the PMT and from athlete and stakeholder 'stories' throughout the year.
2	Understand the National Performance Programme and influence its ongoing development. Outcome: Achieved through working closely with RFU and Leading Edge staff to consolidate the structure of the programme, introduce the Awareness & Development Framework, and continue providing innovative learning experiences and support.
3	Time to explore and understand the organisational and systemic factors relevant to the delivery of psychology in the RFU Men's Pathway. Including managing Non-NPP RFU Psychology demands and requests (e.g. U18s, U20s, Academies, Pathway General, Non-Pathway, other). Outcome: Achieved through immersion in the pathway for 12 months, and through the support of Mark Bennett (to remove some workload) during periods of high demand. A strategy report for how Psychology could be provided across the Pathway was submitted to MB Feb 2018.

Key Learnings from 2017-18:

- The contract of 208 days is sufficient for covering the NPP group.
- 'On-boarding' new NPP entrants was a valuable addition to the NPP this year. Look to advance this in 2018-19 along with feedback processes (i.e. to Academy).
- The capture and/or exchange of information between pathway staff has, very typically, been informal. This can lead to missed capture/sharing and so I would recommend reform of this area for 2018-19.
- Senior NPP players greatly enjoyed and benefited from the JWC experience (e.g. leadership on and off the field). It is worth continuing our efforts to get as many players as possible to have that opportunity.
- From being part of the system for 1 year, there appears good reason to adopt a more education and acquisition based approach to the nuts and bolts of the Chimp Mind Management Model. Example primary objective @U18: understanding the mind and simple mind management techniques. Example primary objective @U20: developing the capacity to apply mind management skills, including self-identity work and influencing others.

2018-19 Service Priorities Proposal:

1	Maintain practice from 2017-18 and build upon it by enhancing the way we capture, evaluate and share value with stakeholders. For example, demonstrating impact and success stories to funding parties.
2	Support of the NPP group through the competition programme at U18 and U20. For example, camp and competition-based education and development provision (including a provision framework).

3

Collaborate with peers to drive Academy CPD opportunities to address issues 'down-stream' that currently arrive upstream.

NPP Psychology Contract Summary

Aug 2018 - Aug 2019



The outlined service was delivered via 120 contracted days of delivery, approximately 2 working days a week.

Days breakdown:

2018 - 64 Days: Prep days: 1 / Aug: 10 / Sept: 17 / Oct: 16 / Nov: 13 / Dec: 7

2019 - 56 Days: Prep days: 1 / Jan: 17 / Feb: 15 / Mar: 7 / Apr: 11 / May: 5

Objective of Service

To engage with the players and stakeholders of the National Performance Programme to support their personal and performance development.

2018-19 Service Priorities and Outcomes:

1	Maintain practice from 2017-18 and build upon it by enhancing the way we capture, evaluate and share value with stakeholders. Outcome: Achieved and documented in monthly NPP Psychology Updates to the PMT and from athlete and stakeholder 'stories' throughout the year (e.g. increased communication via RFU Media channels). Selection of multiple NPP players into the Senior EPS was a notable success.
2	Support of the NPP group through the competition programme at U18 and U20. Outcome: Achieved via increased camp-based delivery (e.g. U20s Winning Edge programme) and sustained IDPs for NPP Players, including domestic-focused support.
3	Collaborate with peers to drive Academy CPD opportunities to address issues 'down-stream' that currently arrive upstream. Outcome: Achieved through, (A) conducting the Regional Academy Psychology Audit, promoting reflection, discussion and action concerning the future of Regional Academy Psychology provision; and (B) collaborating with Don Barrell and Leading Edge to deliver the Academy Managers Forum and CPD initiatives.

Key Learnings from 2018-19:

- The contract of 120 days is sufficient for covering the NPP group, however, a reduced delivery sacrifices the capacity for psychology to be influenced across the Pathway and PRD (see recommendations below).
- Greater inclusion of Academy Managers in the NPP Journey was a positive step (from feedback of players, AMs and PMT). Challenges exist however around RFU and Academy Managers' opinion of NPP Player identification (see recommendations below).
- Monthly ADMs (pre-PMT) improved the capture and exchange of information between pathway staff. Meetings were especially successful when chaired.
- The Seniors appreciated NPP Player Profiles and welcome similar communications in the future.

Advisory Recommendations:

1	Continue to develop the inclusion of Regional Academy Managers, Psychologists (where in position), and Parents in NPP Player Development. For example, a project could target better communication of the NPP selection process and working processes.
2	Continue to support the development of psychology provision within the Regional Academies For example, by building on the project of identifying what a 'minimum requirement' would be to receive RFU funding <i>were</i> it to enter the annual Academy Audit matrix (which all parties believe it should).
3	As per the Psychology Department Proposal submitted to the RFU Board November 2018, I would advise the organisation to revisit its ambition to create a world leading psychology service. For example, the matter of intellectual property of the RFU is ongoing. A Lead of Department could be a point for review following the 2019 RWC.

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to certify that Robbie Anderson provided weekly updates, monthly reports, and annual service audits in his role as National Performance Programme Psychologist at the Rugby Football Union.

We were, in all instances, happy with the information and service delivered by Robbie.

Signed: (RFU contact / role) ALICE SHEFFIELD / MEN'S PATHWAY.
Date: 12/8/19 *Alice Sheffield*

Signed: (Chimp Management contact / role) Dr Anna Waters
Date: 31.07.19 *Supervisor*

Signed: (Robbie Anderson) *R Anderson*
Date: 31 July 2019

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Teaching Case Study: Supporting Individual and Team Functioning in an International Age-Grade Rugby Team

Introduction to the Client Group

The following teaching case study documents delivery of a training programme to the England Rugby Men's U20s Squad (hereafter, The U20s) during their 2018-19 campaign. At U20s level, a campaign is considered to consist of the (European focused) 6Nations competition held February to March, and the global Junior World Championships (JWC), held in June. A series of training and selection camps are held within the campaign which make up the remainder of the potential contact points with the group.

The U20s squad consists of 38 players (later reduced to 28 after JWC selection), who have been selected from regional clubs to represent their country. The squad is subsequently a mix of young males from different schools, clubs, regions, socio-demographic backgrounds, ethnicities, and ages (e.g. the 2018-19 age range was 17-20 years). In support of the U20s is a coaching team, comprising of 1 head coach, 3 technical coaches, 1 team manager, and a team of 8 sport science and medical (SSM) staff – including myself as psychologist.

During conception, design, and delivery of this programme I was employed by England Rugby to oversee the support and development of individual and team functioning in the Men's Pathway (see, Figure 1). The U20s programme, part of the Men's Pathway, upholds an overarching objective of supporting the development of talented players so they can best contend for selection at the Senior International level.

Identifying Programme Objectives and Group Needs

First it is helpful to acknowledge that the 2018-19 campaign was the second season I had supported the U20s, meaning I came into the conceptualisation and design of this programme with good contextual and practical knowledge (Sternberg, 1997). For example, I had good understanding of: the players group, many of whom I had known from U18 involvement or their involvement in the U20s the previous year; the coaches, in particular

the Head Coach, who was leading the programme for his third campaign; the SSM staff; and, the general structure of the season, including the structure, content, logistics, and demands of the training and competition schedule. Contextual knowledge has been recognised as essential for sport psychologists to possess if they wish to integrate themselves quickly and effectively into the wider programme (Dunn & Holt, 2003; Gould, 2002). For me, it was a helpful reference point when co-creating the programmes principal objectives with the Head Coach (HC).

The HC wished the programme to focus on supporting players to integrate with one another; to be given the opportunity to grow as people *and* players (i.e. encouraging the development of skills that can help them on and off the pitch); and, for the team to consider factors which could help them perform at their best in the JWC. The only other necessities were that delivery could fit into the usual camp schedule and have a low costing – no budget granted!

Two outcome objectives of the programme were subsequently agreed: (1) to create an environment in which players and coaches could interact and build connections with one another; and, (2) to use that collaborative environment to explore factors which could make a difference to individual and team functioning on and off the field of play. It was intended that both objectives would focus on building connections and encouraging desirable skills such as communication, interaction, reflection, ownership, leadership, and learning. A final intention was to make the sessions as engaging as possible, agreeing to limit them to 40 minutes maximum.

Programme Design

Basic Structure and Logistics

A reality of camp-based sports programmes is that time is of a premium. As a consequence, it is not uncommon for sport psychology sessions to be crammed into tight time slots, held in inappropriate settings (e.g. the team bus), or positioned at the end of long training days (e.g. Dunn & Holt, 2003; McCann, 2000; Simons & Anderson, 1995

Weigand, Richardson, & Weinberg, 1999). With buy-in of the HC and support of the Team Manager, I was able to secure 6 x 40-minute meeting slots across the campaign, to be held at an appropriate time (e.g. most often the hour before the team's evening meal) and in an ideal setting (e.g. designated, spacious, meeting rooms). Considering the psychological, social, and physical environment of learners is a long-upheld and well researched focus of applied pedagogy (e.g. Barrett, Davies, Zhang & Barrett, 2015; Vygotsky, 1978).

The 6 sessions were subsequently entered into the campaign schedule and titled 'Winning Edge' as my experience a year earlier had been that players are more stimulated by content scheduled on their programme which they can link directly to their performance. My explanation of this title would subsequently make up part of my introduction session with the group and would outline its inherent double entendre: England Rugby wants to support players to be winners on and off the pitch, irrelevant of the score.

Guiding Pedagogical Theory

Considering the objectives of facilitating interaction, discovery, and learning within the group, theory and applications of enquiry-based learning (EBL) appeared best suited to the programme. EBL is defined as an educational strategy based on discovering knowledge that fosters active participation and learners' responsibility (Jong & Joolingen, 1998). EBL is often organised into enquiry phases that together form an enquiry cycle. Although different variations on what is called the 'enquiry cycle' can be found throughout the literature, a systematic review has offered a synthesized enquiry cycle that combines the strengths of existing EBL frameworks (Pedaste et al., 2015).

In overview, Pedaste and colleagues state that good EBL practice constitutes five general phases of enquiry: orientation, conceptualization, investigation, conclusion, and discussion (Figure 2). EBL will hence begin with orientation (e.g. introduce the topic and learning challenge) and flow through conceptualization (e.g. asking or creating questions and determining what needs to be known or done) to investigation (e.g. experimentation,

analysis, and evaluation), where several cycles are possible. EBL usually ends with the conclusion phase (e.g. refinement, construction, and/or conclusions). The discussion phase, consisting of communication and reflection, is potentially present at every point during EBL and connects to all the other phases. That is because discussion can occur at any time during (discussion in-action) or after (discussion on-action) EBL.

In contrast to principles of traditional education (i.e. a *teacher* presenting facts and his or her knowledge about the subject) my role in delivering an EBL programme would be as *facilitator*. For example, the HC had asked me to facilitate the group to identify and develop factors which could help them perform well at the World Cup, as oppose to present a pre-determined syllabus of content and concepts. My role therefore was to facilitate the group in exploring, identifying, analysing, and evaluating issues to develop insights, ideas, and applications.

A final note is that EBL did not only match the needs of the programme, but also aligns with my philosophy and strengths as a practitioner. Explicitly, EBL is a pedagogical method founded in constructivism which aligns with my own assumptions of ontological relativism and epistemological constructivism (Dewey, 1997; Roth & Jornet, 2013). I am consequently interested in what others are thinking and experiencing in *their* world and social or cultural context (Bachtold, 2013). I do not subscribe to a ‘one size fits all’ approach to education or knowledge creation, so this programme aimed to engage thinking and problem-solving skills at the most inclusive and individualistic levels possible within the constraints of group-based learning (Dostál, 2015).

Resources, Content and Concepts

In planning programme delivery I mapped a detailed outline of Session 1 and 2. The remaining sessions would be informed by co-constructed objectives agreed by the group during sessions 1 and 2. Using a planning sheet³ I had created from attending a

³ See Appendix B, Teaching Diary (p. 321-323), for a copy of my session planning document.

Teacher Training Programme during my PhD, I was able to further consider materials and activities to aid delivery across the programme.

For example, a criticism of EBL is that increasing learners' agency and offering less support can lead to less desirable learning outcomes, such as learners struggling to select, organise, and integrate relevant information (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006; Mayer, 2004; Sawyer, 2005). That is why the scaffolding concept, promoted by Bruner and Sherwood (1976, pp. 277–285) becomes essential. In simple terms, scaffolding refers to a process in which teachers' model or demonstrate how to solve a problem, and then step back, offering support as needed (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). Consequently, drawing on my past experience of consulting with rugby squads I considered it important to scaffold the sessions with focus (what is this about?), purpose (how might it help?), actions or applications (what can I do or take away?), and engagement (with respect of anyone's attention span, but particularly 17-19 year old males!).

With regard to resources, content, and key concepts (and in accordance with the EBL framework) I set about orientating the whole programme in Session 1 via the use of a visual wall chart (see, Figure 3). Essentially a visual timeline, the 'journey roll' (as it became known within the group) mapped our group sessions temporally, interceded with other tangible events the team would encounter throughout our campaign (e.g. training camps, games, JWC departure). I intended that throughout the campaign the players would take ownership in deciding what would be added to the journey roll (e.g. group learnings, reflections, moments, etc) subsequently shifting the locus of control of learning over to them – a key principle in encouraging more reflective and self-directed learning (Delf, 2017; Sharples, Taylor, & Vavoula, 2010). The journey roll was also extremely practical in that it could be rolled-up, transported, and accessed at any point or location throughout the campaign. I figured it could inevitably be a good mental prompt sheet in the meeting room of the JWC hotel.

The 'Winning Edge' session title, combined with the journey roll visual, orientated the group that, "learning wouldn't happen only in our sessions, and their development journey wouldn't end exclusively at close of this campaign". That long-term athlete development message recognised that the U20s is not (likely) the pinnacle of many of the players' careers; and neither is rugby the sole *raison d'être* of their whole lives. I hoped to encourage players to consider and invest (explicitly or implicitly) in people skills, problem-solving skills and a growth mindset which could help them thrive beyond this campaign (Dweck, Walton & Cohen, 2014).

Beyond focus and purpose, my final planning considerations fell with how to engage the group. My EBL approach would help as EBL is considered an efficient approach for fostering learners' curiosity and motivation (Holbrook & Kolodner, 2000; Marx et al., 2004; Tuan et al. 2005; Bayram et al., 2013). Storytelling is also promoted as an effective method of engaging people in reflection, orientation, and conceptualization (Lindsay, Thomas & Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2007). Consequently, I choose to introduce the story of the New Zealand All Blacks, with specific focus on their tempestuous journey from perpetual 'chokers' to world dominators. Strong images, relatable themes, idolised role-models and a redemptive story I hoped would hook the group and spark curiosity to explore... "what did the All Blacks change? What makes a team great? What does this mean for us?". Consequently, helping the group to explore facets of effective teams would inadvertently help them establish their own co-created success criteria for the campaign (i.e. 'if we are saying that is important, then what are we going to do about it?').

An additional advantage of using the All Blacks story was that it enabled me to introduce and contextualise sport psychology concepts. For example, commonly coined as 'red to blue thinking', the All Blacks subscribe to a method of mental skills training (MST) founded on cognitive-behavioral principles (see, Ashton, 2011). Aware that an obstacle of big group teaching is the challenges it brings to individualizing the content presented; I hoped that by offering examples of MST in action (e.g. arousal management, focus of

control) learners could go on to investigate ‘what works for me?’. MST as such appeared to offer appropriate content for this type of delivery.

During Sessions 1 and 5 we also utilised mobile phone technology to good effect. The use of mobile technologies has been advocated in EBL (Suárez et al., 2018) and for our sessions it offered anonymous real-time responses to shared questions. For example, one question asked: ‘what will it take to win the JWC?’ and returned a great resource (see, Figure 4) for players to discuss, debate, and draw actions from within the room.

In a final approach to encouraging engagement, I introduced the concept of ‘Bingo Bros’ to the group. Conceptualised to manage facilitator biases (e.g. only asking questions to players I know) and natural dynamics of group (e.g. cliques of players from the same club; extroverted or introverted personalities); my idea was to use a bingo machine to create fun and inclusivity around how people would or wouldn’t be ‘called’ to do certain tasks. For example, as part of a reflective task after session 1, I asked all players to think of one example where they were currently managing their psychology well in relation to England and one area where they felt they could improve. The caveat was that 3 players (the ‘Bingo Bros’) would be drawn at random to share their reflections with the group as part of Session 2. I knew the fear of not having anything to say in front of the squad would encourage players to engage in the reflective exercise, or to take up the offer to talk with me or other players about their ideas (or lack of!) ahead of the session.

A simple bingo machine offered a lot of incentive and challenge throughout the programme delivery and widely became a resource associated with fun, but meaningful activities. A sign that the ‘bingo bros’ concept had later been well adopted by the group came when I was unable to attend one camp due to a shoulder injury (NB: that is why this report only describes 5 sessions, despite originally scheduling 6 on the Journey Roll). Despite my absence, the players still requested if they could use the bingo caller to proceed with group sharing as they had found it helpful in encouraging the aforementioned

behaviours. I couldn't make the camp, but they bought a new bingo caller and proceeded nonetheless!

Delivery and Evaluation

Session 1: January Camp, Day 1. 30 minutes total duration.

Prior to Session 1 I provided the Head and technical coaches an overview of the key concepts I would cover with the group. I have found that briefing coaches pre-session helps them feel comfortable with, or contribute to, your content. I also invited the coaches to observe my session and give feedback at the end.

Understanding that the session would involve up to 42 people (38 athletes, 4 coaches), the meeting was arranged in a large meeting room, with moveable chairs. I had no intentions for the session to be lecture style, so a flexible physical environment was important to meet the flexible working groups the session would feature.

The journey roll provided a helpful visual reference point for me and the group and the use of mobile technology worked well for creating shared knowledge and co-constructed success criteria amongst the group (Delf, 2017). Example discussions included: 'with one word, describe what a successful JWC would be for you', and, the aforementioned, 'what would it take to win the JWC?'. Small group discussions of such topics were utilised to target both of the programs primary objectives, namely: (1) to create an environment in which players and coaches could interact and build connections with one another; and, (2) to use that collaborative environment to explore factors which could make a difference to individual and team functioning on and off the field of play.

Session feedback from the coaches (verbal) and players (collected using the MentiMeter mobile app), was that a strength had been the sessions capacity to engage individual reflection and opinion formation, combined with opportunities to create and share ownership of group themes and agendas (e.g. 'what do I think might help us be a great rugby team?' soon becomes 'what do *we* think can help us be a great rugby team?').

Coaches were particularly complimentary of how the session was setup to encourage all players to have a voice, even (to paraphrase) “the shy players who don’t normally talk”.

The All Blacks story received interest and praise from the players. It had landed well, sparking good conversation around what makes teams great, and the challenges and supports that are associated with greatness in rugby union. One player commented “I had never really given *what* they changed much thought – that was interesting”. Other players sat with me at dinner (post-session) to explore examples and experiences of “red to blue thinking” which also seemed to have stimulated interest and reflection. The hook of knowing 3 players would be called to share their experiences and reflections at the next meeting (thanks to the bingo bros concept) appeared to drive engagement with the reflective tasks. There can be no doubt that teenage males fear few things more than looking out of place with their peers!

I video recorded all of my U20s sessions (with group permission) to review my own practice and to receive further feedback from my practice supervisor. My observations were that I spoke a little fast and had sworn twice during the session; both instances linked to examples of ‘red head’ thinking I offered to the group. I reflected that my pace and energy level was probably right for the group; but that I could mind my language more consciously in future deliveries. When exploring a sport psychologist’s delivery of a programme to American collegiate ice hockey players, Dunn and Holt (2003) found that the practitioner regularly had to reflect on what the appropriate way was to behave with the group. My ultimate guide was the impression I wanted to set for the group, so the action to mind my language - irrelevant of its contextual relevance - became paramount.

Session 2: January Camp, Day 3. 40 minutes total duration.

Session 2 built on the objectives, content, and concepts conceptualised in Session 1. For example, the session began with an introduction led by one of the players, which utilised the Journey roll (see, Figure 5) to recap and engage discussion concerning the ‘takeaways’ from Session 1. I wanted to involve players in delivery this way as there is

support for including athletes or coaches in the delivery of group-based interventions (see, Brown & Fletcher, 2017) and evidence that expecting to teach a group enhances learning of those preparing to do so (Nestolko, Bui, Kornell & Bjork, 2014).

Throughout the session athletes shared, discussed, and analysed experiences of effective and ineffective applied psychology strategies. The language of 'red to blue thinking' featured heavily in the group's language, suggesting the conceptual and lingual scaffolding I had offered in Session 1 worked well for facilitating disclosure, discussion, reflection, and analysis across the sessions. Sport Psychologists' have suggested that such mutual disclosure can help athletes relate to, and learn from, one another (Holt & Dunn, 2006; Windsor, Barker, & McCarthy, 2011).

Utilising theory (e.g. the Cognitive-Behavioural Triangle) and resources (e.g. a 3-column small group exercise completed on A3 paper) I facilitated the group to explore and synthesise new knowledge. In one example, when the group were pondering "if red head is always bad?", I was able to introduce principles from neuroscience to help them frame that strong emotional experience is normal, even healthy; just not always helpful. In all instances of introducing new theory, I would try to keep it as simple and practically meaningful as possible. My intention was to keep my scaffolds to a minimum and their investigation (e.g. reflection, discussion, summarising) to a maximum. Nonetheless, Sport Psychologists who can offer practical insights to athletes are often greatly appreciated by such cliental (Orlick & Partington, 1987; Sharp & Hodge, 2011).

For the 3-column exercise, I asked coaches to hold back from joining the smaller groups until players had chance to start talking and build some confidence and ownership in the task. My experience is that coaches can help players by, for example, posing stimulating questions; however, the presence of an adult can also often stifle a young person's speaking confidence or evoke demand bias. With the coaches hanging back just long enough for players to find their voice, a strength of the 3-column exercise was the rich sharing of practical ideas and personal insights it offered across the whole group.

By sessions end the A3 flipcharts were full of examples, experiences, suggestions, and skills which players and coaches had shared concerning applied sport psychology. The output was so rich that players asked if they could have a copy of other groups ideas. I actioned to share a collated digital version of the three-column worksheet with the group as a reflective and applied-practice resource (see, Figure 6. NB: the choice to make it digital was based on experience that teenagers will often abandon bits of paper, but less so their mobile phones!).

On review of Session 2 I was happy to watch my recording and note that I didn't swear once. Better still, I could observe that I had met my session objectives once again. Players had been facilitated to interact, build connections, and exchange ideas that could help them with performance. 'Red to blue' language and examples continued to appear in dinner hall conversation and subsequent team meetings. It seemed the group was building a new language and connectedness as a result of the Winning Edge programme.

One athlete fed back that Session 2 was "interesting and the right length", which I took as praise, and to mean 'not too long!'. I had also asked a colleague to observe the session who had five years' experience supporting the U20s. Similar to the coaches and players, he felt that the session had been pitched well, with good balance of structure, content, and interaction. He also fed back that 'red to blue' concept was clear, well presented in the visuals I had used, and something he felt could really work for the players and coaches.

Session 3: February Camp. 30 minutes total duration.

Following Session 2, players had tasked themselves to identify, practice, and implement some of the mental skills identified by the group (entering the investigation phase of EBL). Players' development areas ranged from practicing refocusing, through to developing communication skills, leadership behaviours, or stable foundations of confidence. Many engaged with me for one-to-one sessions to further support their development.

In Session 3, with 2 competitive matches now under the team's belt, we actioned to hold a review meeting in the Winning Edge slot. The session would be the 'data interpretation' phase of EBL (Figure 2), which in real terms was an opportunity for individuals and the group to explore: what is and isn't working for us? And what might we need to stop / start / maintain moving forward? An interactive and reflective session in structure and focus, we utilised medium-sized groups (approx. 8 players in 4 groups) to capture individual and collective reflections. For example, I encouraged groups to collate feedback on different focus points, such as what was going well or might be improved on and off the pitch.

Aware that some of the feedback could relate to individual's actions (e.g. a mistake in a game or behaviours off-field), I had requested that the group consider and present their opinions respectfully. Giving feedback in team sports is customary, but it isn't always easy to provide challenging feedback in a constructive way - a good example of the 'soft skills' I hoped to cultivate within players' 'winning edge'. The players engaged really well with the format, providing some great reflective insights, and suggesting their growth in confidence and skill of mutual disclosure by this point in the programme.

Each subgroup nominated a leader to feedback their observations to the larger group; which included three points they believed the team should take forward as actions. This act of orientating and conceptualising new knowledge to the group had subsequently branched a new cycle of EBL and discussion turned to how Winning Edge sessions could best service the team next. The group voted that sessions should henceforth continue to support the development of connections in the team *and* to help them prepare as best as possible for the 5-week long JWC trip – now only 10 weeks away.

Following Session 3, the coaches and Team Manager took on board the feedback generated from the group. The session output came to inform the practice of coaches (e.g. to simplify and revisit certain aspects of tactical play) and structure of the camps (e.g. less meetings late at night). It was also recognised that feedback from players to management

needed to exist in a more continuous fashion and consequently a Leaders Group was established by coach and peer voting. Whilst many of the leader roles were tactically focused, some would focus on areas identified in the Winning Edge sessions (e.g. a player advocate) and all would help with the squad's objective of maximising preparation for the JWC.

Session 4: April Camp. 40 minutes total duration.

In preparation for Session 4 there was an obstacle to overcome – JWC selection had taken place and 5 players who had never attended any of the programme to date were included. These players were very senior with regard to their rugby playing experience and, based on my previous year's observations, I knew that integrating such players would be important to assist the functioning of the team. For example, if you fail to integrate them, they can appear off-pace or disjointed with the knowledge and practices of the group. Effective integration can result in these 'late comers' offering helpful insights or reinforcement to the established practices and principles of the group.

To assist their integration, I met with this senior-player group ahead of Session 4 and, assisted by a few of the original training squad, provided an overview of Sessions 1, 2, and 3. We utilised some of the activities which I had ran with the larger group to date and overall the 'new' group grasped the principles quickly and had already begun to offer experiences and ideas of what could help the team in preparing for the JWC.

Subsequently, Session 4 focused on identifying the essentials of making the JWC the best experience possible. It began however with 3 Bingo Bros being called up to share a personal story each related to a photograph; a task I had briefed all players about prior to the session. This activity was based on the recommendations of Dunn and Holt (2006) and Windsor, Barker and McCarthys' (2011) idea of enhancing team cohesion through personal-disclosure and mutual-sharing. In essence, I wanted to encourage a 'person first, player second' ethos amongst the squad so they could appreciate the people around them for *who they are* as much as *what they do* when at the JWC.

Aided by the MentiMeter mobile responses from Session 1 (Figure 4), the squad explored factors that could contribute to, or detract from, the JWC being a great experience. Many good insights came from players and staff alike who had attended a JWC before. Subsequently, the group identified success criteria of what a ‘great World Cup’ would be (on and off the pitch), along with the types of actions which would likely embolden a good trip.

In a poignant moment, a group of players had suggested that only through winning could the event be a success, which the squad discussed sincerely and finished with consensus that that winning would be amazing, but that their focus and energy would stay on supporting one another, doing the things that made winning most likely, and enjoying the overall experience. Such values-based and process-focused preparation is likely a mainstay of sport psychologists’ practice, but in this instance, it was refreshing to see the group navigate the agenda and related actions of their own accord, assisted only by the scaffolding of the sessions and messaging to date.

Throughout the meeting we had used the Journey Roll to log discussion, learning, and actions points for moving forward. At session close members of the Leaders Group took responsibility for summarising the session and inviting further input or feedback from the team. We subsequently agreed that Session 5 (our final session) would be a summary of everything we had covered to date, an opportunity to ‘award’ the JWC roles (e.g. social committee), and a chance to celebrate successes of the campaign so far. By this point the players group had almost stopped providing me direct session feedback, besides when asked, which often returned, “interesting, engaging, and helpful” (quoted from MentiMeter derived player feedback). I was happy to continue facilitating the group to that end and was quietly satisfied that connections were being built and ideas inspired and actioned.

Session 5: May Camp. 35 minutes total duration.

In the final session of the programme, delivery was predominantly player-led. I had collaborated with the Leaders Group in the build-up to the session and facilitated their role

as the ‘more knowledgeable others’ (Vygotsky, 1978) - meaning I encouraged them to take ownership on facilitating, guiding, and leading the group. My rationale for this step was that these players would likely have a big influence on leading the group over the JWC. They would lead reviews, players meetings, social events, and more - the “social-architects” of the U20s as commonly described in leadership literature (Heifetz & Sinder, 1988; Murphy & Shipman, 2003).

Facilitating the Leaders Group in their preparation for Session 5, but working collaboratively so as they had ultimate ownership of the session plan, I encouraged them to be creative about how the final Winning Edge session would be delivered. This was likely scaffolding at its best – too little and they might not know how to engage a large group, too much and I might as well lead the session myself.

We settled on the innovative idea of shaping Session 5 around a quiz format (using MentiMeter): testing, reinforcing, and recognising retained knowledge and group-desired behaviours. For example, some questions probed the teams shared processes for managing adversities; others clarified roles and responsibilities (e.g. ‘who is the Lord of Light?’ and for a bonus point ‘what do they do?’). The answer to which, by the way, was to remind everyone not to take themselves too seriously when grouchiness set in!); while another section of questions focused on recognising and promoting good practice on and off the field of play (e.g. a vote for ‘best try of the campaign, so far’, and a vote for ‘all round good lad, so far’). During the session players would give a little acceptance speech when awarded a recognition, all of which brought good humour to the group.

Despite sounding light-hearted (for which I would make no apology), this final session served its purpose of reinforcing important learning and shared understanding amongst the group. For example, correct responses on the test for ‘team processes’ (e.g. what is our plan if we go down to 14 men?) were above 90% across the team. Other areas were also reinforced, such as how the team would approach certain off-field challenges (e.g. illness or boredom) and continue to build connections whilst out on tour. The photo

story share, for example, would continue everyday with 3 bingo bros before the morning Team Meeting. When I asked players why they chose to continue sharing their personal stories, they replied that they enjoyed hearing more about the people around them who they had previously only known as “good players”.

Programme Review and Reflective Summary

The programme outlined took a group of young rugby players through a journey of thinking, learning, and action - often concurrently. The principles of enquiry-based learning appeared to work well when integrated into each session and across the programme as a whole.

For a programme which sat so firmly on foundations of the social constructivist approach, much of what was achieved was entirely tangible by the whole group by the end of the programme via the Journey Roll. Key concepts, challenges, solutions, roles, responsibilities, and otherwise, had been identified, considered, and (to our best efforts) addressed.

Utilising the MentiMeter app for a final feedback exercise at the close of Session 5, I asked the group, ‘What are your views of the psychology Winning Edge programme? Stop / start / keep what?’ - responses were enabled to be open ended. Four Likert scale response options were also included: ‘I have found the Winning Edge programme: ‘insightful’ (not at all – very); ‘helpful (not at all – very); ‘engaging’ (not at all - very); ‘encouraged team cohesion’ (not at al – very much). Feedback from the group (a sample of which is provided in Figure 7) was hugely positive and suggested that the overarching objectives of the programme had been met. Through the vehicles of clear purpose, creative content, client engagement, evaluation, and continuous self-reflective practice, I felt the U20s training programme supported the group to connect, reflect, and grow both on and off the field of play.

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Figure 1

Visual Representation of The England Rugby Men's Pathway

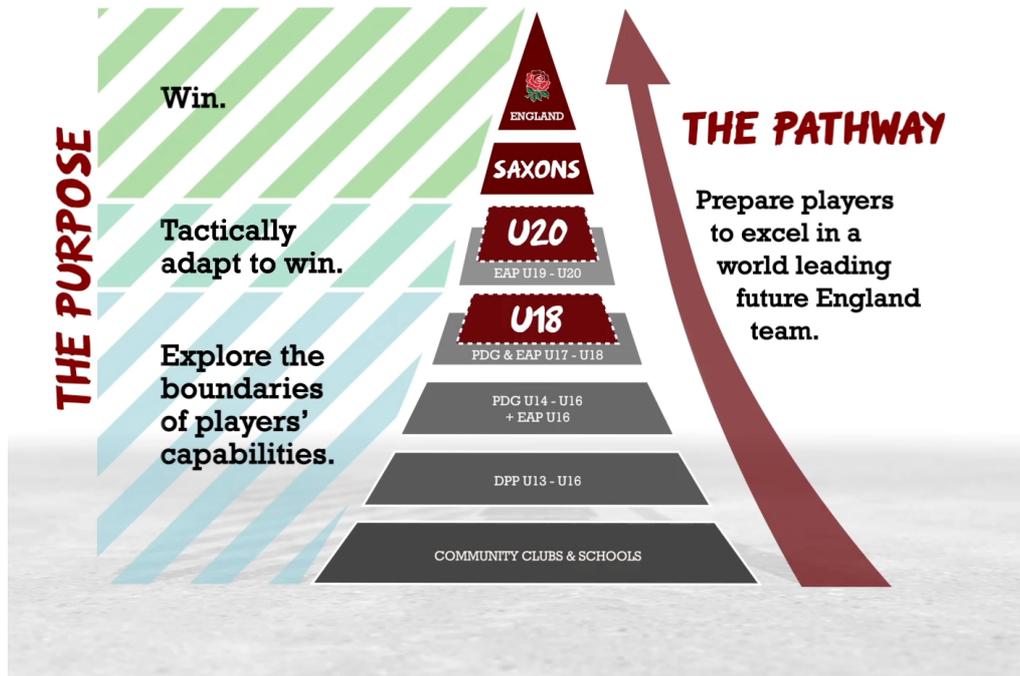


Figure 2

The 5 General Phases and Related Components of Enquiry-Based Learning

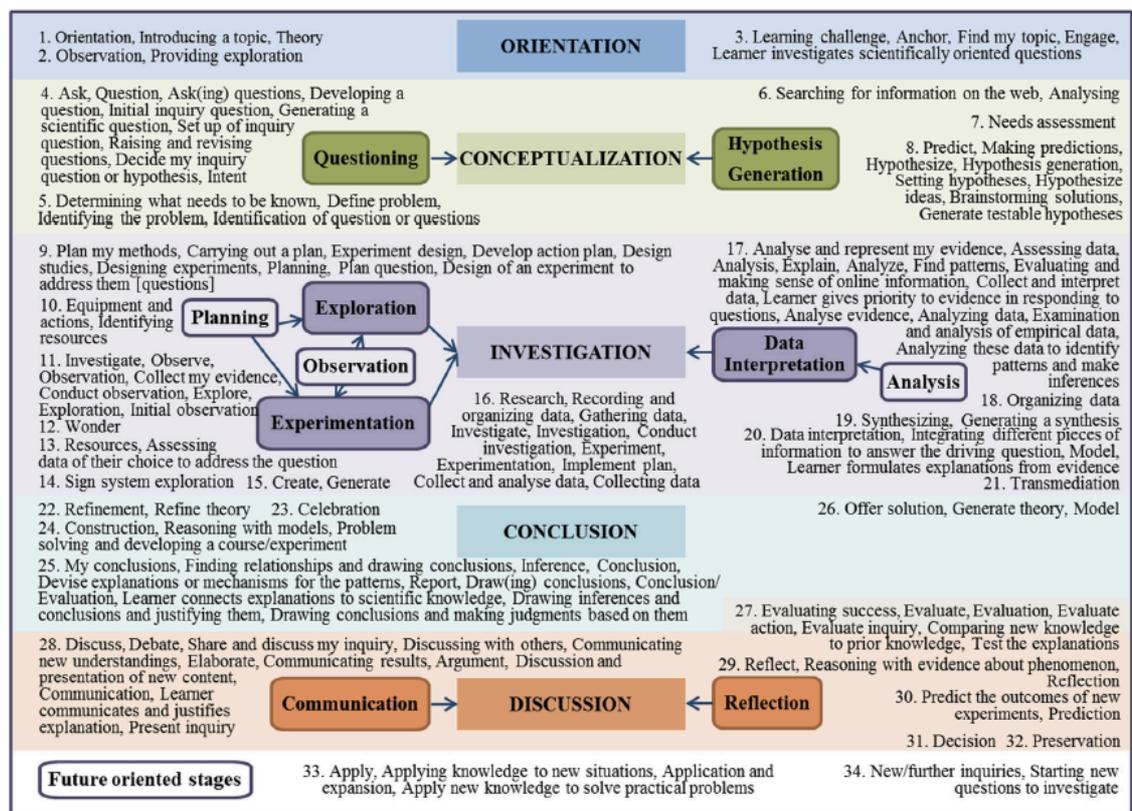


Figure 3

The 'Journey Roll' Timeline and Idea Log for the Group's Learning Journey



Figure 4

Group Responses Collected and Shared Using Mobile Phone Technology (Mentimeter)



Figure 5

Photographs of the Players' Input and Ownership of the Journey Roll

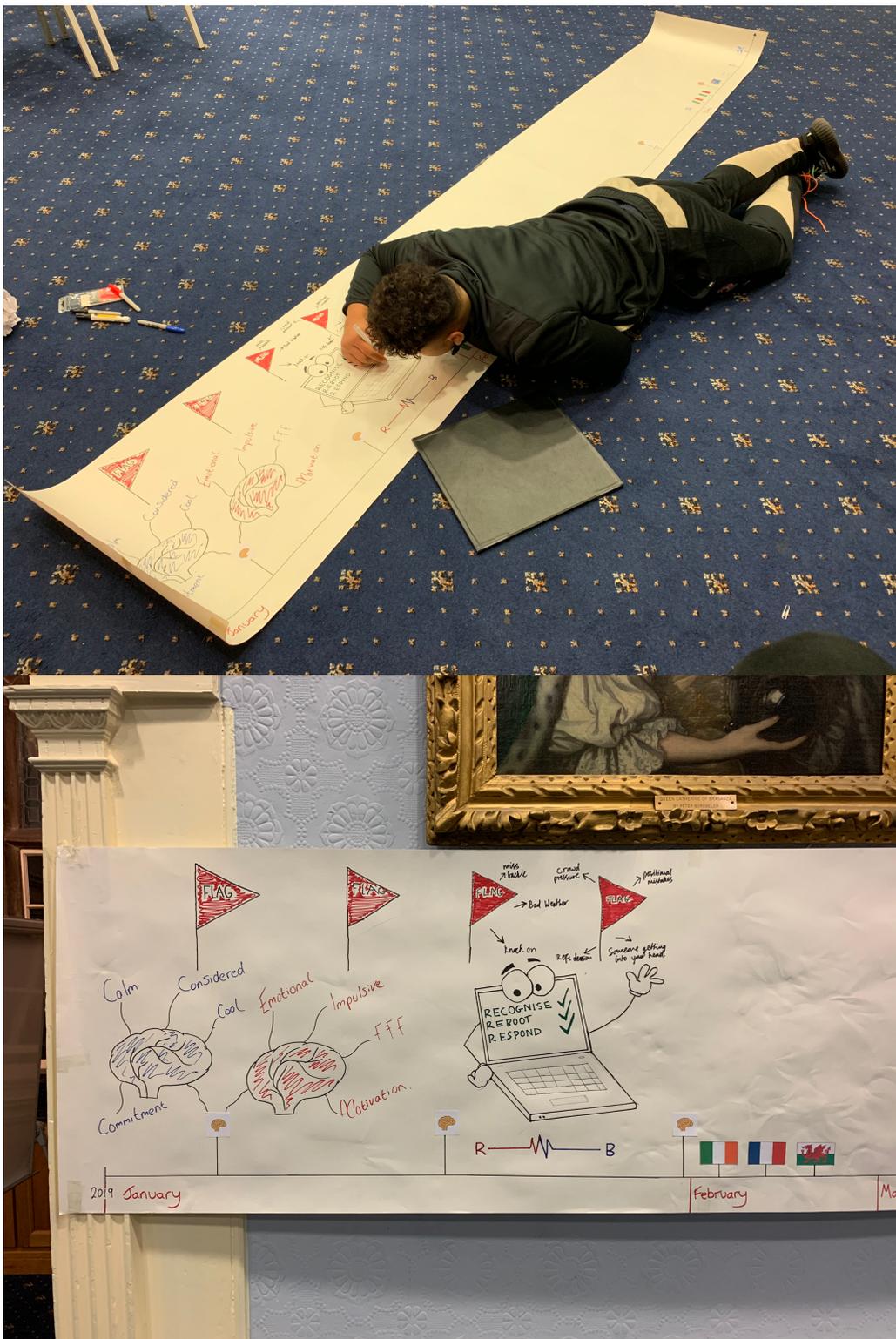


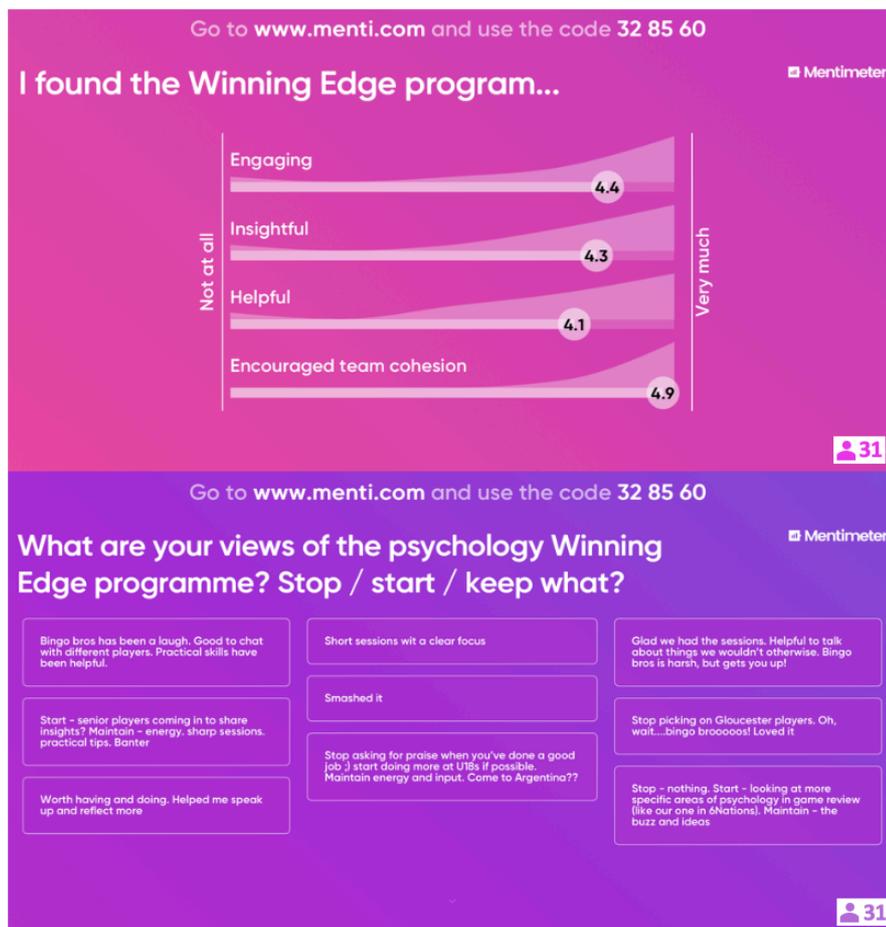
Figure 6

A Digital Handout Created from Information, Insights, and Ideas Shared Amongst Players in Session 2

Recognise (Red Flag = Red Head experienced)	Reboot (Techniques)	Respond (What next?)
Drop kick off / Knock on = embarrassed. Anxious. Mad.	Deep breath + clap hands (clear my head) "Next process"	"Next play" mindset + chose focus point "You choose your attitude, no one else"
Missing a kick / touch = frustrated. Flight mode.	- Punch my hand / Pull socks up - End the moment when you throw back the tee - Vent anger out + deep breath + picture perfect kick	- "What next" – next action – positive - Never leave a bit of your-self in that past moment. It would mean you would never fully be in the game or 'in the moment'.
Someone gets in your head (niggle, provoking, piping up cheap shot) = anger. Distracted.	Wipe hands 2 Deep breathes – look around Re-strap scrum hat	Get together – One Team Respond with your rugby / within the system Laugh at them
Missed tackle (possibly also leading to them scoring) = anger. Disappointment. Revenge!	Vent anger out Bang chest Rub hands together "Park + forget"	Correct technique / approach "Next job" - get involved in something else
Ref wrong decision = muppet! Distracted. Unfair.	Deep breath "He's just a human" approach + How will it help me being annoyed? Take advice from ref or captain	Charm the ref Talk to captain Next job mindset
Messing up a lineout / decision call = frustration. Distracted. Lots to think about.	Get involved in something else Swipe hands Click fingers	Go back to something you are confident with Ask lineout carrier for an easy win ball
Unfamiliar position in line out = confusion. Worry.	Picture the pattern of someone else doing it	Be confident
Getting smashed by opponent = embarrassed! Fair play...but you're getting it next!	Smile + think 'that's not happening again'	Resetting to easy techniques Get back to maximum effort + focus
Dropped from the starting team On the bench = WTF. Gutted. Annoyed. Unfair. Mad.	Get some space for yourself	Talk to the coaches Do the extra work What's the teammate I want to be? ...What do others need? "20 mins to put my impact on the game"
Playing against mates = not right. Distracted.	Concentrate on self	Play as if it was anyone else
Immediately after a mistake = FS!	Close my eyes and think about what I'm doing next	Coming back to win scrum against the head
Messages coming onto the pitch = Too many. Don't agree. Confused.	What is helpful for you to think, feel, do?	What will you do? What is helpful?
Someone else is too red / see a teammate in red =	What is helpful for you to think, feel, do? "It's important they recognise"	Approach appropriately (i.e. in the way you know works for them) What will you do? What is helpful?
Unsure about a piece of information / a task = confused.	Ask / check with others "Other people can give us good ideas"	1. Identify what type of help 2. Identify the most appropriate person
Speaking up in meetings = don't do it! Embarrassed. Risky.	Put your hand straight up (this gets the overthinking / worrying out the way. Hesitation is the killer here!)	Speak slowly Praise yourself after
Called out in session = :/	Water on face / click fingers Listen	Write down point / take it in "I know the effort I'm putting in"
Losing a game = gutted. What did I do?		
Winning a game =		

Figure 7

Images of Feedback from the Final Session of the Winning Edge Programme, Including an Email from the Head Coach.



Steve Bates @ [Inbox -...anagement](#) 15:48 RA

Many Thanks

To: Robbie Anderson

Dear Robbie,
 A sincere note to say *thank you* for all of you hard work, creative thinking, group facilitation and support in preparation of the U20s for the JWC. They were undoubtedly our best prepared team yet and you certainly hold your part in that! Many thanks – great job!
 Batesy



Steve Bates | England U20 Head Coach | Rugby Football Union | Rugby House | Twickenham Stadium | 200 Whitton Road | Twickenham | TW2 7BA |

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Teaching Diary

This diary provides a reflective summary of key learning experiences which have shaped my development as a teacher/trainer (later - *facilitator*) of sport psychology.

Learning experiences have received increasing attention in the sport psychology literature (e.g., Hutter, Oldenhof-Veldman, Pijpers & Oudejans, 2017; McEwan & Tod, 2015; Owton, Bond, & Tod, 2014) and refer to “any interaction, course, program, or other experience in which learning takes place” (Great Schools Partnership, 2013).

My intention henceforth is to example different varieties of learning experiences which have been identified as important in the development of sport and exercise psychologists (see, Hutter et al., 2017). They include, learning from others (e.g. peers, athletes, coaches); ‘traditional’ learning experiences (e.g. courses, teachers); professional development (i.e., dealing with issues, challenges, and dilemmas that occur in sport psychology practice); and practical experience and reflective activities.

To open this diary, and offer context, I will take us back to day one of my PhD training journey. At that time, I arrived as a 30 year old trainee sport & exercise psychologist with some experience of group delivery. I had worked for Chimp Management Ltd (ChMx) for 7 years and within that employment I had been given ideas (from peers with Postgraduate Certificates in Education) of how to deliver group-based teaching. For example, I had been advised to “change the medium of delivery every 10 minutes as people lose focus”; to “try and get people working in threes or on round tables up to 7 people”; and “to structure your session so that it has a mix of knowledge, examples, and applications”. These were all helpful; but often seemed like the cherry on a cake for which I didn’t have the full recipe!

Reflecting back to one of my first deliveries on the PhD programme, I led a session for the U17 Men’s squad of England Rugby. Building on some of the titbits of knowledge I had accrued from colleagues at ChMx, I sat with an old (i.e. recycled) PowerPoint deck and begin to work out how I could trim it to fit this new audience. I planned the session

alone; with no input from my client group (e.g. athletes or coaches), no pedagogical framework, and little information besides it being a '30-minute session for about 45 players'. The session went well (in accordance to player and coach feedback) – but I can honestly see and say now that it was plucked out of thin air, or at most, from a scarcely stocked pantry of options.

I have started with that honest account, because I think it helps me to recognise where I started on this journey. To examine how I have since progressed, I'm going to draw on 3 significant learning experiences which have contributed to my development. The first is a formal training programme and the second and third are both applied practice experiences with subsequent reflective growth. These are not the only learning experiences of my 2-year journey, but I hope they provide a fair representation of the types of experiences and development which have occurred.

Experience 1: The 3is Teacher Training Programme

Hosted by Liverpool John Moores University and accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) the 3is (Information, Insights & Ideas) Teacher Training Programme comprises a series of half day workshops that focus on key issues that face individuals who are new to teaching. The workshops provided me an opportunity to discuss experiences, share ideas and gain some information about a range of techniques and processes that may help in teaching.

For example, in sessions regarding medium and large group teaching there was helpful information around how to organise the room (e.g. rotating groups) and different approaches for engaging students (e.g. scale up, Delphi, or debates). I learnt and practiced planning processes. Specifically, how to consider the needs of the group you are teaching; the objectives and session aims that would consequently arise; and, how you can then structure the session and content appropriately.

Despite lots of new and helpful insights coming my way, I found reassurance and reinforcement that what I had been 'following' (thinking back to my previously mentioned

peer-fed learnings) was for the most part good practice. Now however I could start to pinpoint original sources, nuances in application, and new ideas and information to grow my skills further. For example, I learnt for the first time to reflect on the appropriateness of your content to best match the learning level and needs of your students (e.g. Blooms taxonomy - see, Krathwohl & Anderson, 2009). I also explored different ways to evaluate learning dependant on the objectives of your delivery and the type of role you had (e.g. summative, formative, reflective, experiential). In a summative task within the course we were challenged to prepare and deliver a 10-minute micro-session *without* the use of PowerPoint; a task which I thought was great fun and really made me think creatively. There really was a lot of great ground covered over the programme. You talk about ‘lightbulb moments’ in learning...I nearly blew the fuse!

Consequently, in an effort to consolidate my development (there is evidence after all that knowing you have to teach something makes you better learn it yourself – Nestolko, Bui, Kornell & Bjork, 2014) I offered to share my learnings from the 3is programme with the coaches of England Rugby. They had previously asked me for ideas of how to engage athletes in different ways during ‘classroom’ sessions (e.g. preview or review meetings) and from this programme I felt I had information, ideas, and insights to share. The platform was ideal for me to design, plan, deliver, and evaluate a teacher training session of my own, putting my learning into practice.

Experience 2: Applied Practice - A Group Learning Session for Coaches

Following the 3is training course I put together a summary session titled ‘RFU Learning Environments - Group Learning’ for the coaches and support staff (e.g. S&C, medical) at England Rugby. The session slide deck handout is appended to this diary (Appendix A). My first reflection is how easy it was structuring that session thanks to the planning tool I created based on my learning at the 3is (a copy of the session plan tool and session plan for the coaches’ session is attached as Appendix B). I had almost always started with ‘too much’ information/ideas when planning a session previously, studiously

working to cram it all in! But with a new focus on clarity of objectives and content to match, it was so much easier.

The delivery went as I had planned and hoped. The mixture of direct teaching, self-reflective, small group, and whole group content really seemed to engage the room and feedback on the session as a whole was really positive from my peers. In an interesting build to my own development – and utilising a feedback technique I had learnt on the 3is programme – I asked attendees at the end of the session to list “One improvement that could be made to the session” on post-it notes I handed round. Two suggestions in particular got me thinking: (1) read, “Where is the evidence for the slide about how much people take in? I’ve heard it banded around a lot - but is it that universal / reliable?”; while (2) read, “Great interactive ideas - but isn’t there a place for just teaching people directly and with repetition?”. I was grateful for all the feedback and subsequently took to reflective practice to organise my own thoughts and understanding of the points raised (my full self-reflective diary entry from 25th Sept 2018 concerning this event is attached as Appendix C).

Feedback question 1 was a really helpful pointer from Gordon (my colleague) as it gifted me the lightbulb learning of “don’t pitch what you can’t defend!”. I had lifted the image from the slides of the 3is programme and when I looked into it further it turned out that the Cone of Experience (Dale, 1946) – the slide Gordon had asked about - is not based on any scientific evidence! Obviously that’s a helpful insight for me to learn about that concept in general, as I’ve definitely heard other people hold it up as fact; but more importantly, it taught me not to include any ‘research’ or ‘facts’ that I haven’t really checked out and couldn’t defend myself.

The second feedback question was another good one and Jim later forwarded me and the other coaches a newspaper article stating that ‘traditional methods help children more than current approaches’. With my humility in check from Gordons lesson, I wanted to delve deeper into my understanding of such debates in education so as to provide an

informed opinion to Jim. I came to appreciate that there is sound reasoning for a rote learning approach in education when all you need to do is recall information or sequences (e.g. times tables) (Meyer, 2011). I could see how such approaches are already in use in professional sport, for example, when we ask rugby players to memorise team tactical plays or lineout calls. From that learning, I could fully understand and advocate Jim's suggestion that 'traditional' rote learning has its place in learning and sport.

The issue however with rote learning or direct teaching, I learnt, is what happens when players have to make decisions. Do they really understand the full picture of events? Do they have the cognitive and problem-solving skills to overcome decision making challenges? All of those skills are supplementary to the 'basic knowledge' which rote learning encourages. This subsequently opened my eyes to the whole debate of approaches to and outcomes of learning theory. I read around rote learning theory versus 'meaningful' learning strategies such as enquiry or action based learning (e.g. Delf, 2017; Kolb, 1984; Mayer, 2002; Roth & Alfredo, 2013). For example, Delf outlines that helping people learn is as much about helping them learn *how* to think, not just *what* to think. That struck a huge similarity to how I practice 1:1 psychology. I am fundamentally client-centered and really believe my role is to facilitate people to explore how they are thinking, feeling and behaving as opposed to telling them what to think, feel or do.

A simple coach development session had allowed me to practice some skills whilst also opening my eyes to new considerations in applied pedagogy. I left the experience with a truer appreciation that you have to understand what you are trying to achieve in the classroom to then choose appropriate methods. If it's pure memory – then direct instruction, rote learning, and tests can be great. If it's about more deeper understanding, complex decision making, shared understanding and helping people improve their thinking skills *beyond* pure information recall – then it seems a 'more knowledgeable other' (Vygotsky, 1930/78) doing a chalk and talk lecture might not be best. Context is essential!

And so by this time in my journey I had learnt from: others (e.g. peers at ChMx and the RFU); traditional learning experiences (e.g. the 3is); and challenges that occur in sport psychology practice and reflective activities (as just explored). It was, in due course, time to put the pieces together and deliver the ‘Winning Edge Programme’ which would subsequently be the focus of my Teaching and Training Case Study. Without doubt – I had more professional development to come...

Experience 3: Applied Practice – supporting individual and team functioning in an international age-grade rugby team

With respect of there being a fuller account of the detail of this delivery in its submission as my Teaching and Training Case Study, I am going to focus here instead on two significant insights garnered from this learning experience. The first being that I really came to recognise my preferred philosophy of pedagogy; and the second, that I significantly advanced my understanding and implementation of ways to evaluate the impact of my approach on learning outcomes.

With regard to advancing my teaching philosophy, whilst the 3is programme had opened my eyes to new and varied practical insights, my reading around different philosophies and associated methodologies had been spurred by two other things: (1) Jim’s feedback (as aforementioned), and (2) knowing I would need to write my teaching intervention up academically! I don’t mind admitting that because having to write up a case-study makes you reflect: what am I actually doing here? If I had to write it down and defend it, not just describe the nuts and bolts, what is my actual approach here?

So, I entered the literature and as I explored different philosophies and approaches to teaching, one in particular resonated with me and the needs of my client group most – enquiry-based learning (EBL; Coffman, 2017). I’ve described the mechanics of EBL in my teaching case study, so will focus here instead on why it resonated with me so much. In essence, it matched the recognition that I have had a few times over the past 2 years that I

am a *facilitator*. That's what I see myself as when supporting individuals or groups in their development.

That recognition came especially clear a few months back when I stayed up all night trying to prepare slides for an U18's session because 'I didn't want to give them poor information'. That's the blockage I kept coming up against – "what if this isn't right for them all? What if they don't get it? What if it isn't relevant?". I had accidentally slipped into a positivist mindset and that is *so far* from my core position on how learning, growth, and existence work. Without going too philosophically deep – I am a constructivist affiliate at heart and subscribe to an interpretivist world-view. I am a relativist. How could what I present possibly 'be right' for everyone therefore? What was I even trying to achieve? ...to brain wash them? That certainly isn't what I believe in, nor what I was asked to do by England Rugby! I subsequently reflected on what my role is in the classroom and came to recognise it is fundamentally *to help people think* – not to provide 'the golden piece of information' for a whole class. I am, in essence, a *facilitator* of peoples *own* curiosities, their *own* reflections and their *own* learning. I facilitate people thinking, feeling, and doing things.

Once I'd had that recognition, I felt a weight of expectation, or at least a cognitive and philosophical blockage, lift. I hadn't become blasé thinking I could 'do what I like', instead I had found a philosophy and approach to learning which matched my values and objectives as a practitioner. I could still see the value of traditional teaching approaches (such as rote learning, thanks to Jim), though I knew now where they sat and when I might apply them. But with the U20s I could see, and justify, better than ever before why EBL was right for the programme objectives, the learning group, and for me.

My second big development as a facilitator from the U20s experience came in my learning of how to assess my delivery. I applied more evaluative feedback mechanisms than ever before. For example, I asked for participant feedback (from athletes), observational feedback (from coaches and performance staff), and I recorded the sessions

(reviewing them myself and asking my supervisor for feedback); all of which really enriched and informed my self-reflection and development (for an example reflection based on my delivery feedback see Appendix D).

One area of evaluation I feel to have particularly improved in, was recognising that if we are going to be effective in the classroom we must evaluate the impact we are having on our pupils learning (Sawyer, 2005). That seems obvious in principle, but it's not so simple when the EBL approach means 35 players might be interested in exploring multiple – possibly infinite – learning outcomes! To help address that challenge, I learnt to ask questions which help provide an insight into the learning process of athletes' and how they viewed my role in their learning (Mayer, 2017).

For example, I learnt to ask, 'what are you learning about today?' when players were in small groups. I wanted to see if they could discuss their learning, rather than the task, suggesting the learning intention was clear (Mayer, 2017). Likewise, I framed much of our learning around questions such as 'how will you know you have been successful today'; encouraging co-created learning outcomes, which have been found to be highly motivating for students (Tuan, Chin, Tsai, & Cheng, 2005). In another example I asked, 'what are your next steps in this learning?' hoping to facilitate athletes to understand what progress looked like *for them*, and through occasional nudges or feedback (from me or a coach) they became better able to articulate what their next steps would be (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005).

I can look back now at the U18 session I described at the head of this diary and say my evaluation approach back then was – at the end of the session - to assess engagement by the number of questions asked and maybes to ask a coach or two "was that ok?". Two years later and I am proud to reflect that by the end of the U20s programme I could evaluate my delivery, and impact, so much more robustly.

Summary Reflections

This diary has outlined reflections of four types of learning experiences relating to my development as a facilitator (teacher/trainer) of sport psychology. My knowledge has advanced through experiences such as formal training, applied practice, overcoming challenges, and reflective activities. For example, I have come to better recognise and appreciate that only through an enhanced awareness of the lens through which you view the world can you truly consider, design, plan, deliver, and evaluate coherent learning experiences for others. Once such knowledge is obtained and we begin to operationalise it, the next important consideration should be *impact*. How do we evaluate the impact we are having on others' learning? Recognising the importance of that question has been a *big* development in my professional growth over the past two years. I have moved away from asking "did the session run smoothly and have some interesting learning points" - towards much deeper, rigorous, and methodologically robust approaches to assessing impact.

For example, I have better integrated creative approaches to assist and assess learning in both of the deliveries mentioned in this diary and on each occasion with a much-improved theoretical awareness and rationale for doing so. The visual 'Journey Roll' I used with the U20s (see the Teaching Case Study for a detailed description) is a good practical example of that. The idea came from a mix of my new knowledge (that good learning environments and resources should encourage ownership, connection, and stimulation; e.g. Barret et al, 2015) and my practical experience that a visual tool can help the group track and record some of its shared learning.

Asides from developing my knowledge, rigour, and impact in pedagogy over the past 2 years, I feel another area of substantial growth has been in my self-efficacy for delivering group initiatives. According to Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997), self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainments. He posits there are four major sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences; social modelling; social persuasion; and, psychological responses. When I reflect on the past 2 years, I can see how I (a) learnt from best practice training

(e.g. 3is) and observation (e.g. guest lectures at university) (social modelling); (b) practiced the art of delivery (mastery experience); (c) sought and attained confirmation of impact and positive feedback (social persuasion); and, (d) advanced my all-round propensity to *enjoy* the experience of group delivery. With these reflections in mind, I can see clearly *how* and *why* my confidence as a group learning facilitator is substantially better than the first day I entered my professional doctorate journey.

The experiences described in this diary are of course not exhaustive of all those which have helped me to grow. I've facilitated sessions for university students; parents; monthly departmental management updates; multilingual rugby players; to a group of multi-national investment bankers (I didn't talk too much about them here as I appreciate they are not a sports group - but they definitely fit into the performance psychology bracket and much of what I covered with them came from my applied sport psychology training and experience); research at a national Sport & Exercise Psychology Conference (DSEP 2019); a psychology strategy proposal to the Board of an NGB; and even a live interview to millions of listeners on BBC Radio. All of which have made me think, reflect, and grow.

I am sincerely looking forward to continuing my learning journey and growth as an applied practitioner. As I write this diary I have new engagements booked with new client groups. As research has shown, Sport and Exercise Psychologists continue to grow as practitioners long after their formal training and early practice years (Tod, Anderson & Marchant, 2011). I am pleased to reflect that I know more (much more!) than I did two years ago, but I look forward to seeing how much more I will understand and enjoy teaching in the years to come.

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Appendix A

A Copy of the Session Slides Handout for a Coaches 'Group Learning' Focused Session

 <p>RFU LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS GROUP LEARNING</p>	<p>RFU LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - GROUP LEARNING</p> <hr/> <p>SESSION AIM + OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ To provide you with an opportunity to discuss ideas, information and insights about a range of techniques and processes that can help in your group teaching. <p>By the end of the session you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Recognise good practice in group teaching▶ Identify techniques to apply when leading group learning												
1	2												
<p>RFU LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - GROUP LEARNING</p> <hr/> <p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>2 minutes 10 seconds...</p> <p>On 4 post-it notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 2 components of a good group learning experience?▶ 2 challenges for 'coaches' in groups learning experiences?	<p>IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS</p> <hr/> <p>A GOOD GROUP LEARNING SESSION</p> <table border="0"><tbody><tr><td>▶ Individual behaviours - Tutor and students</td><td>▶ Independence and interdependence</td></tr><tr><td>▶ Respect</td><td>▶ Sharing</td></tr><tr><td>▶ Trust</td><td>▶ Fun - enjoyable</td></tr><tr><td>▶ Clear goals - well structured</td><td>▶ Motivating</td></tr><tr><td>▶ Appropriate assessment</td><td>▶ Appropriate space, time, surroundings, size of the group</td></tr><tr><td>▶ Intellectual challenge</td><td>▶ Good group development, support, group maintenance</td></tr></tbody></table>	▶ Individual behaviours - Tutor and students	▶ Independence and interdependence	▶ Respect	▶ Sharing	▶ Trust	▶ Fun - enjoyable	▶ Clear goals - well structured	▶ Motivating	▶ Appropriate assessment	▶ Appropriate space, time, surroundings, size of the group	▶ Intellectual challenge	▶ Good group development, support, group maintenance
▶ Individual behaviours - Tutor and students	▶ Independence and interdependence												
▶ Respect	▶ Sharing												
▶ Trust	▶ Fun - enjoyable												
▶ Clear goals - well structured	▶ Motivating												
▶ Appropriate assessment	▶ Appropriate space, time, surroundings, size of the group												
▶ Intellectual challenge	▶ Good group development, support, group maintenance												
3	4												
<p>RFU LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - GROUP LEARNING</p> <hr/> <p>WHY OUR GROUP ENVIRONMENTS MATTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Intellectual and shared knowledge▶ Communications skill▶ Personal growth 	<p>RFU LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - GROUP LEARNING</p> <hr/> <p>SESSION STRUCTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Relevant information to consider▶ Strategies for engaging students▶ Resources for planning												
5	6												

TRUE OR FALSE

7

IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS

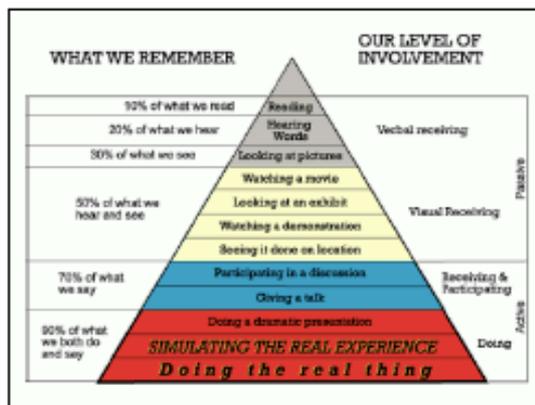
ACTIVELY INVOLVING THE LEARNERS

TRUE OR FALSE:

When we are actively involved in the learning we become more effective learners?

TRUE

8



9

IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS

ATTENTION SPAN

TRUE OR FALSE:

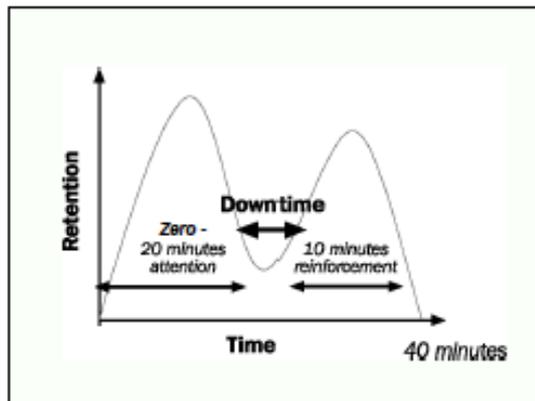
People are learning when they are paying attention?

FALSE

Low periods of attention are when the new neural connections that are formed during the learning period are being strengthened

(Dwyer 2001)

10



11

THE CHALLENGE OF LESSONS, IS THAT:
THEY OFTEN LAST MUCH LONGER THAN A PEOPLES ATTENTION SPAN
STUPENTS MAY BECOME PASSIVE OBSERVERS AND EXPERIENCE FALL OF IN ATTENTION
STUPENTS MAY EXPERIENCE COGNITIVE OVERLOAD

12

ATTENTION SPAN IS INFLUENCED BY...

- Time of the day**
- Motivation**
- Enjoyment**
- Emotion**



13

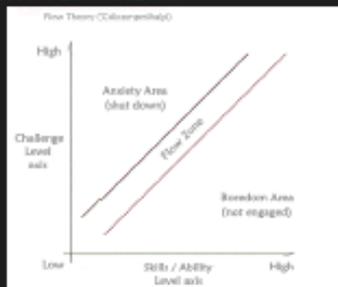
ATTENTION SPAN

TRUE OR FALSE:

Testing people helps them to perform better?

14

MOTIVATION FLOW THEORY



Motiv. Science (2014) 1(1)14. Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience. Paper 3, Nov. 1988. DOI:10.1023/1:101213033. Retrieved 11 November 2018

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WHAT LEVEL?

16

WHAT LEVEL ARE OUR LEARNERS?

Bloom taxonomy	Learning outcome verbs	Level
Evaluation	Judge, appraise, evaluate, revise, assess, estimate	6/7
Synthesis	Construct, design, compose, prepare, manage	6/7
Analysis	Examine, analyse, differentiate, calculate, appraise	5/6
Application	Interpret, apply, demonstrate, sketch, use, illustrate	4/5
Comprehension	Discuss, describe, identify, recognise, explain, review	3/4
Knowledge	Define, recall, list	3/4

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RESOURCES

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<p>GROUP STRUCTURE - Best things</p>	<p>GROUP STRUCTURE - Agree method</p>	<p>"Table-top" Group technology</p>
<p>Activity / Case study</p>	<p>Mind mapping</p>	<p>Index</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Writing / talking to a whiteboard</p>	<p>Activity Index</p>

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IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS

IDEAS FOR ACTIVE, STUDENT CENTRED SESSION

Keep it simple to begin with...

- Write down a question: get the question exactly right so that it addresses what you are really interested in or confused about.
- Ask your questions: ask all the people around you until you have satisfactory answers.
- Tackle a problem: situation, case study.
- Read some material.
- Short test.
- Complete a hand out: fill in gaps, label a diagram.
- Predict the outcome of an event / situation.
- Make a diagnosis... "what's happening / wrong here?"
- Estimate the cost of a design choice.
- List and prioritise

20

Enough said, buckle up – here's the map!

```

graph TD
    A[Establish your destination] --> B[Plan the journey]
    B --> C[Select your route]
    C --> D[Setting out]
    D --> E[The journey itself]
    E --> F[Arriving at your destination]
  
```

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IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS

GOLDEN ARROWS FOR GROUP ENGAGEMENT

- Change up** in lectures (the 10 minute rule)
- Replacing passivity with **interactivity** (make it personal)
- Student **participation** (what are they doing?)
- Visual** and **verbal** strategies for **reinforcing** information
- Slide **design** (Video, colour, questions, a picture says a thousand...)

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IDEAS, INFORMATION & INSIGHTS

POST-IT NOTES

Using the post it notes on your table:

- List **one key learning point** from this afternoon
- List **one improvement** that could be made to the session

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Appendix B

A Session Planning Document, Designed Following my Teacher Training Course and Used (as exemplified) for Planning a Coaches Learning Session

Planning a Group Session		
1. Establish your destination		
Component	Checklist / Notes	
<p>Learning outcomes The overall purpose of the session is the learning outcome. Make sure it links with your programme aims.</p>	<p>1. Explore our opinions of good group learning 2. Explore some information and ideas regarding ‘good’ group learning practice 3.</p>	<p>4. (if necessary) 5. (if necessary) 6. (if necessary)</p>
2. Planning your journey		
Where your topic fits into the programme (camp / season)	We are just about to enter the competition phase. So, lots of group learning sessions!	
How the session will be delivered	Round table	
<p>About the students Remember what it was like when you were a student, but also remember that you were a high-flier. Make your pitch to the more typical student.</p>	<p>Dean Ryan, Gordon Lord, Steve Bates, Jim Mallinder, Don Barrell, Alice Sheffield, Kate Burke, Emma Canty, Robin Eager, Luc Thomas, Robbie Anderson, Penny Craig, Grant Beasley, Henry Mander, Richard Tingay and Barney Kenny</p> <p>15 people</p>	
How you will determine effectiveness?	<p>Feedback from the group at the end Key takeaways in line with my outcome objectives</p>	
3. Select your route (How much information to include)		

What do you want to achieve? State learning objectives:	
First point	How important is the classroom learning environment to us? If important – maximise. If not so – keep it short and sweet.
Second point	There are some important ideas, information and insights when maximising learning environments
Third point	Continued growth (new ideas, feedback, progression) is the only way we'll keep getting the value we want these to have
Fourth point (optional)	
Support materials	Slides Planning a group session handout Post-its
4. Setting out	
Start time	1315
How will I stimulate interest in the topic? Reward / suffering / intriguing question...?	Who was the best and worst teacher you ever had?
Overview of material	Slide deck. Post-its. Activity handouts.
What will the students do during the session?	A selection of tasks to demonstrate how a group session can be conducted. (i.e. individual /reflective, interactive, quiz based)
How will I personally engage with the students? Some relevant personal information which shows your passion or emotional connection to what / who is being taught	Share the story that I agitate after a few minutes. I really struggle to stay still / focused when I'm not a 'participant'. My best teacher – thought it was my rugby coach. But they had it easy. My best teacher was Sue Staunton. She brought things to life. Made them interesting. She kept things changing, moving. She knew how to focus and direct attention. She helped us learn information, and how to pass the exam. She sold me a vision which I'm still following today.
5. The journey	
How will material be organised?	Beginning (intro + objectives), Middle (content + engagement), End (summary + feedback)
Introduction:	As per session objectives

Tell them what you are going to tell them...	
Points in order: Then tell them what you told them you'd tell them...	1. Ideas on what makes a good learning environment 2. Session structure ideas 3. Session content ideas
Conclusion: Tell them what you told them...	Verbal summary of the 'road map'
6. Arriving at your destination	
Take home message. Refer to learning outcomes.	Golden arrows slide + summative handout to takeaway. Also their own reflection of '1 key learning point'.
Summarise (again) and preview next session(s).	Invite ongoing reflection, feedback + contact with RA
End time	1400

Appendix C

A Reflective Diary Entry Considering Feedback Questions Garnered During my Coach Learning Session

25/9/18	RFU Pathway Staff: 'Group Learning' session	<p>Description</p> <p>Following the 3is training course I completed at LJMU, I put together a summary session (on Group Learning) for the coaches and support staff (e.g. S&C, medical) at England Rugby. This had come off the back of a few discussions I had had with coaches who wanted to know how to engage athletes in different ways during 'classroom' sessions (e.g. preview or review meetings).</p> <p>It was really easy structuring the session thanks to the resources I took from the 3is programme (e.g. pedagogical ideas + information, images, activities, etc.). In particular I found it helpful to create a Session Planner for the coaches, which in turn used to inform my practice / creation in this session.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting I asked for feedback (1 thing I did well in the session, 1 thing I could improve) from the group and thought these two suggestions for improvement were worth further reflection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Where is the evidence for the slide about how much people take in? I've heard it banded around a lot - but is it that universal / reliable?" 2. "Great ideas – but isn't there a place for just teaching people directly and with repetition?" <p>Feelings</p> <p>I was glad to get the feedback as it's the kind of challenge I had invited and encouraged. Aside that the only feelings I had with regard to this were that I felt a bit silly when first reading feedback A as I realised I didn't actually have the supporting research! ...more on that in evaluation below.</p> <p>Evaluation and Analysis</p> <p>Creating the workshop helped consolidate my knowledge about group learning and provided a great opportunity to practice it with a group. In particular it was helpful to try the 'small to large' activity at the start, which is something I recognised as important from my Bath lecture in April (i.e. that not everyone will be confident to speak up straight away). That activity seemed to work well and it also gave me a great feel for the knowledge in the room before setting off.</p> <p>In terms of the feedback outlined above:</p> <p>Feedback A: this was a really helpful pointer from Gordon as it just struck me directly with the learning "don't pitch what you can't defend!!". I had lifted the image from the slides of the 3is programme and now I've looked into it further it turns</p>
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out that the Cone of Experience (Dale, 1946) is not based on any scientific evidence! Obviously that's helpful for me to learn about that concept in general as I've definitely heard other people hold it up as fact; but more importantly it's taught me not to include any 'research' or 'facts' that I haven't really checked out and couldn't defend myself.

Feedback B: Jim's question was another good one and he later forwarded me and the others coaches a newspaper article stating that "traditional methods help children more than current approaches". The first thing with all of this was that I didn't feel I had to defend anything. This was good challenge from Jim and his points were well worth exploring.

I read the article he shared and checked out the background. There is indeed good support for rote learning in education when all you need to do is recall information or sequences (e.g. times tables). That's something we already promote for strike plays or lineout calls – so no debate there. The issue however I've learnt is what happens then when players have to make decisions? Do they really understand the full complex picture of events? Can they process multiple sources of information? Do they even have the cognitive and problem-solving skills to overcome decision making challenges? All of those skills are supplementary to the basic 'knowledge' it seems Jim talking about when he asked, "can't we just teach them straight?". The whole body of research and literature concerning enquiry-based learning addresses that very point. For example, Delf (2017) outlines that helping people learn is as much about helping them learn *how* to think, just not what to think. I think my main reflection on this feedback therefore is that you have to understand what you are trying to achieve in the classroom to then choose your methods. If it's pure memory – then direct instruction, rote learning, and tests can be great. If it's about more deeper understanding, complex decision making, shared understanding and helping people improve their thinking skills *beyond* pure information recall – then it seems a 'more knowledgeable other' (Vygotsky, 1930/78) doing a 'chalk and talk' lecture might not be best. Context is essential!

Conclusion

Good learning provided by sharing information, ideas and insights with a group of coaches and inviting their feedback / challenge on the session. Definitely learnt not to reference / promote 'evidence' I can't back up! Also helped me delve deeper into pedagogical philosophy, principles and practices than I would have otherwise.

Action Plan

Feedback to Jim and Gordon about your findings and reflections.
Be mindful of promoting 'research evidence' you can't substantiate

Appendix D

A Reflective Diary Entry Considering Observational Feedback of my Athlete Learning Session

6 Jan 2019	U20s Camp – Session 1	<p>Description Just watched my video back from today’s ‘Session 1’ with the U20s.</p> <p>Feelings I was excited to get going with this one and had confidence in the session structure and my resources (timeline, bingo bros, slides, etc.). I felt a real spring in my step this year, compared to last, and that’s likely because I’ve put myself forward much more this year after feedback last year that players would have welcomed more psychology.</p> <p>Evaluation What was good?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The timeline definitely helped orientate the group. It gave a ‘real’ sense of how much group work we’ll actually do (only 3 hours) and that time is pretty precious from now until the JWC. - The All Blacks story was an easy way to hook the group and a good few players had a strong idea about Red/Blue, so hopefully that was a good choice for promoting further applied discussion from this group. Aarons question for example around ‘is red head always bad’ was great for helping them understand the nuances of emotional states – <i>what works for you??</i> - The Bingo Bros call out worked a treat when Ben D came up and couldn’t think of anything to say! That perfectly illustrated freeze in the room and I felt comfortable playing on it in the room. I also think the act of getting the lads up was well received (e.g. people clapping and having a go) – something to keep. <p>What was bad?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swore twice on the video. Both times were when I was giving examples of Red Head thinking, so they were contextual – but not sure I need or want that in my delivery really. Watching it back I could definitely give the same examples or equivalent without swear words. Definitely helpful watching the video therefore as wouldn’t have noticed that. Action point to be more language conscious next time. - Did I speak too fast? That’s been something I’ve worked on managing in the past (say for keynotes) but watching this video I think it’s either <i>too much</i> talk (in terms of getting the players thinking rather than listening) or just being a bit too eager to contribute. Probably a bit of both. I think the energy level I’m bringing is good, but next time just drop it one gear so that people have more time to process what I’m saying / encouraging them to reflect – they can’t
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do that if its tommy gun presenting. That's something Physio Kate fed back to me last year with the U18s so it's something I want to watch out for more mindfully.

Analysis

As a first session of the programme I'm happy with how this went. I prepared what I hoped was a well-structured session and gave it my energy, the feedback came back positively from players (e.g. Tom W, Tom H, Cam) and from the coaches + Hass. Their pointers were that it was inclusive and set a good tone for what's to come. In that regard I hit my objectives of orientating the room and conceptualising our challenges/objectives as per the frameworks of enquiry-based learning (Pedaste et al, 2018).

On critical reflection I think I could lower my contribution a notch next session and remove any bad language. I also need to build on the Bingo Bros early take-up now and make sure the leverage it creates around people not wanting to look daft in front of the group is well supported so that no one feels too uncomfortable or out of sorts on Tuesday.

Conclusion

Think I covered the bases on this one really. Good preparation, seemed to hit my objectives, engaged observers and feedback, and reviewed tonight. Quick turnaround now before Tuesday but got some good pointers below...

Action Plan

- Remember to be enthusiastic but not overly – keep to one or two points and slow down so people have chance to think about them.
- Be mindful of swearing. Target is no more instances in camp.
- Build on the Bingo Bros concept tomorrow around training – be visible so people know they can grab you if concerned or not getting it.

UPDATE: 8/1/19 Ran my second session yesterday with the group. Seemed to go really well at the time and having just watched my video back I'm glad I didn't swear once and my talking percentage was way down from Session 1 – much more enquiry based learning going on in small groups. Was great at the end when Steve (the head coach) drew from points made in the session to tie the content right back up to our whole philosophy of play – that really shows the content is relevant and helping give people a shared language. Hass's observational feedback was positive too – he thought I pitched the session well and the concepts are clear. These use of EBL scaffold/evaluative questioning (drawn from Mayers 2017 book) seems to have worked well – especially for helping the athletes take responsibility for what success in the session would look like and what their next steps in the learning process were/are. Will take more of the same into the next camp.

Systematic Review: Characteristics of Effective Sport Psychologists: A Meta-Study of Qualitative Research

Abstract

Practitioner characteristics are integral ingredients in sport psychology consultancy. Despite 30 years of qualitative investigation, no study has systematically reviewed and integrated the research exploring the characteristics of effective sport psychologists. The primary purposes of this study were (a) to review the qualitative literature examining the characteristics of effective sport psychologists, (b) critically appraise the evidence, and (c) generate an integrated framework to advance theory and inform recommendations for research and practice. Following a systematic search, 17 papers met the criteria for inclusion. These studies served as the primary data for meta-data, meta-method, and meta-theory analyses, which were then integrated using a meta-synthesis. Three key themes were identified, including: desirable personal qualities, desirable knowledge, and desirable behaviours. We integrated these themes with counselling theory in a model outlining the role of practitioner characteristics in forming working relationships; followed by ways the relationship is powered as qualities, knowledge, and actions interact. This model can inspire directions in the research (e.g., adopting a wider range of methods) and tutelage and practice of sport psychology (e.g., helping practitioners reflect on their own characteristics).

Keywords: characteristics, personal qualities, applied, sport psychologist.

Characteristics of Effective Sport Psychologists: A Meta-Study of Qualitative Research

The number of people offering sport psychology services is growing globally. For example, candidates seeking registration as sport psychologists in the United Kingdom multiplied by 700 percent between 2009 and 2016 (Tod & Eubank, 2017). Such practitioners are entering the applied world striving to be the best they can be, to help others, and to thrive. A question these neophyte practitioners, and indeed the field of sport psychology at large, is asking is “what is an effective sport psychologist?”.

To understand what constitutes an effective sport psychologist, researchers have sought to examine key components and considerations regarding effective practice and practitioners. Broadly, effective sport psychologists are those people who help athletes attend to their issues and achieve their goals (Cropley, Hanton, Miles, & Niven, 2010; Tod, 2017; Tod, Marchant & Anderson, 2007). Orlick and Partington (1987a) found Olympic athletes favour sport psychologists to whom they can relate, establish trust, and access helpful information. This idea that a good sport psychologist is both knowledgeable and interpersonally skilled is shared by athletes, coaches, and managers (Partington and Orlick, 1987a; Weigand, Richardson, & Weinberg, 1999). For example, Partington and Orlick (1987) found that coaches of Canadian Olympic athletes preferred sport psychologists who fitted in to their environments, showed good listening and communication skills, had strong work ethics, and offered useful and relevant expertise.

Away from the frontline of delivering psychological services, effective sport psychologists are also considered as those individuals who are reflective and open to evaluation and progression of their practice approaches (Anderson, Knowles & Gilbourne, 2004; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Tod, Marchant & Anderson, 2007). Cropley et al. (2010) conducted focus groups with accredited and trainee sport psychologists who observed that reflective practice improves self-awareness, case conceptualisation, decision making, and overarching philosophy.

In a narrative review of literature pertaining to effective sport psychology practice, Fortin-Guichard, Boudreault, Gagnon, and Trottier (2018) offered conjoined insights from sport psychologists, athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders (e.g. performance directors, physicians, administrative staff). These participants believed that the best sport psychologists were aware of their own practice philosophies and boundaries. Effective practitioners also possessed and demonstrated helpful assets, such as excellent sport psychology knowledge, practical experience, and the interpersonal skills to build and maintain trust-based relationships with stakeholders - the foundation of influential consulting (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015). Although a helpful contribution to the field, Fortin-Guichard et al.'s review was not without limitation. Ways to advance their work include (a) enhancing transparency around exactly which studies were included, (b) increasing the depth of description of the important practitioner qualities emergent in sport psychology research, and (c) undertaking a critical appraisal of the quality of the research. These advancements may provide avenues by which knowledge and recommendations for practice can be proposed.

In contrast, Woolway and Harwood (2018) went a step beyond narrative discussion in offering a systematic review of research investigating preferred characteristics of sport psychologists. Their findings suggest that the most preferred sport psychologist was of the same gender, race, and age of the client, and they had a high athletic background, sport-specific knowledge, and interpersonal skills. Specifically, interpersonal skills and expert knowledge persistently ranked as two of *the* most valued characteristics for clients and practitioners assessing key attributes of effective sport psychologists (Lubker, Visek, Geer, & Watson, 2008; Woolway & Harwood, 2015; Zakrajsek, Steinfeldt, Bodey, Martin & Zizzi, 2013). These were promising assertions for practitioners and those who support their development, as it is valuable to understand and explore variables over which individuals have more personal control (e.g. knowledge or interpersonal skills), and hence can more easily develop, than those generally considered less controllable (e.g. race or gender;

Lubker et al., 2008). A way to build on Woolway and Harwood's work is to provide in-depth description or discussion of exactly what is meant by interpersonal skills or knowledge. A lack of such depth may have resulted from the review's predominant focus on quantitative research, hence maintaining a significant knowledge gap for those interested in a detailed understanding of the qualities of effective sport psychologists.

Overall, what becomes obvious when exploring the burgeoning literature pertaining to the effective practice of sport psychology is that a number of practitioner characteristics interact, as sport psychologists create relationships, apply knowledge, and meet client's needs (Tod, 2017; Tod et al., 2007). This myriad of interacting qualities creates a challenge for neophyte practitioners, their educators, and researchers interested in advancing knowledge in the area to know exactly where to focus their attention and efforts to progress. In addition, despite making a welcomed contribution to knowledge capture, reviews to date have just begun to offer an in-depth exploration and integration of what is known about the personal qualities, interpersonal skills, knowledge sets, and other factors characterising the highly helpful sport psychologists. In short, there is no easily accessible synthesis of qualitative research regarding the characteristics of effective sport psychologists. Furthermore, there has been no critical appraisal of research in this area to assess the confidence we can place in this knowledge when looking to inform practitioners or provide guidance for training and practice.

A research synthesis summarising the qualitative research concerning characteristics of effective sport psychologists would offer four benefits. First, practitioners committed to pursuing and maintaining best practice would have knowledge against which to reference their own endeavours and self-development. Second, the professional and educational organisations responsible for supporting the growth of sport psychologists would also have a sound foundation on which to base decisions about the content and structure of education, training, and supervision. Third, researchers could identify novel areas of study where knowledge gaps are apparent, or research quality is

questioned, advancing confidence in its usefulness for real world application. Finally, athletes (as the primary receivers of services) would benefit from such research through its propensity to inform and direct meaningful and effective service delivery. If a sport psychologist is able to personally develop in line with what the client most wants, then the probabilities of successful outcomes improve. An outcome benefitting all parties.

As a knowledge synthesis will advance science and bridge the research-to-practice gap, the purposes of this meta-study were (a) to review the qualitative literature examining the characteristics of effective sport psychologists, (b) critically appraise the evidence, and (c) generate an integrated framework to advance theory and inform recommendations for research and practice. A meta-study (Paterson, Thorne, Canam, & Jillings, 2001) was chosen for its capacity to enable the synthesis of research and includes a systematic approach to the collation of studies, a critique of methodological approaches, and a synthesis of findings. We hoped that providing a framework and assessing the level of confidence in the evidence will inform future practice and research and, ultimately, help people.

Method

Review Design

Embracing a relativist ontology and constructionist epistemology (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), a meta-study approach was used. A meta-study “involves a systematic approach to collecting and analysing qualitative research findings” (Tamminen & Holt, 2010, p. 1564) using interpretation rather than reduction of data (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2003). This systematic approach consists of four components (Paterson et al., 2001): meta-method analysis, meta-data analysis, meta-theory analysis, and meta-synthesis. The first three components (method, data, and theory analysis) often take place concurrently; the meta-synthesis is presented as the outcome of a meta-study. Two primary objectives of a meta-study are to identify unanimity and explore inconsistencies in existing literature, and together contribute to the qualification of research for concept development. We completed

the Enhancing Transparency in Reporting the Synthesis of Qualitative Research (ENTREQ) statement (Tong, Flemming, McInnes, Oliver, & Craig, 2012) to ensure a review of high quality (Table 1).

Search Strategy

Keyword Development

A list of keywords was developed via a scoping review of research in the area and subsequent discussion between the authors. The search strategy combined the term *sport psychology* with keywords including: *consultant characteristics; consultant characteristics and practices; personal qualities; characteristics of effective practitioners; consultant effectiveness; practitioner effectiveness; effective practice; consultant style; consulting relationship; relationship building; professionalism in practice; professional practice; improving practice; practitioner background; self-awareness; humility; moral practice; challenges and problems*. A broad selection of keywords and search combinations was chosen to increase the sensitivity (breadth and depth) of the total retrieval.

Electronic Search

The search databases used were EBSCO Sport Discuss, Google Scholar, Open Grey, Web of Science, PsychArticles, PsychInfo, and Scopus. We accepted articles regardless of publication date. The initial search began on 5 February 2018. The final search occurred on 1 November 2019 to ensure no studies published in the intervening period were omitted. No new studies were retrieved. Both backward (i.e., scanning reference lists of included articles) and forward (i.e., searching works that have cited included articles) search strategies were then conducted to check that all articles fitting the inclusion criteria were collected.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Through discussion between the authors and following suggestions in previous research (Anderson, Miles, Robinson, & Mahoney, 2004; Sharp & Hodge, 2013; Weigand et al., 1999), studies employing quantitative methodologies were excluded. Quantitative

research (e.g. Gould, Murphy, Tammen, & May, 1991; Orlick & Partington, 1987b) limits the available response options of participants and hence can fail to capture the potential depth and detail that can be obtained via qualitative methods (e.g. Patton, 2015).

Studies were included if they (a) reported primary data obtained using at least one qualitative data collection technique (e.g., interview, focus groups, open-ended surveys), (b) examined participants' perceptions of effective sport psychologists' characteristics, and (c) were written in English. Based on guidelines for the synthesis of qualitative data (Sandelowski, Docherty, & Emden, 1997), articles were excluded if one of the following criteria was evident: (a) the paper was not original empirical research (i.e. literature reviews, methodological papers, conceptual/theoretical papers, book chapters, and conference presentations were excluded); (b) the study involved only quantitative methods, (c) there was no exploration of peoples' perceptions of sport psychologists' characteristics (mixed methods studies were included if qualitative data could be separated and examined independently from quantitative data; and, studies employing open-ended survey questions were included if raw data (i.e., quotes) were reported), and (d) the study drew from a non-sport/performance setting.

Screening and Selection of Studies

An electronic search was conducted using keywords across seven databases retrieving 18151 prospective research articles. As searches were conducted across seven platforms, each of the 18151 papers were title screened at source and only included in the next phase of screening if they met the designated inclusion criteria.

Five-hundred and one articles matched the inclusion criteria and were collated into a central database using Endnote X8 software. At this stage duplicates were screened and removed. One-hundred and ninety-one research articles remained and were screened by abstract. One-hundred and fifty articles were excluded at this stage, with forty-one articles progressing to full text assessment. The forty-one articles were read in their entirety, revealing 17 articles which met the full criteria for inclusion in the final review. The 24

papers marked for exclusion at this point were subsequently shared with co-authors asked to cast a critical eye regarding whether each paper should be included or excluded, as per the inclusion and exclusion criteria. No amendments were recommended. Forwards and backwards searching of the remaining 17 studies produced a database of 1,751 potential articles. These articles were subjected to the same process as the original 18151 articles retrieved, which produced no new additions to the final 17 research articles included in the review. The general search strategy is presented in Figure 1.

Data Extraction

Following meta-study guidelines (Paterson et al., 2001), key features of retained research articles were entered into the corresponding columns of a data collection spreadsheet (see Table 2 and Table 3). This template was constructed by reviewing a sample of other published meta-studies (Anthony et al, 2016; Holt et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2015) to identify potentially helpful groupings and subsequently choosing categories considered to best fit the purposes of this review. For example, Table 2 summarises the key descriptive, methodological and theoretical features of the primary research reports, including: author, year of publication, title/purpose, country of origin, method theoretical orientation, sample characteristics (e.g. total number, age range, gender, ethnicity, role, sport environment, level of experience), data collection approach, analysis techniques, and theoretical/analytical frameworks applied. Table 3 presents main findings of the reviewed literature (described in more detail below). A full copy of the data extraction template is available from the first author.

Data Analysis

The present review adopted a meta-study approach (Paterson et al., 2001). A meta-study has four components: meta-method analysis, meta-theory analysis, meta-data analysis, and a meta-synthesis. The meta-method, theory, and data analyses lead to the production of the meta-synthesis.

Meta-Method Analysis

The meta-method analysis was used to review the methods and methodologies employed in each primary study, the effect they have on the findings and outcomes, and the collective methodological patterns across the retained practitioner characteristics literature. Based on procedures used in previous qualitative meta-studies (Anthony et al., 2016; Holt et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2015), the retained articles were reviewed, with key methodological information from each paper (e.g. method theoretical orientations, sample characteristics, data collection, data analysis, and guiding theory) extracted into appropriate criterion columns of Table 2. Information in Table 2 was scrutinized for patterns across the literature, and these are reported in the meta-method analysis results section.

Meta-Theory Analysis

The meta-theory analysis was used to critically appraise the content theoretical and philosophical perspectives reported within and across the retained studies, as summarised in Table 2. Central to this aspect of a meta-study is an examination of whether, and in what way, such theoretical underpinnings influence a body of work (Paterson et al., 2001). According to Ritzer (1992), there are three reasons for meta-theorizing: (a) to attain a greater understanding of the underlying structure of existing theory; (b) as a precursor to the development of new theory; and (c) to provide a comprehensive framework that helps explain some or all of the existing theories. Ways in which theory and philosophical perspectives may have influenced the shape and nature of the findings in the studies are explored in the meta-theory analysis result section.

Meta-Data Analysis

The meta-data analysis is a systematic means of critically examining the findings from each primary research study (Paterson et al., 2001), to provide insight into the common concepts being studied across a group of reports, including any similarities and discrepancies between investigations (Anthony et al., 2016). To conduct the meta-data analysis, the lead author reviewed the retained articles' results and extracted the main

findings and conclusions into a database. Where discrepancies occurred regarding the clarity of data reported in articles, the lead author contacted the original research author to check their themes. Salient meaning units were identified and themes that shared similar meanings were clustered together. New themes were created when deemed necessary. Similar themes were collapsed to create the most parsimonious list possible. Through a process of abductive reasoning the decision process evolved to categorise themes within 3 interdependent higher-order groupings, namely (a) personal qualities, (b) knowledge, and (c) behaviours. Coding was checked and rechecked throughout the analysis using the constant comparison technique during which themes were compared with each other to ensure uniqueness. The meta-data is summarized in Table 3 and discussed under the meta-data results section.

Meta-Synthesis Analysis

The final stage, meta-synthesis, involved the integration of interpretations from the meta-data, meta-method, and meta-theory analyses. The purpose of a meta-synthesis is to move beyond the descriptive presentation of findings, towards generating an explanatory or integrative theory, framework, or model to extend what is currently known (Paterson et al., 2001). The purpose of this meta-synthesis was to develop an explanatory model to explain and advance the collective knowledge relating to personal qualities of effective sport psychologists, with a view to providing practical and theoretical insights for applied practitioners, educators, and supervisors, and a robust foundation for future research. To achieve these aims, the authors adopted analytic techniques from grounded theory in a dynamic and iterative process of interpreting, theorizing, and reflecting (Paterson et al., 2001). We considered a range of theories from sport, counselling, and clinical psychology (e.g. Gelso 2014; Poczwardowski & Sherman, 2011; Poczwardowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004; Rogers, 1957, 1979; Wampold & Budge, 2012) to help us construct a framework to organise and interpret the findings, as presented in the meta-synthesis results section.

Review Rigour

The lead author engaged the additional authors as *critical friends* to support and challenge from commencement to completion of this project their views and findings. Together, the authors explored and developed a coherent interpretation of the data reviewed and subsequent meaning (Smith & McGannon, 2018). In addition, all sections of the review (including data collection, meta-method, meta-theory, meta-data, and meta-synthesis) were subjected to discussion, review, and refinement among the other members of the research team, which began during the data retrieval phase and continued until the final presentation of the synthesis presented herein. The findings of the study were also shared at two national conferences of sport psychologists for open critique and idea contribution supporting further refinement of the data presented hereafter.

Results

The search of the databases retrieved 18,151 records. Following screening, 17 studies were suitable for inclusion in the review. Key methodological and theoretical features of the primary research reports are reported in Table 2, with main data features presented in Table 3. Both tables are described as follows.

Meta Method Analysis

Country of origin

Studies drew from the United Kingdom (n = 5); Canada (n = 4); United States (n = 3); and New Zealand (n = 3). The total number of studies listed here equals 15 because two studies (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2014, 2015) drew participants from multiple countries.

Method Theoretical Orientations

Method theoretical orientations were not widely named. Of the 5 studies which did refer to a specific theoretical orientation, constructivism was reported 3 times: once in combination with post-positivist aspects (Zakrajsek et al., 2013), once as a constructivist ontology in combination with an interpretivist epistemological approach (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015), and once in isolation as a constructivist epistemology (Mapes, 2009); an

interpretive phenomenological approach was reported once (Anderson et al., 2004) along with a post-positivist orientation (Thelwell, Wood, Harwood, Woolway & van Raalte, 2018). Method theoretical orientations were unstated in each of the remaining 12 studies, though all likely followed a realist tale orientation (Burke, 2016).

Sample Characteristics

A total of 285 participants provided data across the 17 retained studies. This number is 10 participants less than reported in Table 2, because Sharp, Hodge and Danish (2014) and Sharp, Hodge and Danish (2015) used the same participant set. All participants were sampled via purposive sampling techniques. The age range of participants was not always clearly reported. Nonetheless, we estimate that data had been provided by 164 athletes (aged 18-57 years), 54 coaches (aged 25-60 years), 44 sport psychologists (aged 31-66 years), 11 parents (age range unclear), 10 sport physicians (age range unclear), and 2 heads of medical services (age range unclear). The sample consisted of 52 females and 122 males, with the gender of 111 participants unaccountable from 3 studies (Orlick & Partington, 1987a; Partington & Orlick, 1987; Partington & Orlick, 1991). Four studies included data collected from multiple samples, such as athletes and coaches (e.g. Weigand et al, 1999), sport psychologists and coaches (Sharp & Hodge, 2013), coaches and parents (Thelwell et al., 2018) and coaches and sports medicine professionals (Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, Tod & Cable, 2016). We were unable to compile statistics on other social and demographic factors (e.g., socioeconomic status and ethnicity), because these data were not reported with sufficient clarity across the studies.

With regard to the background information (e.g. professional status, experience, gender, ethnicity, etc.) of sport psychologists whom the study participant groups were discussing, such information was generally unclear or unavailable. From what was discernible, 11 of the 17 studies were referencing sport psychologists working with elite populations (Anderson et al., 2004; Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, & Cable, 2014; Orlick & Partington, 1987a; Partington & Orlick, 1987; Partington & Orlick, 1991; Sharp & Hodge,

2011, 2013, 2014; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2014, 2015), 4 studies were referencing sport psychologists working at collegiate level (Dunn & Holt, 2003; Mapes, 2009; Weigand et al., 1999; Zakrajsek et al., 2013), and 2 studies regarded sport psychologists working with youth sport populations (Barker & Winter, 2014; Thelwell et al., 2018).

Data Collection

Individual interviews were used in 15 studies. More than one qualitative data collection technique (e.g. open-ended survey questions, individual interviews, focus groups) were used in 2 studies (Partington & Orlick, 1991; Weigand et al., 1999).

Data Analysis

Some form of thematic or content analysis was used in all 17 studies. Of the 17, 6 studies further outlined their use of inductive analytic logic, with the remaining 11 papers providing insufficient clarity for us to establish which particular analytic logic (inductive, deductive, or abductive) had been employed. Analysis techniques based on grounded theory were reported in one study (Mapes, 2009), and one other paper cited the use of a consensual qualitative research methodology, incorporating elements from grounded theory, phenomenological, and comprehensive process analysis (Zakrajsek et al., 2013).

Research Credibility

Across all 17 studies, it was not clearly stated if authors had followed a foundational or relativist approach to establishing credibility. The use of multiple researchers to conduct data analysis (team approach to analysis, peer review, inter-rater reliability check, and analyst triangulation) was reported in 16 studies. A form of member checking was reported in 8 studies, most often by returning transcripts to participants for verification (e.g., Barker & Winter, 2014; Sharp & Hodge, 2011). Dependability was suggested in two studies in the form of a reflective diary logged throughout the research, enabling the audit of decision making (Anderson et al., 2004; Mapes, 2009). Only 1 study did not provide a description of employed techniques suggested to infer validity of the research approach (Partington & Orlick, 1991).

Meta Theory Analysis

No content theoretical model or conceptual framework was specified clearly in 15 of the studies. Of the 2 studies that did include the use of guiding theory in the form of a model or framework, Sharp, Hodge and Danish (2014) referenced self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008) to interpret their findings relating to the relationship in sport psychology consulting at elite competitions; while the same authors applied aspects of working alliance theory (Bordin, 1979, 1994) to part justify their 2015 study exploring experienced sport psychologists' views of effective sport psychology consulting.

Meta Data Analysis

Results of the meta-data analysis were organized around the main themes of desirable qualities, desirable knowledge, and desirable behaviours (see Table 3).

Desirable Qualities

A personal quality has been defined as “a tangible embodiment of a practitioner’s core self, which relates to a person’s morals, values, virtues, and beliefs” (Chandler et al., 2016, p.297). Firstly, across the 17 studies reviewed, desirable personal qualities of sport psychologists appeared to collapse under a humanistic-type character set, with for example, being caring, empathetic (of people and environments) and non-judgemental recurring often. In synergy to these dispositions, personal qualities perhaps best encapsulated by the umbrella term “interpersonal skills” also received frequent commendation. Characteristics of interpersonal skill included for example, being relatable, personable, trustworthy, approachable, subtle, non-intrusive, and a skilled communicator (including both speaking and listening skills). What was unclear from these findings, however, is whether being interpersonally skilled is an act of *being* (i.e. suggesting personal qualities at play), *doing* (suggesting a behaviour or skill-based component), or both. This disparity is likely to have occurred due to inconsistency or oversimplification of language used in literature concerning the characteristics of effective sport psychologists.

In a second line of themes recurrent across the literature, effective sport psychologists are considered to possess characteristics of credibility, perhaps through their reputation, or more often, through their evident qualities of professionalism, passion, work-ethic, and humility. We also found that highly effective sport psychologists harbour flexibility, creativity, and open-mindedness to new ideas, and learn to adapt to the ever-changing demands and needs of their clients and service environments (e.g., Orlick & Partington, 1987a).

Finally, effective sport psychologists are respected for their propensity to maintain authenticity. That is, to demonstrate stability and self-confidence in their own being, including their approach to practice. Athletes, coaches, sport physicians, and sport psychologists have all praised applied practitioners who are comfortable to be themselves and to hence operate openly, honestly, creatively, and courageously in the endeavour of best practice.

Desirable Knowledge

Effective sport psychologists are proposed to have extensive expertise from training and qualification in sport psychology and other domains of relevance (e.g. counselling psychology, organisational psychology, performance enhancement, and well-being). In addition to this expert knowledge base, clients expect highly helpful sport psychologists to have exemplary knowledge and to consider ethical and professional issues (Barker & Winter, 2014; Chandler et al., 2014; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2014; Zakrajsek et al., 2013). For example, Dunn and Holt's (2003) investigation of college level athletes revealed respect for sport psychologists who know and recognize the boundary between engaging with athletes or becoming overly friendly (e.g. too much social involvement). On a more implicit level, successful practitioners are also considered to harness a self-awareness of their core values and beliefs, being able to live out their values in their work (Chandler et al., 2016).

Moreover, effective sport psychologists are considered as those with a breadth of consulting experience (ideally at individual, team, and organisational level), enabling the identification of effective and relevant consulting elements. Such elements include the knowledge of how to better tailor empirically-based expertise to real world situations, the insight for when to offer a timely idea or anecdote of relevancy and impact, or the experience to retain the perspective that few (hopefully if any) sport psychologists “know it all”, and as such remain open and willing to learn about individual clients and their contexts.

Desirable Behaviours

Meta-data findings indicated that effective sport psychologists are characterised by providing an accessible, ethical, and helpful service. Behaviours suggested to underpin such outcomes included the ability to establish and maintain collaborative working relationships – considered a cornerstone of effective sport psychology consulting (e.g. Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015). Likewise, athletes and coaches praised practitioners who actively demonstrated a commitment to individualised support, with the work ethic to travel with the team, “muck in”, and generally offer timely delivery and follow up. Practitioners who were generally unavailable, unwilling travel, or considered to demonstrate behaviours of selfishness or arrogance were not perceived favourably (Anderson et al., 2004; Partington & Orlick, 1987). Overall, effective practitioners are perceived as those who invest time, energy, and expertise into the delivery of an appropriate and coherent model of practice (e.g. Chandler et al., 2016; Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2014; Thelwell et al., 2018).

Meta Synthesis

Taken together, the reviewed studies provide rich insights of the characteristics of effective sport psychologists. In collating these data, the current review has also exposed that little, if any, attempt has been made to apply theory to help interpret and integrate such findings. As such, broadly applying theoretical concepts from previous literature (e.g.

Gelso 2014; Poczwardowski & Sherman, 2011; Poczwardowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004; Rogers, 1957, 1979; Wampold & Budge, 2012), this synthesis moves beyond description and integrates the reviewed data, demonstrating that effective sport psychologists are characterised by the 3 pillars of who they are (desirable qualities), what they know (desirable knowledge), and what they do (desirable behaviours, see, Figure 2).

In conjunction with the aforementioned practitioner characteristics, the ability to build and maintain collaborative professional relationships emerged time and again across the reviewed literature as a hallmark of the best sport psychologists. In keeping with the views of Carl Rogers (1957, 1979), it appears likely that good practitioner qualities encourage good relationships. Hence, this synthesis proposes a model (Figure 2) which outlines the importance of practitioner characteristics in the formation of working relationships; followed by three ways in which the relationship is powered as qualities, knowledge, and actions interact to produce benefits in sport psychology.

In understanding the proposed framework, it is helpful to begin with Woolway and Harwood's (2018) assertion that there are certain human characteristics which enter into relationships without much of anybody's choosing. Such fixed characteristics were not the focus of this review, but it is important to note that on entering *the initial relationship* such factors as gender, race, or age could influence the relationship to come – with little the practitioner could do about it (Lubker et al., 2005, 2008). These fixed characteristics influence clients' first impressions, as depicted in the initial conjoined box of Figure 2. Hereafter, the changeable practitioner characteristics emergent from the rich descriptions of the 17 studies reviewed in the present review play-out, in three relationship pathways, each different, although complementary, in their propensity to influence change.

In the first pathway, the personal qualities of a sport psychologist influence the formation of the *real relationship*, defined by Gelso (2014) as “the personal relationship between therapist and patient marked by the extent to which each is genuine with the other and perceives/experiences the other in ways that benefit the other” (p.119). For example,

being authentic, relatable, and non-judgmental emerged consistently across the reviewed literature as personal qualities which are considered to encourage the formation of a *real* and *influential* relationship (Chandler et al., 2014; Mapes, 2009; Sharp & Hodge, 2011). Likewise, establishing trust emerged across many of the reviewed studies as key to effective consulting relationships, as demonstrated by the following extract: “Gaining trust... I think that develops into a relationship that then gives you permission to then explore other areas” (views of an Olympic-level coach, Sharp & Hodge, 2013, p. 319).

The second pathway depicts the benefit of desirable knowledge in the consulting relationship. The sport psychologist works to create allegiance with the client, exploring and explaining relevant ideas and information, including the possible and appropriate intervention approaches and expectations for forward action. For example, the reviewed data highlighted the value coaches and athletes place on sport psychologists who are well trained, with the expertise to offer relevant, practical, and helpful ideas and information (Anderson et al., 2004; Partington & Orlick, 1987; Sharp & Hodge, 2014; Zakrajsek et al., 2013).

The third pathway depicts the specific behaviours and actions the practitioner promotes within the relationship to encourage client involvement and investment in associated change behaviours, the development of future directions, and the relationship itself. For example, experienced sport psychologists have suggested such behaviours to include, (a) encouraging a partnership or client-centred approach, (b) collaborative goal agreement, (c) agreeing follow-up or review protocols, and (d) wherever ethical and feasible, involving the coach and/or parents. Equally, from the client’s perspective, athletes and coaches described a strong preference for sport psychologists who can actively involve them in goal agreement, for its value of encouraging ownership, empowerment, and trust (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015; Thelwell et al., 2018).

In light of additional themes emergent across the reviewed data, on the outside of the proposed model (see Figure 2) lays a surrounding box to demonstrate that sport

psychology relationships are not independent of the context or environment in which they exist. Effective sport psychologists are considered those with the insight and skill to empathise with the people *and the environments* in which they operate (Chandler et al., 2016). For example, consulting with an athlete over a video call presents a significantly different challenge to consulting in a room with a team, or on a pitch with a coach. Effective sport psychologists were considered as those who can recognise, appreciate, and respond to the evolving needs of clients in the dynamic and often unique world of applied sport psychology consulting (Anderson, 2005; Chandler et al., 2016; Orlick & Partington, 1987a).

An aim of the current review included considering the confidence research consumers can have in the reviewed research. Overall, it is helpful to remember that the data digested herein was rich and descriptive at source. Some 17 qualitative research articles explored 285 participants' experiences and perspectives of what characterises effective sport psychologists. Such depth of discursive descriptions provides a solid foundation for the advancement of ideas which simply would not be attainable from any single study or those employing quantitative data-collection methodologies. There are, nonetheless, still limitations to consider.

For example, the body of reviewed data is retrospective and descriptive, and cannot demonstrate if the aforementioned characteristics cause desirable outcomes in service delivery, but only that people believe they do. For example, participants' beliefs may have been influenced by their success, or lack of, as performers. Future research could seek to investigate causal relationships between practitioner characteristics and service outcomes through experimental means. The level of control needed, however, for experiments to have sufficient internal validity may result in findings that lack external validity. In addition, researchers will need to define clearly constructs such as desirable and undesirable service delivery outcomes. For example, although enhanced competitive performance may be a client's desired outcome, it could be difficult to conduct research

that tests if practitioners' characteristics play a causal role in performance enhancement, given the various other factors at play.

Likewise, researchers have used similar qualitative methods across the 17 studies. There is scope for a greater variety of research to be done in this area. For example, researchers have adopted similar methods of establishing validity (e.g. inter-rater reliability and member checking), many of which have received critical attention for their incongruence with research based on interpretive principles (Smith & McGannon, 2018). As a second example, investigators have typically adopted a realistic perspective (Burke, 2016), and alternative viewpoints may enhance the depth and richness of the resulting knowledge. For example, studies underpinned by narrative theory will allow researchers to explore how participants' stories about effective practitioners reveal personal, contextual, and cultural influences in how applied sport psychology is perceived and discussed by clients and other stakeholders.

Almost all participants across the reviewed studies were of white ethnicity and represented western societies commonly understood to uphold individualistic ideologies. Acknowledgment of this fact helps readers to interpret findings and suggestions in light of it and to consider what limitations may exist for understanding the characteristics at play for sport psychologists operating within other ethnic or societal contexts (e.g. practitioners or clients of Black, Asian, or Arab decent, or those operating in collectivist societies).

Despite these recognitions, such critiques do not devalue the rich and meaningful information offered by people in interviews, nor the knowledge formation and advancement they have permitted. The current synthesis draws from a broad host of opinions and enables the exploration of new ideas still. Also, the results provide material upon which practitioners and researchers can base their own reflections, questions, and future directions. The old informs and inspires the new.

Discussion

The current study covered 30 years of qualitative research concerning the characteristics of effective sport psychologists with the objectives of (a) reviewing the literature, (b) critically appraising the evidence, and (c) generating an integrated framework. It was found that effective practitioners are those who demonstrate a blend of desirable personal qualities, knowledge, and behaviours; which underpin and lead to building and maintaining healthy and helpful consulting relationships. The ways these results advance knowledge and inform future research and practice are subsequently discussed.

To begin, the current review advances the field by offering a rigorous, organised, and easily accessible account of the extant knowledge. Collating and reviewing existing literature in this way has enabled methodological, theoretical, and practical considerations to emerge. For example, from a theoretical perspective, we found that athletes, coaches, parents, and sport psychologists identify a medley of personal qualities, knowledge sets, and professional behaviours in describing effective practitioners. This finding supports previous assertions that effective service delivery providers need an array of characteristics (Tod, Marchant, & Anderson, 2007), however it also extends knowledge in suggesting, (a) that no single characteristic can be considered the primary or essential feature of effective sport psychologists, and (b) the range of characteristics favoured by clients appear relatively stable across different populations and time. This second point suggests that research efforts over 30 years have produced a robust representation of the characteristics of effective practitioners, at least in the populations and ways asked thus far.

Further advancement of knowledge is achieved by the present review offering a richer description of the characteristics of effective sport psychologists than was previously available. Drawing on one example from the study's findings, it was noted that interpersonally skilled practitioners are highly favoured by clients and their peers; a finding which corroborates related reviews (Woolway & Harwood, 2018). The present review extends the knowledge of interpersonal skills in sport psychology practice,

however, by unpacking the term and providing a richer description of its constituent parts. That is, what clients *might actually mean*, or desire, when using umbrella terms such as “interpersonal skills”, “expert knowledge”, or “professional behaviours”. For example, the present review found interpersonal skills including empathy, approachability, trustworthiness, and skilled communication to be valued by sport psychology clients, in addition to more descriptive derivatives of requisite subject knowledge (e.g. sport psychology, counselling, wellbeing, ethical, and contextual knowledge) and desirable professional behaviours (e.g. making oneself available, following up after consultations, and providing an individualised service).

Building on these data, the present review also goes beyond the descriptive efforts of previous research and towards interpretation and synthesis of knowledge. We offer a coherent framework through which 30 years of research can be accessed, understood, and applied. Such efforts are particularly valuable considering no studies or reviews in this area have applied theory to knowledge in this way. Answering previous calls in sport psychology literature that ideas from mainstream psychology can be useful to research-focused and applied sport psychologists alike (Chandler et al, 2014); and from previous assertions that *the relationship* between client and practitioner is the foundation of impactful service delivery (Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015), the current review drew on ideas in related fields of study and practice to interpret and advance knowledge (e.g. Poczwardowski & Sherman, 2011; Rogers, 1957, 1979; Wampold & Budge, 2012). The result is an advancement of theory concerning how practitioner characteristics interact and impact outcomes within sport psychology service delivery.

Such innovations in theory can generate original avenues of research. For example, firstly, it would be valuable to investigate how well the identified characteristics and proposed framework predict client outcomes in sport psychology consulting. Secondly, research could explore practitioner’s opinions of how well the proposed framework fits their own practice approaches and advance understanding of real world practices. Thirdly,

there is a dearth of literature attending exactly *how* to express or actualize the characteristics endorsed for practitioners in the specific contexts they work. That is, the *what* of characteristics becomes clear across the reviewed literature, but the *how* one can develop and demonstrate them does not. Fourthly, the present review identified that research in this area has generally asked similar questions, in similar ways, with similar populations. Such approaches have been helpful to get us to where we are yet could be part of the reason why much the same data has been found across 30 years of characteristic focused research. For knowledge to continue to evolve, methodological evolution is also warranted. Future researchers may wish to explore different questions (e.g. *how* characteristics evolve, interact, and impact client outcomes within sport psychologists' careers). These new questions could be addressed with a great variety of methodologies (e.g. narrative content analysis or realist synthesis) and different populations (e.g. to help create a better understanding of how practitioner characteristics impact in collectivist, or other understudied, cultures).

Notwithstanding these considerations for the advancement of theory and research, implications for practice must also be attended to. Following the advice of Cropley et al. (2010) that effective sport psychologists are those considered to engage in reflective practice around what works for them and for their clients, the current review offers a rich resource upon which practitioners can substantiate their self-awareness, stimulate opinion, and direct action. For example, empathy emerged as a desirable personal quality in sport psychologists and was commonly described as the ability to understand the feelings of another person. This assertion is promising for sport psychologists, just as it is for practitioners in sister helping disciplines (e.g. counselling or clinical psychology), as research suggests that listening skills can help demonstrate and enhance empathetic being (Watson & Greenberg, 2011). In essence therefore, empathetic being is a *skill* which can be acquired, improved, and expressed.

Looking at the broader picture, it becomes evident why empathy, listening skills, and counselling knowledge all emerged as desirable characteristics of effective sport psychologists. Characteristics of being, knowing, and doing *interact* in their contribution to effective practice. As such, exploring such characteristics, their development, and relational involvement offers sport psychologists directions in which to improve their practice approach and impact (Barker & Winter, 2014). Sport psychologists interested in advancing their listening skills, for example, could enrol on a communication-based training initiative, such as an introduction to counselling course, or engage in the respective literature (e.g., Katz & Hemmings, 2009; Watson, Hilliard, & Way, 2017; Woolfe, Dryden, & Strawbridge, 2009). Educators and supervisors of sport psychologists could also find use in the presented framework and supporting data, using it, for example, to encourage thought (e.g. student reading and discussion) or inform action (e.g. role plays or supplementary training initiatives).

Finally, when nearing completion of the current review, the lead author was approached by a sport National Governing Body with the request to see the findings at first opportunity. They wanted a greater understanding of the characteristics of effective sport psychologists prior to conducting interviews for applied positions within the organisation. These results can educate clients and others who might employ sport psychologists about who is likely to be helpful in the role and what constitutes good training and practice. The implications for practice appear abundant and promising.

As with any research endeavour, the resultant knowledge and recommendations should also be considered with respect to their strengths and limitations. For example, the present review only included research written in English, although evidence exists suggesting that the inclusion of studies written in other languages do not change a review's findings (Morrison et al., 2012). The included research does, however, span some 30 years of rich qualitative investigation of hundreds of people's opinions across varying demographic populations - advancing knowledge and inspiring directions for research and

practice. It is hoped that such ends justify the current means, and that any future research in this area may cast an even wider net to capture any missing opinion in the present synthesis.

In summary, the current review organizes and advances knowledge concerning the characteristics of effective sport psychologists. Highly effective practitioners are considered those who forge meaningful and impactful relationships through the mediation of helpful qualities, knowledge, and behaviours. Directions for continued research, tutelage, and practice in this regard have been discussed and we hope support the continued development of principled, knowledgeable, and dutiful sport psychologists who meet the needs of their clients and uphold the values and privileges of the profession.

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Table 1*Enhancing Transparency in Reporting the Synthesis of Qualitative Research (ENTREQ) Statement*

N	Item	Guide and description	Page
1	Aim	State the research question the synthesis addresses.	6
2	Synthesis methodology	Identify the synthesis methodology or theoretical framework which underpins the synthesis and describe the rationale for choice of methodology (e.g. meta-ethnography, thematic synthesis, critical interpretive synthesis, grounded theory synthesis, realist synthesis, meta-aggregation, meta-study, framework synthesis).	6
3	Approach to searching	Indicate whether the search was pre-planned (comprehensive search strategies to seek all available studies) or iterative (to seek all available concepts until they theoretical saturation is achieved).	7
4	Inclusion criteria	Specify the inclusion/exclusion criteria (e.g. in terms of population, language, year limits, type of publication, study type).	7-8
5	Data sources	Describe the information sources used (e.g. electronic databases (MEDLINE, EMBASE, CINAHL, psycINFO, Econlit), grey literature databases (digital thesis, policy reports), relevant organisational websites, experts, information specialists, generic web searches (Google Scholar) hand searching, reference lists) and when the searches conducted; provide the rationale for using the data sources.	7-9
6	Electronic Search strategy	Describe the literature search (e.g. provide electronic search strategies with population terms, clinical or health topic terms, experiential or social phenomena related terms, filters for qualitative research, and search limits).	7-9
7	Study screening methods	Describe the process of study screening and sifting (e.g. title, abstract and full text review, number of independent reviewers who screened studies).	8-9
8	Study characteristics	Present the characteristics of the included studies (e.g. year of publication, country, population, number of participants, data collection, methodology, analysis, research questions).	Table 2
9	Study selection results	Identify the number of studies screened and provide reasons for study exclusion (e.g. for comprehensive searching, provide numbers of studies screened and reasons for exclusion indicated in a figure/flowchart; for iterative searching describe reasons for study exclusion and inclusion based on modifications to the research question and/or contribution to theory development).	8-9 + Figure 1
10	Rationale for appraisal	Describe the rationale and approach used to appraise the included studies or selected findings (e.g. assessment of conduct (validity and robustness), assessment of reporting (transparency), assessment of content and utility of the findings).	9-12
11	Appraisal items	State the tools, frameworks and criteria used to appraise the studies or selected findings (e.g. Existing tools: CASP, QARI, COREQ, Mays and Pope [25]; reviewer developed tools; describe the domains assessed: research team, study design, data analysis and interpretations, reporting).	6-11
12	Appraisal process	Indicate whether the appraisal was conducted independently by more than one reviewer and if consensus was required.	11-12

13	Appraisal results	Present results of the quality assessment and indicate which articles, if any, were weighted/excluded based on the assessment and give the rationale.	7-9
14	Data extraction	Indicate which sections of the primary studies were analysed and how were the data extracted from the primary studies? (e.g. all text under the headings “results /conclusions” were extracted electronically and entered into a computer software).	9
15	Software	State the computer software used, if any.	8
16	Number of reviewers	Identify who was involved in coding and analysis.	11-12
17	Coding	Describe the process for coding of data (e.g. line by line coding to search for concepts).	9-12
18	Study comparison	Describe how were comparisons made within and across studies (e.g. subsequent studies were coded into pre-existing concepts, and new concepts were created when deemed necessary).	9-12
19	Derivation of themes	Explain whether the process of deriving the themes or constructs was inductive or deductive.	10
20	Quotations	Provide quotations from the primary studies to illustrate themes/constructs and identify whether the quotations were participant quotations of the author’s interpretation.	Not Applicable
21	Synthesis output	Present rich, compelling and useful results that go beyond a summary of the primary studies (e.g. new interpretation, models of evidence, conceptual models, analytical framework, development of a new theory or construct).	17-25

Table 2*Key Methodological and Theoretical Features of Primary Research Reports*

Study	Purpose	Country of origin	Sample characteristics	Method theoretical orientations	Data collection	Data analysis	Use of Guiding Theory
Orlick & Partington (1987a)	To assess Olympic athletes' perspectives of good sport psychologists and their services utilized prior to the 1984 Olympic Games.	Canada	Study Participation Group: 75 (gender not specified) Olympic athletes, representing multiple sports Sport Psychologists discussed: 11 SPs were discussed. Their demographic information was unstated.	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Unstated, though qualitative analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Partington & Orlick (1987)	To assess Olympic coaches' perspectives of good sport psychologists and their services utilized prior to the 1984 Olympic Games.	Canada	Study Participation Group: 17 (gender not specified) Olympic coaches, representing 15 sports Sport Psychologists discussed: 21 sport psychologists were discussed. Their demographic information was unstated.	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Unstated, though qualitative analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Partington & Orlick (1991)	An analysis of Olympic sport psychologists best-ever consulting experiences.	Canada	Study Participation Group: 19 sport psychologists (5 males, 3 females, remaining sample unspecified). Consultants ranged from new to experienced at consulting at the Olympic level. 12 consultants were primarily university based, representing 10 institutions. Sport Psychologists discussed: Self-reflections and sport psychologists in general.	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Open-ended survey and focus groups.	Inductive content analysis	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.

Weigand, Richardson & Weinberg (1999)	Athlete and coach evaluation of a season long sport psychology internship.	Not Specified	<p>Study Participation Group: 12 collegiate-level female basketball players (mean age = 20.25 years \pm 1.14) and 1 coach (aged 36 years).</p> <p>Sport Psychologist discussed: 1 male and operating at the collegiate internship level.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Open-ended survey responses (n=13) and individual semi-structured interviews (n=3).	Inductive content analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Dunn & Holt (2003)	To examine collegiate athletes' perceptions of (a) the delivery of a sport psychology program and (b) the characteristics of the consultant who delivered the program in a team sport setting.	Canada	<p>Study Participation Group: 27 collegiate-level male ice hockey players' (mean age = 22.4 years \pm 1.14).</p> <p>Sport Psychologist discussed: 1 male and operating at the collegiate sport level.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Inductive content analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Anderson, Miles, Robinson, & Mahoney (2004)	Evaluating UK based athletes' perspectives of factors pertinent to the effective practice of sport psychologists.	UK	<p>Study Participation Group: 30 (20 female, 10 male) elite UK-based athletes (mean age =22.7 \pm 8.2) from a range of sports, with an average of 4.9 years (SD = 3.2) competitive experience at international level.</p> <p>Sport Psychologists discussed: 8 (4 female, 4 male) accredited sport psychologists were discussed.</p>	Interpretive phenomenological approach (Smith, 1997).	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Inductive content analysis (Smith, 1997).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Mapes (2009)	Athletes' experiences of sport psychology consultation:	USA	<p>Study Participation Group: Collegiate male wrestlers (N = 10, mean age = 22 years). Eight of these athletes were white, two were African</p>	Constructivist epistemology (.).	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.

exploring a multi-season, cross gender intervention.

American. The total group represented a mix of sociodemographic backgrounds.

Sport Psychologist discussed:
1 white, European-American, female, consulting at the collegiate sport level as a PhD candidate in a counselling and Sport Psychology program.

Sharp & Hodge (2011)	Sport Psychology Consulting Effectiveness: The Sport Psychology Consultant's Perspective.	New Zealand	<p>Study Participation Group: 13 (9 males, 4 females) sport psychologists (M age = 44.8 ± 10.6). Participants' years of consulting experience ranged from 6 to 20 years (M years consulting experience = 11.1 ± 4.7).</p> <p>Sport Psychologists discussed: Self-reflections and sport psychologists in general.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Thematic content analysis (Weber, 1990).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Sharp & Hodge (2013)	Effective Sport Psychology Consulting Relationships: Two Coach Case Studies.	New Zealand	<p>Study Participation Group: 2 male sport psychologists (1 British and 1 New Zealand Middle Eastern, M age = 38 ± 4 years, both accredited with Sport and Exercise Science New Zealand and with a M of 8.5 ± 1.5 years applied sport psychology consulting experience. 2 male elite coaches (1 New Zealand European and 1 New Zealand Fijian, with a M age = 39.5 ± 6.5 and an unclear number for years applied coaching experience.</p> <p>Sport Psychologists discussed:</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Inductive/content analysis (Weber, 1990).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.

			Self-reflections and sport psychologists in general.				
Zakrajsek, Steinfeldt, Bodey, Martin & Zizzi (2013)	College Coaches' Perceptions and Preferred Use of Sport Psychology Services: A Qualitative Perspective.	USA	<p>Study Participation Group: 8 (5 male, 3 female, all European American) college coaches, representing various sports, with experience of coaching both male and female athletes, and engaging in sport psychology services in 7 out of 8 coaches interviewed. Age ranges included 21–29 (n = 2), 30–39 (n = 3), 40–49 (n = 1), and 50–59 (n = 2). Coaches had an average of 16.5 years (SD = 10.46) of coaching experience and an average of 12.75 years (SD = 11.47) in their current position. At the time of the study, four coaches were using sport psychology services with their team while four coaches were not.</p> <p>Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.</p>	Constructivist, with postpositivist aspects (Hill et al., 2005).	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Consensual qualitative research methodology (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997), incorporating elements from grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), phenomenological (Giorgi, 1985) and comprehensive process analysis (Elliot, 1989).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Barker & Winter (2014)	The Practice of Sport Psychology: Youth Sport Coaches' Perspectives.	UK	<p>Study Participation Group: 8 (7 male, 1 female) youth sport coaches (mean age of 43 years ± 15.57) who held a minimum of ten years' experience with youth performers of a county to national level in various sports.</p> <p>Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Inductive content analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.

Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, & Cable (2014)	Personal Qualities of Effective Sport Psychologists: A Sports Physician Perspective.	UK	<p>Study Participation Group: 5 (4 males, 1 female) physicians and 1 male Head of Medical Services, working in a range of UK-based elite and professional sports.</p> <p>Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Content analysis.	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Sharp & Hodge (2014)	Sport psychology consulting effectiveness: The athlete's perspective.	New Zealand	<p>Study Participation Group: 9 elite athletes (6 male and 3 female, all Caucasian, mean age = 32.7 years \pm 11.05, mean competitive experience = 17.9 years \pm 9.0) from a variety of sports, currently representing their country at an International level, and currently working with or had worked with a sport psychologist.</p> <p>Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Thematic content analysis (Weber, 1990).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2014)	To examine what experienced sport psychologists believed to be essential for consulting effectiveness at elite sport competitions.	Various (UK, USA, Norway, Canada)	<p>Study Participation Group: 10 accredited sport psychologists (8 male and 2 female, <i>M</i> age = 50.44 years, <i>M</i> years consulting experience = 21.67 years) who had considerable experience consulting at pinnacle sporting events (e.g., Olympic Games, World Championships, World Cups, European Championships).</p>	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Thematic content analysis (Weber, 1990).	Self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2008) was used to interpret findings relating to the relationship in sport psychology consulting.

			Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: Self-reflections and sport psychologists in general.				
Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2015)	Experienced sport psychologists' views of effective sport psychology consulting.	Various (UK, USA, Norway, Canada)	Study Participation Group: 10 accredited sport psychologists (8 male and 2 female, <i>M</i> age = 50.44 years, <i>M</i> years consulting experience = 21.67 years) who had considerable experience consulting at pinnacle sporting events (e.g., Olympic Games, World Championships, World Cups, European Championships).	Constructivist ontology (Weed, 2009) and interpretivist epistemological approach (Weber, 1990).	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Inductive content analysis (Weber, 1990).	Working Alliance theory (Bordin, 1979, 1994) was used to part justify the study and interpret findings relating to the relationship in sport psychology consulting.
			Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: Self-reflections and sport psychologists in general.				
Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, Tod & Cable (2016)	To explore coach and sport physicians' perspectives of the personal qualities of effective sport psychologists when coping with organisational demands.	Not specified (though UK)	Study Participation Group: 6 sport physicians (5 male and 1 female) and 7 coaches (all male), representing a range of sports and all with experience of working with sport psychologists. Sport Psychologist(s) discussed: No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.	Unstated, but likely realist tale.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Interpretational qualitative analysis (Côté, Salmela, Baria & Russell, 1993).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.
Thelwell, Wood, Harwood, Woolway & van Raalte (2018)	To elicit youth-sport coaches and parents' perceptions of sport psychologists.	UK	Study Participation Group: 11 youth-sport coaches (male = 10, female = 1; <i>M</i> age = 36.1 ± 11.2 years) and 11 parents (male = 8, female = 3; <i>M</i> age = 47.5 ± 5.7 years) with no previous	Post-positivist.	Individual semi-structured interviews.	Interpretive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).	No theoretical model was employed to justify the study or interpret results.

experience of using sport psychology services.

Sport Psychologist(s) discussed:

No demographic information was stated, likely referring to sport psychologists in general.

Table 3*Main Findings from Primary Research Reports*

Study	Main findings		
	Desirable qualities	Desirable knowledge	Desirable behaviours
Orlick & Partington (1987)	Relatable, adaptable, committed, trustworthy, and caring.	Practical, individualised, ideas to offer, based on relevant and sport-specific knowledge.	Interpersonally skilled in building client-centred relationships. Prioritises 1:1 support over group work, with timely delivery and follow-up.
Partington & Orlick (1987)	Good listener and communicator, relatable (to athletes and staff), adaptable, positive and committed, timely, creative, and confident.	Well trained, with case-specific empirically-based expertise in mental skill development. Remaining open to learning from athletes, coaches and new experiences.	Adopting a client-centred approach and not overstepping the boundary from psychologist to technical coach. Willing to travel, attend camps/competitions, accept low fees and low plaudits. Able to demonstrate lasting impact on team harmony, motivation, problem-solving and overall performance of athletes and staff.
Partington & Orlick (1991)	Stable (e.g. good self-regulation), interpersonally skilled (e.g. good communication skills, especially skilled listening), non-judgmental, open to ideas and learning, positive, confident, committed and caring.	A breadth of consulting experience so as to enable the identification of effective and relevant consulting elements.	Able to assess fit and commitment from themselves and the client from the offset. Thereafter delivering an individualised client-centred approach. Characterised by a 1:1, timely, practical, encouraging, and low-profile approach to delivery.
Weigand, Richardson & Weinberg (1999)	Good communicator (including listening), caring, committed, trustworthy and enthusiastic.	Sport-specific knowledge and appropriate mental skills and examples for the sport.	Timely, accessible, helpful, supportive and appropriate delivery.
Dunn & Holt (2003)	Caring, positive, good communicator (including listening), non-judgemental, approachable and trustworthy.	Awareness and understanding of matters relating to team history and tradition. Knowing the boundary between too much social involvement with the team.	Accessible, timely, professional/ethical, inclusive and straightforward delivery.

Anderson, Miles, Robinson, & Mahoney (2004)	Personable, approachable, good communicator, perceptive, honest and trustworthy.	Experience and up-to-date knowledge of applied sport psychology, with sport-specific knowledge non-essential.	Provider of an ethical, accessible, practical, timely and coherent service; including mental skills training and other activities (e.g. counselling related activities) through individualised and group approaches.
Mapes (2009)	Good communicator (especially listening), authentic, patient, non-threatening, committed, credible, confident and helpful.	Sound awareness of professional and ethical boundaries, with sport-specific experience or knowledge, counselling skills, and appropriate mental skills and examples for the sport. Remaining open to learning from athletes, coaches and new experiences.	Provider of an accessible, professional, inclusive and non-compulsory service. With a focus on facilitating peer-to-peer learning, individualised practical take-aways or counselling-like services.
Sharp & Hodge (2011)	Trustworthy, empathetic, non-judgemental, confident, approachable, adaptable, reflective, and interpersonally skilled at building professional consulting relationships (e.g. skilled communicator).	Knowledge of general models of psychology and psychotherapy, counselling psychology, mental skills training, and ethical and professional codes and considerations. Sport-specific experience or knowledge is also highly preferable, along with the willingness to learn about individual clients and their contexts.	Creator of strong, balanced and collaborative working relationships through which a coherent model of practice is followed allowing clients to fulfil their individual needs.
Sharp & Hodge (2013)	Open communicator (honest, transparent), trustworthy, relatable and adaptable.	Knowledgeable of the client and their needs, the clients sport, ethical and professional considerations, and sport psychology theories and techniques.	Creator of a trustful working alliance, based on common interests, open communication, upholding clear boundaries and 'fitting in' with the team and culture.
Zakrajsek, Steinfeldt, Bodey, Martin & Zizzi (2013)	Trustworthy, relatable, approachable, empathetic, hardworking, credible, nurturing, passionate, honest and with presence.	Formal training in sport psychology, athletic experience, understanding of the athletic environment, and experience consulting with teams and individuals.	Effective conveyor of impactful sport-specific and general psychology knowledge, within the bounds of competent and ethical practice.
Barker & Winter (2014)	Personable, approachable, clear communicator, professional and caring.	Professional qualifications/status and experience in the field of applied sport psychology. Demonstrating a willingness and interest to learn more about the client and their sport.	Understands and supports athletes, coaches and parents to improve their psychological awareness and abilities to use psychological techniques to maximize performance and personal growth.

Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, & Cable (2014)	Open, honest and understanding, approachable, good communicator (including listening), empathetic and trustworthy, humble, secure in self, good sense of humour.	Formal education and professional experience, with a sound understanding of competent and ethical practice.	Ability to build effective working relationships, read environments, and respond to client's needs in delicate situations.
Sharp & Hodge (2014)	Personable, non-intrusive, available, enthusiastic, flexible, and trustworthy.	Applied sport psychology knowledge and consulting experience; including knowledge and experience of the athlete's sport.	Ethical, practical, client-centred support. Actioned through a collaborative, trustworthy and flexible working relationship.
Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2014)	Good listener, confident in self, selfless and consistent.	Knowledge of general models of psychology and psychotherapy, mental skills training, organisational psychology, and ethical and professional considerations.	In relation to good practice at competition: working closely with coaches and athletes (when needed and appropriate), fitting/mucking in, limiting new interventions and upholding consistency in behaviour.
Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2015)	Authentic, committed, trustworthy, non-judgemental, adaptable and a skilled communicator (including listening).	Knowledge and expertise in human functioning, analytical thinking and counselling skills.	Accessible, holistic, professional and ethical service. Actioned through a collaborative, respectful, trustworthy and flexible working relationship.
Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, Tod & Cable (2016)	Respectful, empathetic, patient, humble, subtle, self-assured, resilient, rigorous, authentic and courageous.	Knowledge of high-performance sport environments, cultures and processes; including how to manage people (e.g. managing up), how to speak the sport-specific language, and how to position and represent themselves appropriately within the organisational hierarchy. Additional awareness of their deepest core values and beliefs, and how to live this out in their work.	Provider of relevant and appropriate delivery across the team (e.g. athletes, coaches, support staff, and management), including encouraging and supporting colleagues' ability to optimize their communication and critical thinking skills as to develop awareness and understanding of self and others.
Thelwell, Wood, Harwood, Woolway & van Raalte (2018)	Approachable, personable, skilled communicator (including listening and presenting skills), trustworthy, timely and reputable.	Extensive expertise from training, qualification and experience in sport psychology, performance enhancement, well-being, coaching and/or parenting.	Holistic, accessible, inclusive (of parents and coaches), impactful and affordable service delivery.

Figure 1

General Search Strategy Flow Diagram

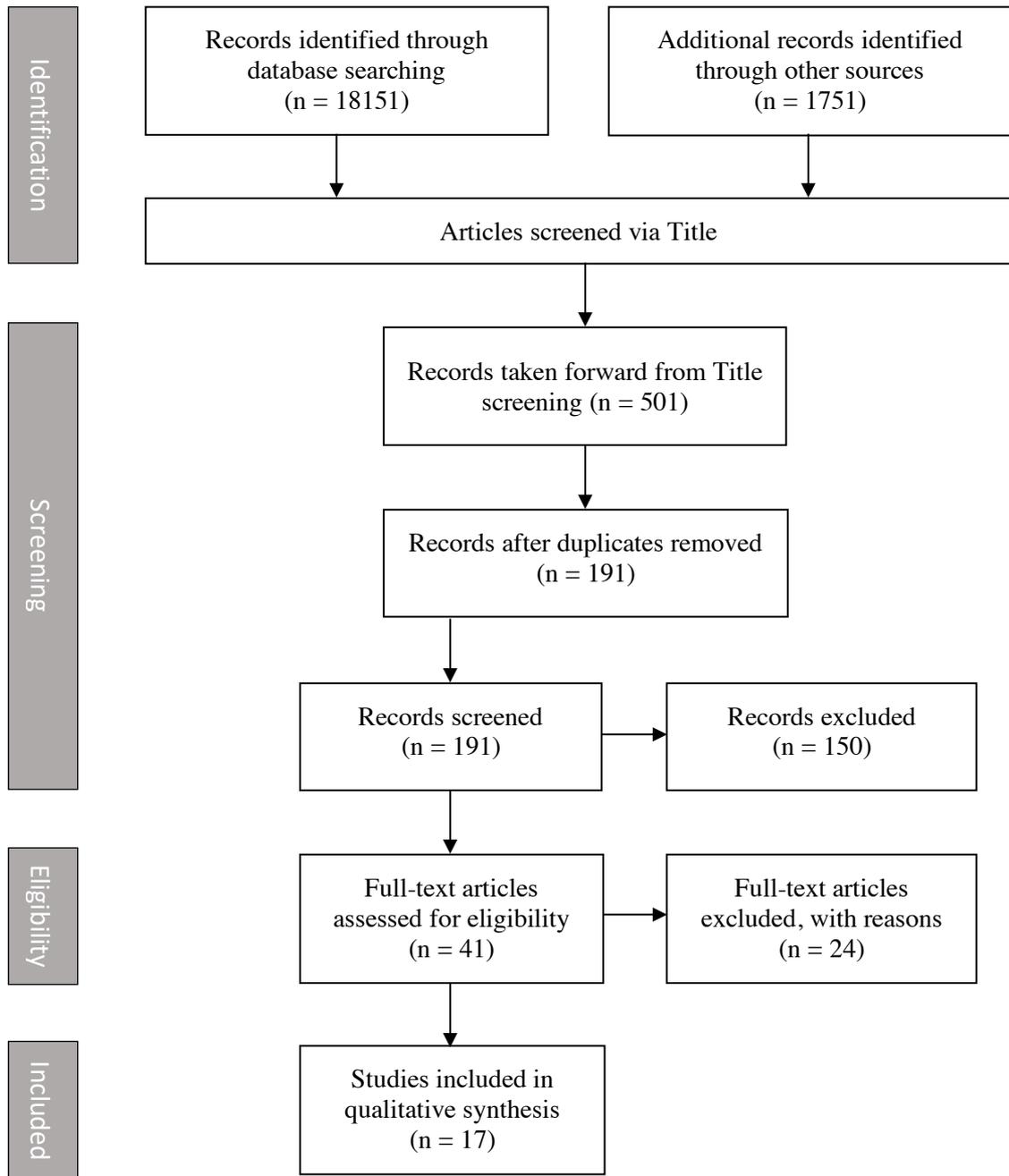
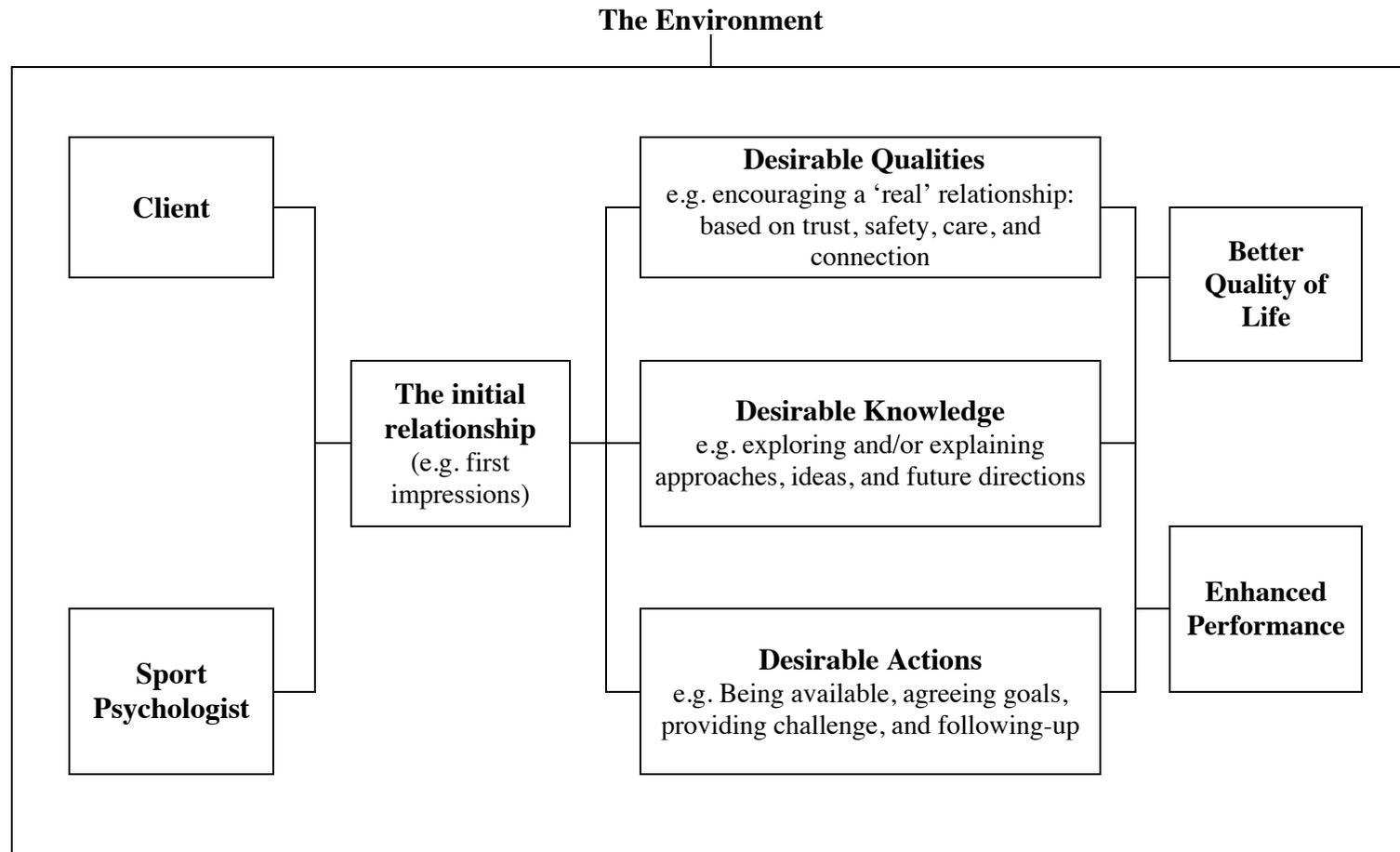


Figure 2

Practitioner Characteristics in the Sport Psychology Consulting Relationship



Empirical Study 1: Practitioners Narratives of why they Adopt the Chimp Mind Management Model

Abstract

Objectives: We examined applied practitioners' (N=10) stories about why they adopted a model of practice, with a focus on the chimp mind management model.

Design: Qualitative interviews informed by narrative theory.

Method: Practitioners (5 females and 5 males, aged 28–66) with at least five years of professional experience discussed their professional journey during open-ended narrative interviews. Data analysis began with an examination of the narrative structure of the practitioners' stories, followed by an investigation of the narrative themes.

Results: The structure of the participants' stories championed a common plot: overcoming dissatisfaction in the endeavour to help clients. Narrative themes included how the chimp model helped practitioners to overcome dissatisfaction with service acumen and impact, including: theoretical integration, technical eclecticism, and assimilation. An additional theme involved social factors that influenced practitioners' adoption of a service approach.

Conclusions: results illuminate motives and suggest criteria for practitioners' selection of a service model. Findings also parallel clinical and counselling psychology research, suggesting practitioner development continues throughout their careers. Applied implications include the value of practitioners, educators, supervisors and researchers proactively examining meaningful models of practice.

Keywords: applied, sport psychology, chimp model, practitioner development

Practitioners Narratives of why they Adopt the Chimp Mind Management Model

How can I help clients and establish myself as a successful applied practitioner?

Such questions might be familiar to all reflective psychologists eager to thrive, not merely survive, in their chosen career. Understanding and refining how best to work with clients is subsequently a focus of practitioners, supervisors and researchers alike. Embracing a conceptual model is one-way practitioners can navigate consultancy and drive impactful service delivery (Andersen, 2005; Aoyagi, Cohen, Poczwardowski, Metzler & Statler, 2018).

Broadly, effective sport psychologists are those who help athletes attend to their issues and achieve their goals (Cropley, Hanton, Miles, & Niven, 2010; Tod, 2017; Tod, Marchant & Anderson, 2007). According to sport psychologists, such outcomes are achieved by, (a) developing a collaboration-based relationship with clients, (b) clarifying and agreeing clients goal(s) for the service, (c) engaging with some form of intervention or therapeutic action(s) towards goal attainment, (d) operating authentically as guided by clearly delineated core beliefs and values, and (e) operating from a theoretical orientation or model of practice (Cropley et al., 2010; Tod, Hardy, Lavalley, Eubank, & Ronkainen, 2019). Such ingredients of effective consultancy are not unique to sport psychology however and have been noted by researchers in both counselling and clinical psychology settings (Wampold & Budge, 2012). These features of effective delivery are crystalized in Poczwardowski, Sherman, and Ravizza's (2004) professional philosophy framework. Presented as a hierarchical structure, Poczwardowski and colleagues outlined five important components in service delivery - arranged from the most stable and internal to the most dynamic and external, including (a) personal core beliefs and values, (b) theoretical paradigm concerning behaviour change, (c) models of practice and the consultant's role, (d) intervention goals, and (e) intervention techniques and methods. It is clear to see the overlap between the criteria for effective consulting as outlined by Cropley et al (2010) and the professional philosophy components as outlined by Poczwardowski et

al. (2004). In Poczwardowski et al., however, theoretical orientation formed a bridge linking the practitioner's personal beliefs and values with their professional practices, interventions, and relationships. Theoretical orientations hence allow practitioners to develop a coherent view of what is important, possible, and necessary to assist clients, making them an important focus for theory and practice in applied psychology. Although counselling researchers have studied practitioners' theoretical orientations, sport psychology researchers have made scattered, mostly indirect, attempts to examine the topic (Frisson & Orlick, 2010).

In defining this central component of effective service delivery, Poznanski and McLennan (1995) stated that a theoretical orientation:

refers to an organized set of assumptions, which provides a counsellor with a theory-based framework for (a) generating hypotheses about a client's experience and behavior, (b) formulating a rationale for specific treatment interventions, and (c) evaluating the ongoing therapeutic process (p. 412).

A clear theoretical orientation can hence act as a compass for applied practitioners seeking the shores of client helping success. Whilst some scholarly effort has gone into better defining and describing the philosophies and theoretical orientations available to sport psychologists (Frisson & Orlick, 2010), a large knowledge gap remains as to *why* practitioners embrace the particular frameworks they do, and why such orientations might change over time. A better understanding of practitioners' motives would enrich understanding on this broader issue.

To illustrate by moving one such framework into focus, little is known about why practitioners adopt the Chimp Mind Management Model (hereafter, Chimp Model; Peters, 2012). This absence is perhaps surprising given the public profile of the Chimp Model, particularly in the United Kingdom, which has seen elite athletes report having used it under practitioner guidance and found it works for them (Peters, 2012; Slot, 2012; Williams, 2014). In addition to athlete accounts of efficacy, the Chimp Model is also the

substance of a top selling book (The Chimp Paradox; Peters, 2012), and has enabled its author to establish a thriving psychological and emotional skills training business. This latter point shows growth in the number of practitioners who are being trained in and now using the chimp model: allowing scope to ask why and how? Knowledge from answering these questions will likely provide insights relevant to other models and orientations of practice.

Although the main components of the chimp model have been published within a book for the general population and reviewed by sports researchers (see, Slater, 2013), we contacted the model's creator (Professor Steve Peters) for an at-source description of the model:

The Chimp model has a number of facets to it.

It is an access model to the mind. Based on the neuroscience of the mind and the rules by which the mind works, it allows individuals to understand why and how their behaviours, thinking and emotions form and how to manage these. The model is therefore the basis for acquiring mind management/emotional skills.

The model describes parts of the mind that operate outside of our control and allows an individual to dissociate from these aspects of the mind, see them objectively and then take ownership and responsibility for managing them. It brings to life the mind as often having its own agenda and way of working independently from the individual.

This dissociative approach of an independent thinking part of the mind coupled with responsibility and accountability for managing this - but not being responsible for the nature of the non-controllable processes of the mind - sets the model aside from other therapies.

The model is based on principles from behavioural, cognitive, dynamic, analytical and neurobiological sciences and incorporates these into a unified approach.

The fundamental tenets of the model are: development of understanding and insights through proactivity; application of insights to self, others and settings; skill acquisition and skill maintenance; in relation to the mind.

The chimp model is hence an integrative model which is being applied in elite sport and other performance and non-performance domains. Given the aforementioned importance of a theoretical framework to help inform and guide practitioners work, understanding why practitioners adopt it appears a fruitful area of applied research. Specifically, research into why practitioners adopt the chimp model is hoped to offer advancements fourfold.

First, we can advance knowledge about why practitioners engage with the theoretical orientations and models of practice that they do. That is, *why* approaches work for sport psychologists and in *which* ways; bolstering understanding in the broader issue of practitioners' development. Second, practitioners, particularly trainees, may benefit from such knowledge through its capacity to better inform their sense-making or decision-taking regarding their own philosophy of practice and service delivery. Third, educators could enhance their appreciation of the needs of students or supervisees through enhanced understanding of their motives for adopting a given philosophy or approach. That is, to what end are models helpful, and what shortfalls in existing skill or knowledge are they attending? Finally, researchers can benefit from the present study in its capacity to explore an under-researched area of theory and practice with real potential to illuminate future research directions.

To achieve these benefits, the purpose of the current study was to investigate why practitioners adopt the consulting models that they do. Given that the nature of why one human should do anything is so inextricably bound to their own personal story, to address the purpose we adopted a narrative approach. We asked applied practitioners to tell the

story of their adoption of the Chimp Model. Through telling their stories, we hoped participants would help us understand their motives for adopting a model of practice, the mechanisms through which models service them, and the ways in which such stories are told.

We anticipated that the findings of the study would, (a) advance knowledge of why practitioners adopt the theoretical orientations they do, and (b) provide insights with the potential for real-world impact in recommendations for practitioner development and service delivery.

Method

Study Design and Philosophical Underpinnings

Underpinned by ontological relativism and epistemological social constructionism (Smith, 2010), this study reports on qualitative data collected during interviews guided by a narrative approach (Riessman, 2008). Narratives are considered “discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people’s experiences of it” (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997, p. xvi). In narrative analysis, focus is on the stories people tell, including what is told (content), how it is told (structure and performance), and why it is told (function) (Parcell & Baker, 2018). In keeping with the present studies aims, we focused on participants’ stories of their professional journeys and their adoption of the Chimp Model as a practice approach.

Participants’ stories reflected their interpretations and presentation of their life story, and we were not striving to access an external impersonal reality (relativism, Yilmaz, 2013). Further, we acknowledge that these data have been co-constructed through participants’ interactions with us (social constructionism, Yilmaz, 2013). The relationships we shared with participants shaped the richness of the generated stories. Given that data were subjective and co-constructed, participants’ stories were bounded by the language and personal and social scripts available to them (McGannon & Smith, 2015).

Participants

Ten participants (female n=5; male n=5) volunteered for the study. This sample included 8 British Psychological Society chartered psychologists (sport and exercise, n = 7; occupational, n = 1) and one consultant psychiatrist, all of whom were full-time practitioners and registered with the UK Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC, n=9). The additional participant was also a full-time practitioner, though undergoing advanced (British Psychological Society Stage 2) training to register as a sport and exercise psychologist with the HCPC. Interviewees ranged from 28 to 66 years of age with their work experience of helping athletes ranging from 5 to 39 years post-education. Collectively, the group averaged 8.5 years working across various domains with the Chimp Model, including sport, education, corporate, military, and general public. Initially we set a target of interviewing 10 individuals as a minimum. The strategy was to collect, transcribe and analysis data from those first 10 interviews before, drawing on Saunders et al. (2018), we asked ourselves: did we have sufficient data to support the findings and did these results answer the research question? The member reflections and critical peer review discussed in the research credibility section allowed us to reflect on our answers to the two questions.

Procedure

Following institutional ethical approval, a purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit participants. The first author utilised his professional network and contacted participants individually by email, outlining the study's purpose, risks, and safeguards, and inviting them to participate. Initially 11 participants were identified using the following inclusion criteria. To be included, participants must have (a) been trained in the Chimp Model, (b) practiced in sport using the Chimp Model, (c) been supervised using the Chimp Model, and (d) fulfilled the standards deemed necessary to practice by their registering body or be undergoing advanced (BPS, Stage 2) training. Ten practitioners agreed to participate in a single recorded interview, providing written informed consent prior to data

collection. The eleventh invited practitioner could not participate on grounds of personal circumstance.

Ahead of the research interviews, the lead researcher conducted pilot interviews with two Chimp Model mentors who were exempt from research participation on the grounds of not working in sport. We were able to reflect upon audio recordings of the pilot interviews, and the interviewees' feedback, to identify how best to help participants tell their stories; for example, by learning to refine the use of non-verbal cues and identifying appropriate times to ask questions. Consequently, the research interviews were conducted utilising Jovchelovitch and Bauer's (2000) four phase narrative interview guidelines and in a setting of the participants choosing, where three interviews were undertaken face-to-face and seven were conducted by video call (using Skype).

In phase 1 (initiation) of each research interview, participants were reminded of the topic beforehand to help them prepare. In Phase 2 (main narration), interviewees told their stories uninterrupted, encouraged only by the researcher's non-verbal cues, until there was clear coda (when the interviewee pauses or signals the end of the story). Once it seemed the story had been told, the interviewer asked probing questions such as: "is that everything in that story for you?" or "is there anything else you want to say?".

In phase 3 (questioning), once the main narrative, including any interviewer probes were complete, the interviewer then asked immanent questions using the language of the interviewee to elicit new and additional material beyond the self-generating schema of the story. For example, "you mentioned [event] in your story, what happened after that?" or "you mentioned [person's name] twice today, what role do they play in your story?".

Finally, in phase 4 (concluding talk) the tape recorder was switched off and interesting discussions often occurred. Interviewees occasionally passed comment on what the interview experience had offered them for example, and others cast more light on aspects of the story told. In these instances the interviewer took notes in a research journal at the soonest convenience to help capture the additional narrative content and context.

Each participant was thanked for presenting their story before the end of the interview and final debriefing. Interviews ranged in length from 43 to 68 minutes with an average duration of 57 minutes.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim, meaning the audio recordings were converted into text such that the story was captured as accurately as possible to how it had been spoken. Paralanguage, pauses, laughter, intakes of breath, gesturing, facial expressions, speech repairs and inaudibles were all included in light of Emerson and Frosch (2004). Combined, the transcribed interviews yielded 152 pages of single-spaced text. Following the recommendations of Riessman (2008), we started by examining the story's structure and then its content. Focusing on one participant at a time, the lead author read and listened to the transcripts several times before focusing on identifying the structure of each story. The author explicitly searched for the beginning, middle, and end of each story, while formulating possible narratives contained within. An excel spreadsheet allowed the lead author to capture text units or passages that supported or contradicted the narratives plausibility. To assist with examining narrative structure and help guide analytic focus, we drew on Bell's (2004) ideas for understanding and constructing plots in storytelling. Bell asserts that most plots fit within a simple sequence he called the LOCK system, standing for Lead, Objective, Confrontation, and Knockout. Lead relates to identifying the lead character of the story. Often the lead is compelling and someone we follow throughout the course of the story. Objective concerns the driving force of the story or the lead's motivation. Objectives take either of two forms: to get something or to get away from something. Confrontation attends the opposition (from other characters or outside forces) the lead comes up against. Without confrontation, a story rarely holds the emotional tension needed to make it compelling and engaging. Finally, knockout: a great ending can leave the reader (or listener) satisfied.

Once the narrative structure of each story was established, confirming confidence that the data being examined was narrative in nature, our focus turned to a narrative thematic analysis guided by Smith's (2016) suggestions. We looked for themes that helped maintain and drive the story forward, out of which details about why practitioners adopt the chimp model emerged. An excel spreadsheet again allowed the lead author to note possible features within the transcripts, while he returned to the transcripts to find data allowing him to evaluate the conceivability of his insights. Narrative indwelling (Smith, 2016) resulted in the lead author producing short summaries of possible narrative structure and content themes, which he shared with the second author, who acted as critical friend, and participants (as part of the member reflections process discussed below). Data analysis was not linear and we moved back and forth between the transcripts and the summaries to create, evaluate, and modify narrative structure and content.

Once analysis at the individual level was completed, we considered how the features regarding why practitioners chose to adopt the Chimp Model might compare to each other and the overarching narrative structures and themes. Crystallisation of a coherent results set was achieved by narrative indwelling, discussion between the lead and second author, and consideration of the emergent findings in light of the sport, clinical, and counselling psychology literature. During the cross-participant analysis we found ourselves going back to the transcripts to check, evaluate, and modify the results in the individual summaries.

Credibility

Adopting a non-foundational approach (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), we identified credibility criteria to guide the study consistent with our aims and values. The three steps of this process included, (1) clarification of our aims and values, (2) alignment of our values and aims with recognised criteria, and (3) design and conduct of the study ensuring we upheld these criteria. Aims and values included, to: (a) advance knowledge, (b) demonstrate to participants that we cared about them, (c) represent findings in a credible

format, (d) uncover our assumptions and biases, and (e) provide results that could be helpful to practitioners and the wider field.

Based on these guiding aims and values, the relevant criteria we addressed included novelty, care, credibility, transparency, and resonance (Burke, 2017; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). We pursued novelty by exploring an under-researched area through an under-utilised methodology (Papathomas, 2016). With regard to upholding care and transparency, we acknowledge that the lead author had existing relationships with each participant, which we believe helped reassure the interviewees that we cared about, (a) them as people, and (b) representing their narratives fairly. We accept, however, that whilst such relationships have positive aspects, there was also some aspects which need to be kept in check with regard to transparency and credibility. For example, we wanted to ensure that existing bonds, assumptions, and biases were not unduly influencing the way participants stories were interpreted. To achieve this, the lead author engaged in regular self-reflection in the form of a research journal, and in peer-reflection by regularly sharing results and progress with colleagues to expose his thinking to critical review. We also engaged in member reflections with participants during data analysis and the final write up stage to allow for additional opportunities where we could reflect on their stories together (Tracy, 2010). Finally, with regard to resonance, results of the study were presented in academic circles for critical feedback and discussed with trainees and experienced practitioners to judge the applied value of the results.

Results

Findings within and across participants narratives are presented in two sections, (1) an overview of apparent narrative structures; and (2) an overview of prominent thematic content.

Narrative Structure: Resolving Dissatisfaction

In all practitioner narratives a clear structure of a beginning, middle, and end was obvious. Further, stories consistently featured a lead character (themselves), with a clear

objective (to be good and helpful practitioners) thrust into confrontation (e.g. with clients they weren't sure how to help) which ran through the story until it ended with their knock-out punch – the chimp model provided an enhanced way of understanding and approaching their practice. All narratives were therefore centred on the resolution of some dissatisfaction, which served to connect events and give insight into the experience told.

Explicitly, participants told of dissatisfaction with their early training and consequently feeling underprepared for consultancy. Participant 5:

P5: Okay so let's start with my journey. The first Olympics I did it was 2004 and that was working with individuals in [Olympic Sport]. I went as a private practitioner to that and I definitely spent most of my time with my mouth open going "what the hell is this?" and feeling quite underprepared for it. I was just ridiculously underprepared. I suppose it was the realization then, that...how credible was I? Did I have a clear way of working? A clear practice?

Practitioners explained their eagerness to develop their knowledge and skill base so as to overcome their dissatisfactions and the confrontation of high standards in professional sport:

P8: The first Olympic job I had was with [Olympic Sport] and it was very clear on day one that the message was "if you are not any good, we will sack you". So the benchmark had been set. And I think there is a benchmark to working in elite sport that you have to be good enough to work in there. But there is also a privilege that comes alongside trying to support an athlete at that level, there is a requirement to know your stuff and to challenge yourself to be the best practitioner that you can.

Consistently practitioners storied how previously studied orientations and models of practice appeared disjointed, conflicting, or overly reductionist, fuelling concerns in competence and confidence:

P7: ...when you got taught psychology it wasn't really, well, I didn't feel like I was ready to go and actually sit in front of anyone or do anything practical. So it was all

good theory, but yeah it wasn't particularly confidence inspiring or thinking "yeah this is what I'm going to do". So I suppose I was searching for something that could bring everything together. Because there's so many theories. Like there's Freud, and there's this, and that. It almost felt like you have to...some people went down one category or another...like some people went down a clinical route and they would be just using CBT. It just seemed very siloed and that didn't seem to make very much sense to me.

Practitioners were unhappy because they did not have a model they felt comfortable with. Through conferences, professional networks, or self-discovery (for example, through reading the Chimp Paradox), practitioners discovered the chimp model. The model made sense to them, enhancing their personal and professional insight:

P10: ...that was what the chimp model gave me: insights and ideas. It made sense. It helped theory make sense. Thinking made more sense. Emotions and drives made sense. Behaviours made sense. It changed the way I see and practice psychology and the way I help people.

Here we read the embodiment of the knockout punch the chimp model offered practitioners. It offered the lead character of each narrative a theoretically, conceptually, and practically enriching framework to make sense of their world and the ways in which they could help their clients.

Asides from the characters, motives, and resolutions in focus to this point, participants' interviews also give light to the social scripts influencing or evident in practitioners' narratives. For example, all participants framed their motives for adopting a service model in the context, or template, of how service delivery is set up. The lead character (practitioner), driven to be helpful (a typical *professional* objective), is pitted against the challenges of professional consulting (offer something or lose your job!), an obstacle they scale by finding an effective (to them and their clients) approach. Such scripts will be familiar to all psychologists keen to be good at their job and keep it, not

simply because professionals are driven to succeed, but also because the storyline of overcoming an obstacle is an extremely common story telling resource, to which all of us will be exposed many times. The cultural script helps the current participants to understand their experience therefore, and likely our ability (as readers) to do the same.

Narrative Content: How the Chimp Model Assisted Practitioners

When storying their professional development, practitioners described three pathways through which the Chimp Model helped galvanise and strengthen their practice. In doing so they provided insights of criteria for determining a good model. Namely, (1) is it coherent? (does it offer theoretical integration?), (2) does it work and enable me to help clients? (championing technical eclecticism), and, (3) does it help me develop as a practitioner? (enabling assimilation).

Theoretical Integration

Theoretical integration concerns how the Chimp Model helped practitioners to develop a coherent picture of theory and practice.

P1: It was this framework. It was a framework that, as you know, pulls together hundreds of different concepts that could all sit on their own and actually become quite complicated and overwhelming for *you*, never mind the person you're trying to communicate it to! But the model pulled it all together, sat them all in place next to each other, and almost allowed and gave you this like, just, comfort blanket where like, if in doubt I will just fall on it, and I will go back to and follow this little mind map I've got in my head which is based on this model. And it just turned an incredibly complicated beast – psychology - into something much more usable.

By integrating conceptual and intervention level knowledge, practitioners felt better able to figure out what was going on for clients and how to help them:

P1: The chimp model gave you a framework for how to formulate people. It does. I don't think other Psychs get that. Like, we could go: human, chimp, computer *signalling three squares in the air* and then from the human *signalling

downwards from the human box* you would go values and logical thinking traits, and then from the computer *signalling downwards from the computer box* you would go beliefs and behaviours - what am I hearing them say and believe and what past experiences are leading to that?. The Chimp clearly gives you drives, instincts and emotional thinking patterns. So that gave you a structure to formulate people, so that you would then know you are going to work on 'X' part. That is what is good about it.

Beyond helping practitioners to better organise their understanding of diverse psychological theories and approaches to practice, participants told of how the Chimp Model also helped them communicate a coherent model of practice for clients:

P3: I think one of the strengths of the model is that it gives you a backdrop to explain to people the little bit of work you're doing here, and where it fits in the bigger picture, and why it would be helpful.

By allowing practitioners to better explain their thinking and practices, clients might have better opportunity to build allegiance with the decision-making process and forward steps.

Technical Eclecticism

In addition to helping them develop a theoretical view of service delivery, practitioners told how the Chimp model enabled them to work effectively, flexibly, and authentically with clients:

P6: That's one thing that I absolutely love about the chimp model, if you have got a problem it will break it down into numerous things so you can go, 'Right have I tried looking at this? Looking at this? Looking at this?'. There are continuous things you can keep plugging away at. It's almost like a gym routine, if you want an ideal body, you know there are certain exercises you can do and it's just a case of repping them out. The model gives you that.

P5: And I have tested it. And it works.

Despite the aforementioned advantages of embracing the Chimp Model because it worked, consultants' narratives also told of recognising its limits and at times adopting an altogether different approach with clients, as necessary:

P6: So now in reflection, I do feel that I'm at that stage where I really respect and love the model and personally engage with it; however, I'm putting it in my back pocket when I'm in a one-to-one until I can categorically say to myself "from what I have understood from this person, this model might help". So unless that is what has been equated in my head, I'm not going to use it. Now I don't know if that's an approach for everyone, some people might say "no the model is good, so let's go in with it". But from my experience that's what I've done and when I've made that change, I've noticed a maturity in my practice, and I've noticed a more receptive client at the other end of it. Because you know, actually they're thinking: "He respects me. He's taken the time to get to know me".

Here the narrative is clear that although practitioners use a model, they are still open to other ways of working. What is important to them is doing a good job with their clients and that means employing what works.

Assimilation

A third narrative of how the chimp model assists practitioners concerned its capacity to help them develop as practitioners with greater levels of knowledge and skill:

P9: The bit which resonated for me and made proper sense with the chimp model was the concept that there is this bit of your brain that you cannot control. No one had really told me that before. And I guess CBT doesn't tell you that either. I think ACT very much does. But, yeah, that was a new concept to me and actually it was very much freeing. I was like "okay that's why I've been trying all of this CBT and sometimes still get caught out".

P1: [the] model...has given us wider blinkers. Like a horse has blinkers *holds hands up at side of face in a narrow vision*, well if I've only been taught in a certain set of PST sport psychology approaches then my way of formulating is based only on that very narrow view. And what [the model] did was took the blinkers further back *moves hands to wider pane of vision at eye level*, and therefore gave you more things to think about. In a very simple way still, but you were taking into account more things.

Intent to continue their professional development, practitioners told of how they continue to assimilate new ideas, views and practices on top of the chimp models solid foundation:

P5: Yeah, I guess it's the go to...it's the stability of the model, it's the enduring nature of it. Because now I read stuff on the brain and other theories and it completely relates back to the model. So everything I read now I still come back to 'how can it relate to this work'? So what is it...how old am I now? very old! ...so it is 11 years on from meeting [mentor] and I still get excited thinking about how things relate to the model. And I think that as a practitioner you have to have something which gives you stability, security, direction. It certainly helps to settle your chimp when working with other people, and I continue to have that in this approach. And I just simply wouldn't want to move away from it. There's loads of really good stuff out there, but I always want to be able to bring it back to what feels like home. I feel very comfortable working with it.

Practitioners like the model because they believe it helps them to develop as practitioners.

Social Influences

Participants entered other characters into their stories, such as mentors, peers, and clients who played influential roles in their adoption of the chimp model. The appearance of these social influences suggest that practitioners' adoption, application, and storying of the chimp model does not occur in isolation, but instead within a socially and culturally influenced existence.

For example, the similarity across participants stories would suggest that their narratives were not just their own, but also likely the stories of helping professionals in a western society drawing on the foremost narrative resources and social scripts available to them. Psychology is, after all, a *helping* profession, meaning the narrative of dissatisfaction with an inability to help is directly informed by the cultural script of the profession and likely enhanced by the western-individualistic narrative of striving to overcome adversity and succeed.

With a practical focus, practitioners told of how guiding peers (supervisors, teachers, colleagues) impacted the advancement of their theoretical orientation and practice:

P1: it was just amazing to have this guy teaching this small group: (a) this model, (b) how to apply it, (c) teaching us wider experiences than we would ever have gotten in sport psychology consultancy. Like about human beings; about how they function. About certain illnesses - of both physical and mental nature. And I just think that once or twice a month, was just...unbelievable.

Beyond tutelage, a narrative of inclusion and support also emerged as an important influence in the development of the competence and confidence practitioners came to enjoy:

P5: I think it was the camaraderie and the companionship and the sense of support that you had there [Chimp Management Ltd] which was overwhelming. A troop. We used to ask [mentor] to give us input and to help shape things and drive projects; but we were able to do our own projects and ideas with this safety net of his supervision behind you.

Interaction with clients also impacted how practitioners understood, applied, and appreciated the Chimp model. Specifically, the most common narrative was that they tried the chimp model and it worked:

P5: I think that working with [mentor] gave me a real sense that I could see how my work was going to affect people and I began to see the results for myself. Getting engagement from athletes was really quick. Their ability to grasp it was quick. Their ability to move seemed to be quicker than previously. So there was definitely a speed element to it; which is important - because the chimp in us, and its nature, is that we want a quick fix.

Finally, practitioners' universally spoke of how they found real resonance with the Chimp Model when they applied it to themselves, overcoming dissatisfactions and challenges in their personal lives:

P6: It wasn't until I joined the company and we started embedding what the chimp model actually was; you know really going into the nuances, going into the detail, and really pushing it on us to really live the chimp model and apply it to ourselves, did I start having eye-opening moments. Before I joined the company it was just a book. It was facts. So, I started applying it to myself and that was the key to my self-development. ...It's just helped me to become a lot calmer and more comfortable – that is, to better recognise and manage *my* chimp – both in and away from practice.

Besides enabling practitioners to overcome their practice-based anxieties, powerful narratives also emerged of how a clear model of practice helped practitioners face their most challenging life events:

P5: So I live it every day. But the final part, and I don't know whether you know this or not, but before Christmas I was diagnosed with breast cancer. ...And it's one of those that you go, “oh, right. I wasn't expecting that”.

Interviewer: **softly** Yeah...

P5: And, what was really fascinating about it was that I almost applied the model so well, but I got surprised at each stage of the diagnosis. Because at first it was just

a lump, so I said “okay just stick with the facts”. You know, “don't lose the plot right now”.

Interviewer: Yeah

P5: So then - what are the things I can do in terms of a plan? What are the things I can do with my emotions to help manage that? You then get to the next stage which is that it's 80% certain to be cancer...“Ow, wow”. I guess I had compartmentalised it so well that I wasn't ready for that bit. But this went on the whole way along. And lots of friends and family have just commented on how rational and reasonable I've been about it. But also, how in touch with my emotions I was. So, I had moments in the middle of the night where I would lose it; just because of the utter fear of leaving my children too early. But, erm, I got in touch with [mentor] at Christmas just to say the greatest, deepest, thank you that I could. Because I have been able to help people and that's been a gift, but to be able to apply it to myself when you have a diagnosis which you are not expecting - and I was very lucky Robbie because it's been localised cancer, I had a lumpectomy – it's been removed - I had radiotherapy for a month and now I take tablets. So it's good news in a bad situation. But I can genuinely say that I have dealt with it. I have not suppressed anything. But I had the skills and the ability to take it on for what it was, allow Gladys [the practitioners name for her Chimp] to be pretty scared about it, but then be able to have an even keel. And that was important - for those around me – but it was also just important to be as well as I can - obviously for the recovery and the treatment of that.

Interviewer: I'm so glad you could be as well [practitioners name removed]. I'm so glad you could be for yourself.

P5: Yeah, thanks. So a big milestone. And I haven't shared that with many people. If it's a relevant and helpful thing to include in your study then do include it.

Here, as with all narratives within the social influence cluster, we are reminded that practitioners do not just learn about how to practice when being a sport psychologist. We can learn about such things in all contexts of life.

Discussion

Results in the present study revealed that practitioners' narratives of why they adopted the Chimp Model championed a common plot: overcoming dissatisfaction in their endeavours to help clients. Within this narrative, practitioners' stories featured themes describing how the Chimp Model helped them to overcome dissatisfactions with skill, knowledge, and impact. These themes included (a) improving coherency in their understanding of service delivery theory and practice, (b) embracing an approach that showed impact, and (c) assimilating new knowledge and skills on previous foundations. Practitioners' adoption of an integrative orientation and model of practice was also found to be influenced by social factors. These findings advance knowledge in the following ways.

First, the present findings enhance knowledge by illuminating why practitioners select the models of practice that they do. Understanding practitioners' motives for seeking out and adopting such frameworks helps expand both research and theory. Previous research has focused on the ingredients that constitute a practitioner's professional philosophy, but little attention has been afforded to why practitioners adopt the component parts that they do (Poczwadowski, Sherman, & Ravizza, 2004; Tod et al, 2019). The present findings indicate that practitioners may perceive graduate training to have left them with a wide scope of theoretical knowledge, yet, with little instruction of how to pull their knowledge together in a meaningful, coherent, and functional model of practice.

Furthermore, practitioners are driven to remain flexible and adaptable in their approach to helping clients and in accordance are driven to find integrative solutions. Such findings mirror those of consultants in sister disciplines of sport psychology. For example, Rønnestad and Skovholt (2013) found counsellors and therapists commonly experience

disillusionment with the preparatory value of their graduate training; which in turn spurns apprehension, and invariably the drive to find helpful resolutions.

The results reveal that dissatisfaction with training is not necessarily a negative experience but can motivate practitioners to seek out helpful ways of closing the gap between where they are and the high demands of service delivery in sport. Such findings remind, and perhaps reassure, practitioners that much of professional development occurs after training and throughout the career. There is only so much that can be taught, and likely received, during graduate and postgraduate level education. The recognition of the current findings is the value a service model can offer practitioners who are pursuing advancement in their theoretical and applied acumen.

The second way the present results advance knowledge is by specifying how integrative models assist practitioners in alleviating aforementioned dissatisfactions. Three pathways for how practitioners integrate models into their existing approach were identified; suggesting criteria for determining a good consultancy model. Specifically, we identified that practitioners search for resources that let them make sense of theory, help clients, and drive their own professional development. These three criteria are presented in the current study within the respective pathways of: theoretical integration, technical eclecticism, and assimilation.

Theoretical integration reminds us that human psychology is complex, yet models can help us to build a more coherent and workable understanding of life and psychology. The act of meaning making is important, if not essential, to human survival (Frankl, 1985); yet on a lesser scale the present findings suggest that models can also assist psychologists to help clients and doing so allows psychologists to elude threats of redundancy. Technical eclecticism reminds us of a simple principle of applied practice therefore: consultants and clients look for what works. A good service model, by the current results, provides practitioners the scope and confidence they desire when formulating and offering their service interventions.

Beyond integrating and bolstering knowledge and skills, the present findings also suggest a model of practice provides with a foundation upon which further proficiencies can be assimilated. Ambitious practitioners will be keen to grow professionally, yet the present results suggest that the adoption, or integration, of new ideas need not trigger castigation of old knowledge; especially not *good* old insights. This assimilative notion builds on the earlier argument that the majority of practitioners will develop their philosophy of practice over many years, if not their entire working life. Integrative orientations hence allow practitioners the permission to explore new conceptual and practical ideas which they can include or rebuff from their practice approach based on professional judgement of new concepts' value.

The third way the present findings advance knowledge is by underlining the role of social influences on practitioners' development of their approach. Practitioners do not adopt models of practice studying alone. Instead, the influence of supervisors and peers identified in the present study echoes other bodies of research that extol the benefits of professional relationships, experiences, and ongoing reflective practice for practitioner development (Huntley, Cropley, Gilbourne, Sparkes, & Knowles, 2014; McCarthy and Jones, 2013). On a broader level, the current findings might encourage or remind practitioners to invest in, and maintain, a supportive, yet mentally stimulating and professionally challenging, social network which champions the continuous development of their practice approach.

Aside from highlighting the influential role of others, the present findings also emphasise the importance of a model of practice resonating and holding impact when applied to self. The idea of managing oneself is not new in helping professional's literature. Poczwardowski, Sherman, and Henschen (1998) suggested that applied practitioners are one of the primary instruments in the client behaviour change process. Instability in a consultant can hence destabilise the entire consulting process, or certainly offer little help when turbulence in the consulting process arises. Numerous scholars and

practitioners have since underlined the importance of applied practitioners recognising their psychological and physical limitations, susceptibilities, and prejudices, and finding helpful ways to manage the challenges they face in and away from their practice settings (Bachkirova, 2016; Epstein and Hundert, 2002; Gelso and Fretz, 1992; Poczwardowski & Sherman, 2011; Simons & Andersen, 1995; Waumsley, Hemmings, & Payne, 2010). The present findings support the notion that practitioners value models which enhance their self-awareness and self-regulation.

A final recognition from the current study is how integrative models, here the chimp model, can help practitioners to utilise theory from a wide range of disciplines. Tod et al (2019) recently highlighted that there are many benefits sport psychologist might obtain by immersing themselves in the counselling and clinical literature and vice versa. The present study shows us how practitioners might do so in a meaningful way. In his own description at the head of this study, Peters (creator of the chimp model) describes its diverse base of principles from behavioural, cognitive, dynamic, analytical and neurobiological sciences. Grasping an inclusive model, such as Peters', can hence provide practitioners with a secure base from which they can explore other ideas from across sister disciplines.

Despite the advances in knowledge offered by the present investigation, few studies exist without limitations. Firstly, the present findings enhance understanding of *why* practitioners adopt an integrative approach to practice, but tells us little about how they work, or not, in practice. Understanding of the strengths and limitations of applied approaches can inform practitioners who might adopt them and in turn better service the fields cliental. Future research could focus on practitioners' narratives of applying their model with clients. What is it that they experience to work about models? Likewise, where do models struggle to have impact and what are practitioners' experiences and understanding of such occurrences?

Secondly, the current study focused on a group of practitioners who used the same approach. Doing so allowed us to select a homogenous group and helped us attain depth of understanding. Future research could build on the current study by exploring the reasons and pathways through which practitioners come to adopt other models of practice across varying theoretical orientations (e.g. cognitive-behavioural, humanistic, psychometrics, family systems, eastern philosophies). Such continued advancements would help shed more light onto the thinking, development, and practice of applied consultants.

Thirdly, although the rich findings of the present study suggest that future research could be narrative driven, it would also be good to consider other methodologies for conducting research in this area. For example, quantitative research would help us understand the proportion of researchers using different models and orientations. Likewise, quantitative research could tell us if different models are correlated with effectiveness. Furthermore, this study found one predominant narrative, which came out of a fairly common template. Practitioners sought to resolve dissatisfaction with their skill base and client outcomes; they discovered the chimp model which helped them and their clients, so they continued using it. Future research is needed to explore what other types of story exist around philosophy and practice. What stories are being silenced?

Notwithstanding these opportunities for further knowledge advancement, the present findings have implications for real world practice. Improved attention has been given to the development needs of sport psychologists in recent years and the present findings reinforce the idea that neophyte, and experienced, practitioners might benefit from exposure to theoretical and practical orientations around which they can organise and assimilate acumen over time (Tod, Hutter, & Eubank, 2017). Trainees could be exposed to a wide array of service models in formal training and be given the opportunity to trial their application. Established practitioners might benefit from continued access and critique of theory and practice literature, including ongoing supervision to aid their lifelong development.

In summary, the present study illuminates why applied practitioners adopt the models of practice that they do. Practitioners narratives tell of the chimp model offering helpful ways of understanding, organising, and building-upon vast bodies of ideas, insights and information – in turn producing a more coherent, dynamic and efficacious approach to service delivery. Recommendations are made for future research in this helpful, yet still under-researched, line of enquiry into practitioner development and delivery. Continued growth in understanding why practitioners embrace their theoretical orientations and models of practice, and to what effect, will further assist the development and delivery of practitioners to come.

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Empirical Study 2: Practitioners Narratives Highlighting Active Ingredients in Service Delivery with the Chimp Mind Management Model

Abstract

Objectives: We examined practitioners trained in the Chimp Mind Management Model (N=10) stories about two of their athlete consultancies, with a focus on their descriptions of the active ingredients involved in service delivery.

Design: Qualitative interviews informed by narrative theory.

Method: Consultants (5 females and 5 males, aged 28–66) with at least five years of professional experience discussed two client consultancies during open-ended narrative interviews. Data analysis began with an examination of the narrative structure of the practitioners' stories, followed by an investigation of the narrative themes.

Results: The structure of the participants' stories reflected a quest narrative in which practitioners described themselves facilitating athletes' goal pursuit efforts. Narrative themes of how practitioners' assist clients emerged, including, (a) forming relationships, (b) sharing and generating knowledge, and (c) encouraging and undertaking helpful actions.

Conclusions: Results extend knowledge of the active ingredients in sport psychology service delivery, for example by illuminating how practitioners engage clients in the consultancy process. Findings provide a reference source for practitioners, educators, supervisors, and professional bodies to identify the knowledge and skills practitioners need to develop. Recommendations for future research are offered, including the exploration of clients' narratives of the active ingredients of sport psychology service delivery.

Keywords: sport psychology, active ingredients, chimp model, narrative enquiry

Practitioners Narratives Highlighting Active Ingredients in Service Delivery with the Chimp Mind Management Model

Throughout the successes and setbacks of applied consultancy, reflective sport psychologists consider the elements of practice that make a difference when working with clients. To assist their endeavors, practitioners call on introspection, peer and supervisor perspectives, and relevant literature concerning the active ingredients of service delivery (Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, Tod, & Cable, 2016; Cropley, Hanton, Miles, & Niven, 2010). Understood as the process-related factors of applied consultancy, such as *how*, not *if*, an approach has impact (Pavuluri, 2016), active ingredients constitute an essential knowledge source for applied practitioners. Through better understanding the active ingredients of applied consultancy, applied consultants can better understand how to help clients.

To expand on what is already known about active ingredients of service delivery, it is useful to recognise the term as an umbrella expression under which two categories reside: common factors and specific factors (Wampold & Budge, 2012). Common factors describe elements of service delivery that exist regardless of the intervention model employed. For example, the formation of a positive working alliance between athlete and practitioner to assist the client's mastery of a given focus. Specific factors thus refer to elements clearly associated with a given approach, such as the specific steps or activities outlined in the practice manual of acceptance and commitment therapy (Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 2009).

Identifying the active ingredients in applied sport psychology has not greatly captured researchers' attention. This is in stark comparison to a healthy body of research exploring the efficacy of psychological and psychosocial interventions (Brown & Fletcher, 2017). When researchers have explored why interventions work, they have typically examined practitioners' opinions and accounts of consultancy, such as how they gain entry, assess client's needs, and deliver interventions (Simons & Anderson, 1992; Fifer, Henschen, Gould, & Ravizza, 2008). Such accounts have however, by the authors own

admissions, tended to be journalistic in style falling short of defining and exploring active ingredients to any rigorous detail.

Perhaps the healthiest body of findings, falling under the common factor's category in sport psychology research, describes the characteristics of effective applied consultants (e.g., Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, & Cable, 2014; Chandler et al., 2016). Broadly effective sport psychologists have been characterised by the three pillars of who they are (desirable personal qualities), what they know (desirable knowledge), and what they do (desirable behaviours). For example, athletes and coaches prefer trustworthy and personable sport psychologists, who can offer expert and helpful insights, in a timely and appropriate fashion (Orlick & Partington, 1987; Partington & Orlick, 1987).

To help advance understanding of active ingredients in service delivery, Tod and colleagues (2019) explored practitioners' consultancy stories and the components involved. Practitioners described working in concert with athletes who needed help in solving their problems. This collaborative expert problem-solving narrative, as the authors named it, was described by practitioners to be influenced by relationships, client allegiance, and active athlete engagement towards service delivery outcomes. The authors also noted that contextual factors, such as time, cultural climate, and stigmas could also influence service delivery. These elements were thus suggested as active ingredients of sport psychology service delivery. The issue however stands that little other sports-based literature exists from which comparisons, contests, or confirmations can be drawn.

To help address this shortfall sport psychology researchers and practitioners might turn to clinical and counselling research where much more has been established. For example, a series of reviews have examined hundreds of experiments examining relationships between psychotherapy process and outcomes variables (Crits-Christoph, Gibbons, & Mukberjee, 2013; Orlinsky, Grawe, & Parks, 1994; Orlinsky, Rønnestad, & Willutzki, 2004). These authors have identified process variables associated with psychotherapeutic outcomes. Client variables include: (a) suitability for treatment, (b)

cooperativeness versus resistance, (c) contribution to the therapeutic bond, (d) interactive collaboration, (e) expressiveness, (f) affirmation of the therapist, and (g) openness versus defensiveness. Non-client variables include: (a) global therapeutic bond, (b) therapists' and clients' reciprocal affirmations, (c) treatment duration, and (d) therapeutic realisations.

Despite the argument that research evidence is too limited to elucidate the active ingredients of sport psychology service delivery, that statement might be a little false in that it treats sport psychology as something different to its sister fields. We know that, apart from different contexts, the sport, clinical, and counselling professions are applied sciences focused on understanding the helping process. Likewise, practitioners from each speciality seek to form working alliances with clients and facilitate behavioural, cognitive, or emotional change. There appears much that sport psychologists could gain by drawing on clinical and counselling psychology research to inform their theory and practice (Tod et al., 2019).

Another similarity between sport and its sister disciplines is the variety of consulting models embraced and employed by practitioners. In sport psychology, for example, numerous philosophical and applied frameworks have been outlined, including, humanistic, cognitive-behavioural, and psychodynamic orientations (Hill, 2001). Integrative theoretical orientations, those which involve combining or blending theories and methods from multiple models, have also emerged as popular with practitioners preferring flexibility when meeting dynamic service demands (Bond, 2002; Friesen & Orlick, 2010; Ravizza, 2002; Tod, 2014).

In the United Kingdom, one integrative approach adopted by sport-based practitioners is the chimp mind management model (Peters, 2012). Drawing on theory and principles from psychology and neuroscience, the chimp model offers a representation of the operations of the human mind; as well as insights for better understanding how thoughts, feelings, and behaviours can be managed and harnessed constructively (Slater, 2013). Despite its considerable sales as a self-help book and public attention from elite

level athletes and sport psychologists in the United Kingdom (Peters, 2012; Slot, 2012; Williams, 2014), research exploring the chimp model's application in elite sport has been wanting. A better understanding of how practitioners story their use of the chimp model, including how they experience it to work, or not, in practice, could provide an illustration of service delivery and considerations apparent. For example, although we can surmise similarities between the sport, clinical, and counselling psychology professions, practitioners accounts from sport psychology are too sparse to ascertain if they do practice in similar ways, and through similar mechanisms, as outlined in allied disciplines.

Examining how practitioners story applied sport psychology can thus benefit both knowledge and practice advancement. For knowledge advancement, we stand to gain a richer understanding of how practitioners interpret and story their service delivery. That is, how they make sense of it, explain it, and present it; highlighting what they believe is important in the process. Such advances will help to better inform understanding of applied sport psychology and better inform comparisons drawn to knowledge in clinical and counselling psychology.

Knowledge advancement of this variety would help better inform practice. Practitioners' narratives of consultancy will give us a better idea of what they are doing in practice; providing a reference point for neophyte practitioners to consider in their own development. Likewise, experienced practitioners could find such insights helpful to spur reflections, affirmations, or future directions regarding their own practice, which in turn could advantage clients in their care.

Advancing knowledge of how practitioners story their service delivery is also important because people do not operate based on reality; they operate based on their perceptions. Exploring how practitioners narrate service delivery can hence illuminate individual and environmental influences that help shape the way practitioners interpret, describe, structure, and story service delivery; such as the social scripts available to them.

Practitioners narratives thus provide fertile ground for better understanding how sport psychologists experience, action, and report work within the field.

The purpose in the current study was to explore how experienced sport psychology practitioners, trained in the chimp mind management model, storied the active ingredients involved in two of their client interactions: one in which they deemed service delivery had been effective and one in which service delivery had been ineffective. Asking practitioners to discuss both effective and ineffective client interactions provided variation in the data to help explore the narrative structure and themes within their stories. As the focus of the study was on practitioner narratives, a narrative analysis was deemed as appropriate to explore the research question.

Method

Study Design and Philosophical Underpinnings

Underpinned by ontological relativism and epistemological social constructionism (Smith, 2010), this study reports on qualitative data collected during interviews guided by a narrative approach (Riessman, 2008). Narratives are considered “discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people’s experiences of it” (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997, p. xvi). In narrative analysis, focus is on the stories people tell, including what is told (content), how it is told (structure and performance), and why it is told (function) (Parcell & Baker, 2018). In keeping with the present studies aims, we focused on participants’ accounts regarding two specific athlete consultancies.

Participants’ stories reflected their interpretations and presentation of their life story, and we were not striving to access an external impersonal reality (relativism, Yilmaz, 2013). Further, we acknowledge that these data have been co-constructed through participant’s interactions with us (social constructionism, Yilmaz, 2013). The relationships we shared with participants shaped the richness of the generated stories. Given that data

were subjective and co-constructed, participant's stories were bounded by the language and personal and social scripts available to them (McGannon & Smith, 2015).

Participants

Ten participants (female n=5; male n=5) volunteered for the study. This sample included 8 British Psychological Society chartered psychologists (sport and exercise, n = 7; occupational, n = 1) and one consultant psychiatrist, all of whom were full-time practitioners and registered with the UK Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC, n=9). The additional participant was also a full-time practitioner, though undergoing advanced (British Psychological Society Stage 2) training to register as a sport and exercise psychologist with the HCPC. Interviewees ranged from 28 to 66 years of age with their work experience of helping athletes ranging from 5 to 39 years post-education. Initially we set a target of interviewing 10 individuals as a minimum. The strategy was to collect, transcribe and analyse data from those first 10 interviews before, drawing on Saunders et al. (2018), we asked ourselves: did we have sufficient data to support the findings and did these results answer the research question? The member reflections and critical peer review discussed in the research credibility section allowed us to reflect on our answers to the two questions.

Procedure

Following institutional ethical approval, a purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit participants. The first author utilised his professional network and contacted participants individually by email, outlining the study's purpose, risks, and safeguards, and inviting them to participate. Initially 11 participants were identified using the following inclusion criteria. To be included, participants must have (a) been trained in the Chimp Model, (b) practiced in sport using the Chimp Model, (c) been supervised using the Chimp Model, and (d) fulfilled the standards deemed necessary to practice by their registering body or be undergoing advanced (BPS Stage 2) training. Ten practitioners agreed to participate in a single recorded interview, providing written informed consent prior to data

collection. The eleventh invited practitioner could not participate on grounds of personal circumstance.

Ahead of the research interviews, the lead researcher conducted pilot interviews with two Chimp Model practitioners who were exempt from research participation on the grounds of not working in sport. We were able to reflect upon audio recordings of the pilot interviews, and the interviewees' feedback, to identify how best to help participants tell their stories; for example, by learning to refine the use of non-verbal cues and identifying appropriate times to ask questions. Consequently, the research interviews were conducted utilising Jovchelovitch and Bauer's (2000) four phase narrative interview guidelines and in a setting of the participants choosing, where three interviews were undertaken face-to-face and seven were conducted by video call (using Skype).

Phase 1 (initiation) focused on two service delivery stories: one each in which participants judged effective and ineffective outcomes had occurred. For each story practitioners were asked to identify a possible consultancy experience and explain their criteria for labelling it as effective or ineffective. We focused on participants criteria of effectiveness because we wanted to understand their experiences from their perspective and facilitate as open a data capture as possible. That is, stories not dictated by our own benchmarks of success.

In Phase 2 (main narration), interviewees told their stories uninterrupted, encouraged by the researcher's minimal prompts to encourage continued narration, until there was clear coda (when the interviewee pauses or signals the end of the story). Once it seemed the story had been told, the interviewer asked probing questions such as: "is that everything in that story for you?" or "is there anything else you want to say?".

In phase 3 (questioning), once the main narrative, including any interviewer probes were complete, the interviewer then asked immanent questions using the language of the interviewee to elicit new and additional material beyond the self-generating schema of the

story. For example, “you mentioned [psychological principle] as something you wanted to come back to, would you like to now?”.

Finally, phase 4 involved a conclusion in which the interviewer thanked participants for presenting their story and transitioned into the next interview stage (either the second story or the end of the interview and final debriefing). Occasionally, after the tape recorder was switched off interesting discussion occurred. For example, interviewees occasionally passed comment on what the interview experience had offered them, and others cast more light on aspects of the story told. In these instances, the interviewer took notes in a research journal at the soonest convenience to help capture the additional narrative content and context. Each participant was thanked for presenting their story before the end of the interview and final debriefing. Interviews ranged in length from 43 to 68 minutes with an average duration of 57 minutes.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim, meaning the audio recordings were converted into text such that the story was captured as accurately as possible to how it had been spoken. Paralanguage, pauses, laughter, intakes of breath, gesturing, facial expressions, speech repairs and inaudibles were all included in light of Emerson and Frosch (2004). Combined, the transcribed interviews yielded 152 pages of single-spaced text. Following the recommendations of Riessman (2008), we started by examining the story’s structure and then its content. Focusing on one participant and each consultancy story at a time, the lead author read and listened to the transcripts several times before focusing on identifying the structure of each story. The author explicitly searched for the beginning, middle, and end of each story, while formulating possible narratives contained within. An excel spreadsheet allowed the lead author to capture text units or passages that supported or contradicted the narratives plausibility.

To assist with examining narrative structure and help guide analytic focus, we drew on Bell’s (2004) ideas for understanding and constructing plots in storytelling. Bell asserts

that most plots fit within a simple sequence he called the LOCK system, standing for Lead, Objective, Confrontation, and Knockout. Lead relates to identifying the lead character of the story. Often the lead is compelling and someone we follow throughout the course of the story. Objective concerns the driving force of the story or the lead's motivation. Objectives take either of two forms: to get something or to get away from something. Confrontation attends the opposition (from other characters or outside forces) the lead comes up against. Without confrontation, a story rarely holds the emotional tension needed to make it compelling and engaging. Finally, knockout: a great ending can leave the reader (or listener) satisfied.

Once the narrative structure of each story was established, confirming confidence that the data being examined was narrative in nature, our focus turned to a narrative thematic analysis guided by Smith's (2016) suggestions. We looked for themes that helped maintain and drive the story forward, out of which details about the active ingredients of service delivery emerged. An excel spreadsheet again allowed the lead author to note possible features within the transcripts, while he returned to the transcripts to find data allowing him to evaluate the conceivability of his insights. Narrative indwelling (Smith, 2016) resulted in the lead author producing short summaries of possible narrative structure and content themes, which he shared with the second author, who acted as critical friend, and participants (as part of the member reflections process discussed below). Data analysis was not linear and we moved back and forth between the transcripts and the summaries to create, evaluate, and modify narrative structure and content.

Once analysis at the individual level was completed, we considered how the features within participants stories might compare across the sample and the overarching narrative structures and themes. Crystallisation of a coherent results set was achieved by narrative indwelling, discussion between the lead and second author, and consideration of the emergent findings in light of the sport, clinical, and counselling psychology literature.

During the cross-participant analysis we found ourselves going back to the transcripts to check, evaluate, and modify the results in the individual summaries.

Credibility

Adopting a non-foundational approach (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), we identified credibility criteria to guide the study consistent with our aims and values. The three steps of this process included, (1) clarification of our aims and values, (2) alignment of our aims and values with recognised criteria, and (3) design and conduct of the study ensuring we upheld these criteria. Aims and values included, to: (a) advance knowledge, (b) demonstrate to participants that we cared about them, (c) represent findings in a credible format, (d) uncover our assumptions and biases, and (e) provide results that could be helpful to practitioners and the wider field.

Based on these guiding aims and values, the relevant criteria we addressed included novelty, care, credibility, transparency, and resonance (Burke, 2017; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). We pursued novelty by exploring an under-researched area through an under-utilised methodology (Papathomas, 2016). With regard to upholding care and transparency, we acknowledge that the lead author had existing relationships with each participant, which we believe helped reassure the interviewees that we cared about, (a) them as people, and (b) representing their narratives fairly. We accept, however, that whilst such relationships have positive aspects, there was also some aspects which need to be kept in check with regard to transparency and credibility. For example, we wanted to ensure that existing bonds, assumptions, and biases were not unduly influencing the way participants stories were interpreted. To achieve this, the lead author engaged in regular self-reflection in the form of a research journal, and in peer-reflection by regularly sharing results and progress with colleagues to expose his thinking to critical review. We also engaged in member reflections with participants during data analysis and the final write up stage to allow for additional opportunities where we could reflect on their stories together (Tracy, 2010). Finally, with regard to resonance, results of the study were presented in academic

circles for critical feedback and discussed with trainees and experienced practitioners to judge the applied value of the results.

Results

Participants stories had a common structure that we labelled the quest for goal attainment narrative. Within the overarching narrative there were three core themes regarding how practitioners assist athletes' quest for goal attainment, which included relationships, knowledge, and actions. Participants effective and ineffective consultancy stories had a similar narrative structure and themes, so results presented hereafter are an integration of the data sets.

Narrative Structure: The Quest for Goal Attainment

All consultancy stories had a clear beginning, middle, and ending and also paralleled a well-established narrative structure, the: Lead, Objective, Confrontation, Knock-out, or, LOCK system (Bell, 2004). A lead character, the client, was described as having an objective, such as the goal of maximising their performance potential. Other service goals included, but were not limited to, improving resilience, relationships, group cohesion, health, happiness, and confidence. As one practitioner described, “[the client] came in with a clear demand. He was wanting change. There was a lot of suffering going on in his life to actually want to engage with help and support”.

Thereafter practitioners told how the lead character worked to develop knowledge and skills to overcome confrontations on their goal attainment journey. Here practitioners inserted themselves into stories as the wise sage or side kick character who works to aid the hero, as the following practitioner conveyed:

P4: When it comes to supporting clients towards their goal, my role is to mentor them in emotional skill development. So what you are basically saying is that when I meet a person I am helping them to, get some understanding of what the brain is structured like and the rules [for its functioning]; get insights into their

own mind and personal life; then get skills in order to know how to work within your own mind; and then when you've acquired those skills maintain them.

In the positive consultancy stories, practitioners were able to establish a bond with clients, assisting them in developing the knowledge and skills conducive to reaching their goals. Such progress was not always a smooth, linear, or possible journey, however. In accounts of ineffective experiences, practitioners storied how they were unable to connect with clients or assist their psychological growth and goal attainment. All stories subsequently met a knock-out crescendo of triumph (goal attainment) or tragedy (goal failure). When elaborating on why athletes either did or did not achieve goal attainment, participants talked about the active ingredients discussed in the next section.

Narrative Content: Themes Related to Active Ingredients

Across practitioner's narratives there were common themes through which they drove stories forward and described how they facilitate client's goal attainment efforts. Three primary groupings of active ingredients emerged, including: (a) relationships, (b) sharing and generating knowledge, and (c) encouraging and undertaking helpful actions. Elaboration of each active ingredient is thus offered.

Relationships

All practitioners scripted the centrality of a trusting and collaborative relationship to effective service delivery. Two mechanisms through which practitioner-client relationships develop were told, (1) connecting at a personal level, and (2) by connecting on an agreed purpose. The first relationship pathway, connecting with clients at a personal level, was described to occur through the demonstration of genuine care and interest on the practitioner's part. As one practitioner conveyed, "Don't forget there is a person in front of you. Talk to that person, align with that person, show them that they are in an environment that is accommodating and non-judgmental" (P6). Occasionally a bond was initiated or strengthened through personal connections or shared interests, as one practitioner storied:

P5: The one way that I had been able to engage [the athlete] was through family. Because she was a mum of three, I was a mum, and our connection was on that actually...we just started a bit of a conversation around children and suddenly she lit up and it completely changed our relationship.

Some practitioners storied about working with clients over a number of years, during which a deep sense of care and connection had formed. For all practitioners, their accounts echoed efforts to connect with and relate to athletes as people first, professionals second. As one practitioner expanded, "It's that quote, 'They have to know you care, before they care about what you know'. That is so true". On the basis of genuine care and interest demonstrated by the practitioner, and perceived by the client, a real relationship was commonly told to blossom and endure.

Not all bonds were fashioned on an intimate connection however, as demonstrated by the second relationship pathway described by practitioners: connecting on an agreed purpose. Here, practitioners storied how the working relationship can be established or strengthened by clearly determining the purpose, or goals, clients bring to consultancy:

P10: An important thing in that case was how clearly we set up the objectives early on. I think once he shared and clarified what we were there to work on, and what my role was in that for him, he settled into it. It was like he had set a course and knew I was in his team for the journey.

By helping clients to clarify their goals, aspirations, and expectations for service delivery, practitioners felt the working relationship itself took shape. While many successful consultancy relationships were told to initiate with clear working objectives, narratives of ineffective consultancies also storied the importance of clients wanting to engage in the consulting relationship and subsequent processes: "I had missed it from the off. They didn't really want to do psychology work, but the sport was putting them forward. I had missed clarifying their desire for change from the off" (P6). Across other unsuccessful consultancy narratives, interviewees described their stance on clients with

apparent resistance to a consulting relationship, as the following practitioner encapsulates: “Any therapist would say that, if you have got somebody that is resistant to the therapy and won't engage then you leave them space to come back when they're ready” (P3).

Nevertheless, even without interpersonal connection or apparent client goal motivation, some relationships were storied to be kick-started by practitioners demonstrating availability, knowledge, or impact to athletes. As one practitioner narrated:

P1: I think what worked for [athletes name removed], or what got them hooked in anyway, was seeing me present some content at the group level...they come to you after and ask a question much more relevant or pertinent to them. That's your opening; they've come to you to see what is on offer *for them*.

Here we see how, based on hope or curiosity, clients occasionally seek out practitioners who employ and adapt their expertise to establish relationships and work with athletes at the level they want to or can respond to. Practitioners' role as the wise sage or side kick character thus crystallises; positioning themselves across the narratives as a mentor, or facilitator, of client's goal attainment endeavours.

Knowledge

The second narrative theme across consultancy stories concerned the sharing and generation of ideas between practitioner and client. Such knowledge exchange was told to occur through the facilitation of discussion, reflection, instruction, and formulation (including action planning). For interviewees, each of these facets of knowledge exchange or creation appeared central to service delivery. As one practitioner described:

P10: It was one of the first times [athletes name] had sat down and talked this out loud. You could see him piecing the picture together. There were a few funny moments really, you know, “oh yeah – that's obvious now!” on his part. But also he started to recognise areas he didn't have answers or plans for.

In the previous quote we see the value practitioners promoted in athletes having a forum to talk and reflect upon what is and isn't working for them; as well as opportunity to

ask for input from the practitioner to help address issues or occurrences. One interview described such a case:

P4: She had arrived at quite a tricky spot personally. She was obviously working hard, and had great family support, but she was failing to manage her emotions. She just didn't know how in reality.

In instances such as this, practitioners described their introduction of the chimp model into consultations as a tool to assist clients in developing psychological insight. That is, enhanced understanding of themselves, others, or situations. As one interviewee elaborates: "that's one of the biggest predicting factors of success for me. If clients have or can get psychological insight, then they can fly with it and make big change" (P2). Across their account's practitioners described using the chimp model to facilitate athletes gaining such insight:

P5: When you meet someone it's often hard for them to understand what is going on in their own head...what's happening? Is it normal? So just being able to draw the brain and go, 'these are the different parts. This is how they work. Can you identify with that?'. They suddenly go "oh, yeah! I get that. I can see that". So immediately they have got some insight and they have got a way of talking about their mind and their brain.

As well as offering a tool kit to explain and understand the human mind, emotions, thinking, and behaviour, practitioners described how using the chimp model, with its basis in neuroscience, could also help clients build trust in the credibility of support, encouraging their allegiance to the working relationship aforementioned:

P7: Well I think somebody like, say, [athletes name]...he didn't want to talk about his thoughts and feelings and in the buildup to [the Olympic Games]. You could see him really struggling with stuff and he would open up a little bit, but not really. He would see it as weakness to say if he was worried about stuff. And then, I think what worked well with him was going down the more

science route. To go, “Right this is the science of your brain; this is what *will* happen. These parts of your brain *will* have these sorts of thoughts and feelings - it’s *normal*. If you don't have them then your abnormal!” . It almost gave him permission to have those thoughts and feelings. So, I think what helped [that athlete] was the scientific explanation of it. He bought in.

Other advantages of stimulating new knowledge and insight through a consultancy model emerged. Practitioners described using the chimp model as a framework within consultations to work through issues with clients, in turn creating collaborative formulations and actions plans.

P9: So for example, we prepared him for a performance, and then actually he got really nervous before it and it didn't go well. So he came into a session and with the chimp model it allows me to be objective and say ‘okay well let’s have a look at what happened through the model’ . So perhaps, ‘what's happening with your human? What planning did you do? What preparation? How did you get the right autopilots into your computer ready for the event?’ Then, ‘how did your chimp feel? What were the triggers to it? What Gremlins are there in your computer that impacted on it all? What was missing, in terms of the right autopilots to manage your chimp in that moment?’ . So, 99% of the time I could just work through that process. *He’ll* then, which I think is the key point because I'm just writing this on a whiteboard so he’ll be able to see it as well, he’ll be able to say “this is why that happened. This is what we can change. This is what I need to do. This is the new autopilot I need to have next time to manage this” .

As the previous extract portrays, all practitioners described their use of the chimp model in effective consultancies as a tool to help clients gain insight into their own mind and to empower them to make informed reflections, recognitions and decisions for moving forward.

In narratives of ineffective consultancies, practitioners often described a perceived inability to help knowledge exchange and psychological insight transpire. That is, they reflected that either their approach did not match the client's needs, or the client might not be receptive to ideas, discussion or support at that time. As one practitioner conveyed:

P8: I remember seeing that client years later. They were actually really positive about the work we had done. Which surprised me! But it was what they said about "not being ready back then to engage with psychology", that made sense. I guess I was eager, and they weren't ready. It's just good learning; not to beat yourself up.

Delving deeper into the types of psychological insight practitioners told to emerge from successful consultancy with the chimp model, three phrases reappeared across their narratives: understanding, normalizing, and disassociating. For understanding, practitioners storied how the chimp model offers clients helpful explanations and insights of human functioning. In particular, practitioners advocated the use of a model for its utility in turning extremely complicated concepts into something comprehensible, relatable, and adoptable for clients:

P8: And one of the things that we know about the power of models or metaphor is that they are sticky, aren't they? People remember them. If you go into the ins and outs of neuroscience people aren't really interested, and they switch off in about 2 minutes. But when you can actually make it sticky, people just resonate with it, it just makes sense.

As well as helping clients to understand themselves and others from a more informed perspective, practitioners also described how knowledge sharing could help clients see themselves, others, and even their prospects in a new, more hopeful, light:

P10: One of the things I like most about [the chimp model], is that [athletes name] is somebody who has spent a lot of time feeling bad and beating herself up for unhelpful thoughts, but slowly and surely she gained the recognition that

chimp thinking is quite a normal thing and that everybody has got that part of their brain. I think that has really been useful for someone whose Chimp probably does beat them up quite a lot. So I think that separation of chimp and human is one of the things that has almost been a bit liberating for her. That “*sigh of relief*, oh few, maybe it's not just me. Maybe I've just got a really active chimp to manage”.

In the previous extract we see the narrative themes of understanding, normalising, and disassociation (from strong thoughts, feelings or emotions from the ‘chimp’) all apparent. Subsequently, psychological insights gained from a better understanding of the human mind and its functioning appeared all some clients needed to help establish a shift in perspective with healthy and helpful affect. Likewise, the previous extract demonstrates the unique language a model can offer both practitioner and client, which was also storied to impact at group and cross-cultural levels:

P2: So a coach at this particular sport has tended to get very nervous at competitions and makes everyone else very nervous. So again, with the chimp model, you can talk about that in a group setting, about in terms of how people’s brains work and how when you are at a competition people will react in different ways. So you don't have to pinpoint anybody, but people can become more aware and start to think about how they are behaving in terms of the neuroscience in the brain, rather than sort of pointing a finger and saying “you got really nervous”. So I think in terms of an organisation it brings a common language and a common way of working.

P7: So this young racing driver...he used [the chimp model] really effectively to kind of understand himself better. In fact the whole family used it, so the mum, dad, and his brother. The whole family used it as a language and a way to communicate with one another and how to manage all of their emotions.

Not every client related to the language or style a practitioner might promote

however, around which practitioners told a similar story:

P1: I remember there were different athletes who [said]... “I don't really like the language and don't want to be told I have a chimp in my head”. It doesn't mean I wasn't using the model; I was just using it without the phrases.

The principle appears that practitioners benefit from understanding client's needs and preferences and how to work with them in the most appropriate way.

Finally, practitioners storied how knowledge sharing could act as the gateway, or platform, upon which continued steps could be established to support athletes in their goal attainment efforts:

P1: I think that the clients I worked with found the chimp model, especially the first few sessions, *really* great. Because you would see that lightbulb moment “Ah, okay - I get it now. I see why it is that this, this, and this happens. And I understand that now when you delve back in time *how* that experience affects me now”. And then you start to build the plans moving forward and they go “Brilliant”. It gives them a bit of a *pauses for thought*, release, really I suppose. Because they are back in the driving seat. In the sense that, it gave them that knowledge that they can do something about it. They might now know what they need to do to help themselves, or we can make a plan to do it.

Once again, this extract demonstrates the narrative that a professional relationship, through which helpful ideas are shared and generated, can assist a client to spur a helpful change in thinking, feeling, or behaviour. To build on that foundation, practitioners discussed a third active ingredient of service delivery which could facilitate client's goal attainment efforts: the undertaking of helpful actions.

Actions

Across consultancy stories practitioners described how both themselves and clients could undertake helpful actions to facilitate goal pursuit. Attending clients' actions first,

effective consultancy narratives featured athletes who were active within the process. As one interviewee illustrated:

P10: Reflecting on what is it I think that has worked with this athlete, it's her insight and her commitment to go away and actually reflect on things. So I think that sometimes we overestimate the impact that we have in our sessions, and underestimate what they're actually going away and doing in between. And I think the reason that this has been successful is that this athlete is probably one of the most committed athletes that I have worked with in sport, in that you have spoken about something and set her something to go away and do, without fail she will go away and do that, and then also think about it a little bit more and apply it to something else as well.

Commonly discussed client-led actions were either psychological, such as reflective or cognitive restructuring activities; or, practical, such as establishing support networks, holding important conversations, undertaking deliberate practices, or proactively monitoring their progress. The importance of monitoring progress was conveyed by one interviewee:

P3: I made him write it all out in a little book during or after each session, because that's what I do. Write out the things which resonate, explain them, build your notes. So it is about working hard, doing homework, a bit like cognitive behavioural [therapy]. Create reference points - reread. So this was all going well. Then about 18 months into the therapy he lost the book. And he was devastated *chuckles*. So I had to pick him up and say, 'We can do it all again. Just start again, get a new book and we'll go again'. And about a year had past and, he had got his new notes, but he found the old book. And this is such telling point about skill base and how it is steady progress, he said "I could not believe what I read. I couldn't believe this was me. I couldn't believe my beliefs. I couldn't believe the first few sessions". He said, "it's so far from me

now. I just don't recognise this person". So this is where you can see that forward movement of progression. It's very slow but I believe that is the right way to do things, not lightbulb moments. But I think it's very insidious and actually you don't see it yourself until you measure it.

The narrative persisted that clients could best utilise sport psychology and related concepts through considered, and committed, practice:

P2: A key thing that you find when you are doing lots of one to ones is that people come in and after a few sessions they realise that actually they have got to make the changes and that can mean hard work! The [chimp] model is just a way of understanding your mind and accessing and learning strategies and skills, but actually it's hard work needed to apply the model and use it effectively. So in that way it doesn't work for a lot of people, because they think they're going to come in and get a quick fix. Even when you explain initially it's about reflection and developing insights and skills, they still want that quick fix.

Far from blaming clients, participants consistently held a reflective tone within their narratives, through which they acknowledged and critically reviewed their own actions within consultancy. Examples included, if they felt they had set consultancy up from the offset to involve and empower clients and if the amount or "dose" of knowledge exchanged, or areas explored, had been appropriately matched to clients' needs and capabilities. As one practitioner illuminated: "You really need a good understanding of your client, their world, their needs, your tools, and the interplay of all those factors" (P4). Such considerations, apparent across all consultancy stories, appeared to relate to professional decision making in action and subsequent reflection. Participants storied how from the earliest point of engagement with a client through to conclusion of the consultancy, they are permanently engaged in a process of assessing and responding to client's needs and capabilities. As one practitioner illustrated:

P5: the [chimp] model isn't a recipe approach. You don't just take a one-model-fits-all approach. You have to work with flexibility with the model. There are some core principles which you can't move away from, because they are the model...But then how you go about doing that, I think that's what's different for each individual. Don't take a recipe approach. But now, with [athletes name], I would question whether I would overtly use a model with her. Or whether I would simply be using it myself to formulate and work with her. The type of work I would do with her now would be different, less cognitive, less thinking, and more behavioural. Because I understand it more.

In testament to their technical agility, practitioner's accounts spanned a range of client goals (aforementioned) and across a wide variety of client populations (e.g. athletes, coaches, parents, support staff, teams from varying sports; performing artists; investment bankers and hedge fund managers; and all of these from varying ages, nationalities, and physical or mental abilities). Despite their flexible approach, practitioners told of how a central model enables them to maintain coherency in their client offerings:

P9: Within the chimp framework that's what you've always got, you can decide which route you go down but explain why the certain part you are doing here makes sense in the broader framework and language.

Practitioners active role in the consultancy process thus manifests, they must remain active facilitators of the client's goal attainment efforts; executing professional decision making, whilst actively seeking to uphold the client's agency at the centre of the relationship formed.

Now we can observe at least two examples of the overlap that exists between the active ingredient themes of relationships, knowledge, and actions. In the first example, by practitioners actively framing consultancy from the off to centralise and promote client empowerment, the bond and relationship is formed as clear goals, responsibilities and

forward actions emerge. In the second example, across consultancy stories, practitioners told of how they involve clients in the formulation process, for example by use of a whiteboard or flipchart during consultations to help formulate a case and share ideas in front of a client, which they believed to strengthen athlete engagement with the process and subsequent investment in the relationship, knowledge and actions generated.

A final action prevalent across consultancy accounts was the process, and seeming importance, of practitioners managing themselves. As the following extract examples:

P1: I think it's about a way of being. And that might sound like a bit of a copout, because people say, "yeah, but what are you actually doing?". Well I think what I'm actually trying to *be* - my job as the psych in an organisation - is to be the one person, as best as I possibly can, who is managing my emotions to see through everything and then know how I need to be in different places to help others get to a certain point...whether that's in a one-to-one setting or a group setting.

Subsequently, practitioners storied how reflection on and in practice enables them to better consider and manage themselves within the consultancy process:

P5: So I think the other layer that the model brings you, and [my supervisor] was very disciplined every time I would call him from a tough training camp to ask, "how are *you* doing? What is going on in *your* system?". Because you are applying it to yourself, it's that daily check in. Or that moment to check-in and ask: okay how am I doing in myself? And that awareness to study and stabilise your system. If there's agitation you know how to deal with it, and it prompts you to do that. If you are going to work with the model, then you have to work with it authentically.

Here we are reminded that practitioners are as human as the clients they support.

Both parties must manage themselves: their thinking, feelings, and actions, within the consulting process in their efforts for goal attainment success.

Discussion

Results in the current study revealed how practitioners story the active ingredients of applied consultancy around a central narrative of facilitating client's goal attainment efforts. Within this narrative, themes of how practitioners assist clients emerged, including, (a) forming relationships, (b) sharing and generating knowledge, and (c) encouraging and undertaking helpful actions. These findings are discussed in regard to how they extend current literature and understanding as follows.

The first way these results advance knowledge is by furthering understanding of the active ingredients in service delivery. The findings provide novel insights into applied practitioners' cognitive maps regarding service delivery. Understanding how practitioners make sense of their experiences and the active ingredients helps expand research and theory. In focus, the current results indicate that experienced practitioners perceive the active ingredients that include (a) a trusting and collaborative relationship, (b) the sharing and generation of knowledge, and (c) encouraging and undertaking helpful actions help clients to work towards and often achieve their goals for sport psychology. These results extend upon previous research into the active ingredients of sport psychology service delivery, adding depth to the knowledge base.

As one example of the extension to theoretical understanding, the present findings enhance understanding of the relationship, as an active ingredient, in applied consultancy. Mirroring previous research, the present findings corroborate the centrality of the client-practitioner relationship to effective service delivery (Chandler, Eubank, Nesti, & Cable, 2014; Orlick & Partington, 1987; Sharp & Hodge, 2011, 2014; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015). Where current findings add depth to understanding however, is through their illumination of the mechanisms through which relationships are developed. Results

indicate practitioners demonstrate Rogerian-type personal qualities (e.g. congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy; Rogers, 1979) to form meaningful relational bonds with clients. Furthermore, practitioners adopt a goal orientated approach to help clients identify their reasons for engaging in the service relationship, subsequently strengthening its existence. Such findings link the working processes of sport psychologists to those of clinical and counselling psychologists, as outlined in Bordin's (1994) working alliance narrative. Bordin discussed that in addition to the interpersonal bond, effective working alliances involved both parties having an understanding of their respective tasks, goals, and responsibilities. Whilst the narrative of a strong, balanced, and collaborative working relationship being central to consultancy is not novel (Tod et al, 2019); the homogenous group of practitioners in the present study and the context of their work is, meaning the present findings broaden our understanding of where this knowledge might thus apply.

A second way in which the present findings extend knowledge is by illuminating how client goal attainment can be facilitated through the use of a psychological model. For example, present findings indicate that the Chimp Model, an approach based on neuroscientific principles, provides clients and practitioners with a comprehensible, relatable, and helpful way to conceptualise and approach otherwise complex issues. For example, the present findings illuminate how a metaphorical model can encourage a common language between client and practitioner, or clients and peers, which in turn can help them make sense of and address important agendas. Such findings extend beyond the premise that practitioners can provide expert insights and credible ideas for athletes, towards illuminating how they do. The present findings did not advocate a 'one-model-fits-all-approach' however. Practitioners need the awareness and skill to reflect upon the best approach for each individual client. The need to continually assess and develop one's style and scope of practice thus appeared a resounding message for practitioners in the field.

A third way the present findings advance knowledge of applied consultancy is by illustrating how practitioners encourage clients to be active participants in the consultancy process. That is, practitioners discussed the importance of clients *doing things* to improve their situation and how they can be encouraged to do so.

For example, practitioners described up front and ongoing contracting of client's goals for psychological support – placing them at the centre of the consultancy process from the offset. Clients remained involved in consultancy through practitioners use of whiteboarding within sessions, promoting an open and collaborative approach. Further still, practitioners storied agreeing healthy and helpful actions for after sessions with clients, such as keeping a reflective learning journal, investing in social support networks, or undertaking deliberate practice of psychological skills.

These findings extend beyond previous assertions that athletes must be self-determined to be involved in and get the most out of the consultancy process (Sharp & Hodge, 2011; Sharp, Hodge & Danish, 2015). Indeed, counselling research has found that client motivation for change can impact the client's engagement while in therapy, whether the client stays in therapy, and how positively the therapy can impact the patient (Prochaska & Norcross, 2001). In the presented examples however, practitioners go beyond stating that successful clients are only those who come ready to engage in consultancy, by outlining mechanisms through which they can actively encourage athlete participation in the process. Each of the examples set out thus represents a skilled interaction between practitioner and client, in which the practitioner works to proactively facilitate client engagement, ownership, and agency in the consultancy process and outcomes.

Notwithstanding the advances in knowledge aforementioned, the current findings warrant consideration within the study's limitations. For example, a strength of the current study was that it researched a homogenous group, enabling a depth of understanding to be garnered. Nonetheless, the lead author is a single individual, with a particular world view,

exploring a homogenous group of practitioners. What would be useful is for other people, operating from other models and perspectives, to interview practitioners. Such endeavours could broaden the knowledge base and allow for greater confidence in what has been found and its potential for transferability to other groups. Future research could also build on current focus, by exploring the narratives of athletes and coaches to better understand the active ingredients of service delivery from their perspectives.

Finally, the current study employed narrative analysis, which has helped expand the knowledge base concerning active ingredients in service delivery. Other types of research methods and questions are available. For example, the present study focused on the narrative structure and themes within sport psychologist's consultancy stories; future research could explore the way practitioners organise and present their narratives, with a focus on the performance or structural perspectives of analysis. Such research would provide a deeper insight of how and why practitioners tell the stories they do and what that means for them, others, and the field.

Aside the above considerations, the current results have applied value for trainee practitioners and their educators. For example, the current findings indicate the importance of relational skills and expert subject knowledge in applied consultancy. Such findings can help neophyte practitioners to direct their learning and training energies to meaningful endeavours. There are, for example, counselling programs on which neophyte practitioners can learn and hone client-centred consulting skills; infinite written and digital resources available to advance subject knowledge; and supervised work experiences to marry theory and practice in action.

Educators and supervisors of sport psychologists could hence use the present findings to better inform the areas they help practitioners develop. For example, educators could discuss active ingredients of service delivery as part of course syllabus', including the use of role play to encourage practitioners to employ skills such as active listening, providing erudite but relevant explanations, integrating helpful approaches such as

whiteboarding, and agreeing helpful actions within the practice setting. Neophytes might find the notion of role play to be unrealistic or uncomfortable, yet few things in the classroom will be as uncomfortable as not having a skill base to work with real clients when the time comes.

For experienced practitioners the present findings provide a reflective stimulus to ask how they build relationships, promote psychological insight, and engage client's agency in the consultancy process. The focus for assessing consultancy impact has traditionally focused on consultancy outcomes, such as whether athletes fulfil their personal goals or scale challenges identified. The present findings offer a more process focused measure of success, directing practitioners to review their acumen and skill of client engagement, communication, and support. Experienced practitioners willing to share such reflections would likely be a welcome addition to national conferences where trainees, peers, and the field in general could greatly benefit from the ideas and insights shared.

As a third implication of the present findings, professional bodies, such as the British Psychological Society, might benefit from the present findings as they help inform what training is needed and what training standards should include. For example, the present findings indicate that skills to build relationships, including possession of a robust consulting model to guide and inform interactions, are important for applied practice. Professional bodies could thus legislate that within sport psychology education, training and supervision, practitioners should cover such topics.

To conclude, the present study provides new insights into practitioners' narratives regarding the active ingredients involved in service delivery. The narrative structure focused on a quest featuring both the client and practitioner collaborating to assist client's goal attainment efforts. Narrative themes emerged of how practitioners facilitate athletes' endeavours, namely through relationship building and maintenance, knowledge exchange and creation, and commitment to healthy and helpful actions. These findings have strong

parallels with the active ingredients discussed in sport psychology, clinical and counselling literature. In addition to extending existing applied sport psychology theory, these findings have applied implications for practitioners, educators and professional bodies. By helping practitioners to better understand and enhance their service delivery, clients of the field stand to engage effective practitioners to support them on their quest to goal fulfilment in sport.

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Research Commentary

The following research commentary captures my actions, reflections, and learnings through the research process of my professional doctorate. To help structure the commentary I have found it helpful to chronologically consider where I was at the beginning of my journey, where I have been throughout the two-year process, where I feel I am now (at its completion), and possible future directions.

Where I Was

On arrival at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) it is fair to say that I was out of touch with the research process. My undergraduate had taught me the ‘nuts and bolts’ of study design and my MScs’ provided a more critical and deeper appreciation of considerations such as ontology, epistemology, and axiology (Yilmaz, 2013). I subsequently engaged in qualitative research for both of my Masters, underpinned by a relativist ontological and constructionist epistemological worldview, each time employing similar qualitative methods to address quite different questions. Thereafter, I chose to focus on doing applied practice for the best part of the next decade. The commencement of my applied work preceded the regulation of practitioner psychologists by the HCPC, so the need to acquire registered status was something I was mindful of.

On reflection, 10 years of applied practice represented quite a significant gap between all of the research knowledge and skills I garnered from BSc and MSc level through to when I recommenced with active research at LJMU in 2017. In honesty, I had not only disengaged from an active role as a researcher over that period, but also from the sport psychology research base at large. This formed a big part of why I choose to enrol on a HCPC approved professional doctorate. Out of touch and unpractised with research (and quite apprehensive as a result), I decided it was time to study again, including re-engagement in research via the design, conduct, evaluation, and submission of three substantial research projects.

Where I Have Been

Understanding the Research Process: Formal Learning

A reacquaintance with research methods occurred early! Formal teaching sessions with Martin Eubank and David Tod helped improve my understanding of exactly what is expected in Level 8 research activity. I learnt, for example, the importance of level 8 research achieving knowledge generation, originality, impact, and rigour. From this clarity I started to appreciate that I was going to have to ask new questions and in new ways.

This was also the first time in my research career that I really grasped the idea of impact. I had always had the desire to conduct research that had meaning to me, but here I learnt the importance of it really transferring and translating to others. For example, my first MSc final research project never reached publication because it lacked the precision of a clear research question and transferable findings. I can tell this because I reviewed it as a development exercise early in my PhD journey. Based on my learnings from Prof Doc taught classes and self-directed reading, I can see that my previous discursive writing lacked structure, making it hard to discern the main findings and recommendations. There was also (a little bit to my embarrassment) quite a bit of pontification! I had learnt this phrase from David Tod, and boy could I see it when I revisited my old work. Lesson learnt...research is a platform, not a soapbox. I have learnt to write academically, with my reader in mind.

In June 2017, another taught class helped to clarify the fundamentals of conducting a systematic literature review (SLR). A primary recognition for me was that a systematic review is about analysing papers rather than people. A simple principle which really helped me to conceptualise the focus of an SLR. We continued to discuss other important considerations, including: how you might create a good research question; how you might consider and control research rigour (e.g. the PRISMA statement; Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009); the steps, processes, and timeline an SLR might typically follow; and, some other helpful tips to consider when conceptualising, conducting, and writing-up a research project.

By the end of this introductory phase of my research journey I had many more questions than answers. The difference now being that my questions were informed and purposeful. Do my clients have any problems / questions that may be useful for me to investigate as a practitioner-researcher? Do I have any questions which could inform my own professional development or the development of others in the field? Are there any collaborations possible in my PhD cohort or network? It was time, I learnt, to start planning my journey.

Planning the research process is not something I have done before. In honesty, time is often abundant at undergraduate and even MSc level, though it has always been a premium in the constricted window of my doctorate. Accordingly, I mapped out my research schedule as part of my Plan of Training. Following self-directed reading around the conduct of a SLR, I gained an appreciation that it would be a significant undertaking (Eubank & Tod, 2017). Also, having no clear research question for any of my studies at that time, I hoped prioritising the SLR would springboard my reengagement with literature and research in general. With hindsight, although my SLR ran pretty much to schedule, I later found it hard to balance the demands of research (and other submissions) and professional consultancy commitments from November 2018 through to March 2019. That is the real-world of a pracademic though; and ongoing reference and review of my plan of training did help me keep abreast with my progress, ask for help when needed, and remain as proactive as I could throughout the process.

Identifying Research Topics: Client, Peer, and Introspective Engagements

My first port of call when considering potential research topics were the interests and relationships I had already established in applied sport psychology. On reflection, I think my initial ideas had to come from these sources because I had such a poor connection with the sport psychology literature base. It is now unthinkable that I would do a research project without a rich affiliation with the relevant literature; however, looking back to 2017 I was driven and fortunate enough to seek a research agenda close to my personal and

professional interests. To help in that process, I engaged in a lot of self-reflection of my own professional development and co-ordinated with three groups of which I am part.

Firstly, I explored potential research topics with colleagues and supervisors at my employer, Chimp Management Ltd. I have consulted using the chimp model for over a decade, but I am aware that the research base exploring the chimp model in elite sport is woefully scarce. Indeed, one of my key objectives of undertaking a doctorate was to go beyond my day-to-day consultancy to better understand approaches such as the chimp model, including their function, strengths, weaknesses, and alternatives.

Secondly, I explored my other professional networks, for example my contract with England Rugby promised many potential avenues for research. The RFU had longstanding interests in the notion of a 'National Psychology Curriculum' but had never had the manpower to research and potentially operationalise the idea. Likewise, the RFU had ongoing research projects, such as one investigating the characteristics of elite rugby players, which spurred opportunities for continuation across development age groups.

Thirdly, my research peers and supervisors at LJMU have a keen interest in practitioner development in the field of sport psychology; an area which spurred particular interest in me the further I explored it. It was interesting, for example, to reflect on my own education, training, supervision, and ongoing efforts to improve. Through a combination of my engagement with all of these groups, the literature base, and a lot of self-reflection, I decided that for the research component of the doctorate I wanted to contribute to the knowledge base concerning the development and delivery of effective sport psychologists. I also wanted to give something back to the company that had employed me for 7 years – producing research into the chimp mind management model.

Narrowing Focus and Selecting Appropriate Methods

At an LJMU research group meeting in late 2017, a perfect storm brewed. Everyone present held a passion for advancing knowledge pertaining to practitioner development in our field and the idea of a collaboration was offered by David and Martin

(research project supervisors), who advised that the British Psychological Society (BPS) had commissioned a group project in the area. The opportunity to work as part of research group appealed to me greatly. I feel that opportunities to share, challenge, support and inspire idea formation are greatly enhanced when engaging with other people.

Over a couple of months, through an iterative process of meetings, self-directed reading, and indwelling, we evolved our ideas for the project. The real-world presenting issue came in the form of the BPS Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology (DSEP) having an interest in continuing to support and improve practitioner development pathways. We identified a specific need to investigate the evidence-base concerning practitioner development processes and thus enable informed recommendations for future advancements of UK education and training systems. To address the identified shortfall, we narrowed in on the undertaking of a realist synthesis on training and supervision in sport psychology.

A realist synthesis, I came to learn, is an approach to systematic reviewing that is not linear but iterative (Wong, Greenhalgh, Westhorp, Buckingham, & Pawson, 2013). It begins by proposing a programme theory or logic model (basically our group's idea of what a training and supervision intervention / programme should look like), to then review the literature in waves to identify evidence for and against the model, and the gaps in knowledge, refining the model after each wave. For us, due to its firm roots in the realist philosophy of science, a realist synthesis offered the perfect approach, as it places particular emphasis on understanding causation (in this case, understanding how training programmes and experiences generate outcomes in practitioners' development) and how causal mechanisms are shaped and constrained by social context. To help clarify the output, or outcomes, of training and supervision programmes in sport psychology, we agreed it would be helpful to establish a clear picture of characteristics of effective practitioners in our field. My study was thus born: a systematic review of the characteristics of effective sport psychologists.

Through exploration of possible methods, I narrowed in on the meta-study methodology as a relevant and rigorous approach to explore and synthesise the extant literature regarding practitioner characteristics. A meta-study involves a systematic approach to collecting and analysing qualitative research findings, using interpretation rather than reduction of data (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2003). This systematic approach consists of four components (Paterson, Thorne, Canam & Jillings, 2001): meta-method analysis, meta-data analysis, meta-theory analysis, and meta-synthesis. The first three components (method, data, and theory analysis) often take place concurrently; the meta-synthesis is presented as the outcome of a meta-study.

I came to select the meta-study methodology for two reasons. Firstly, it made sense to me. That is, I could see the different layers of knowledge this approach enables a researcher to examine and consider. It is not limited to better understanding data, methods, or theory alone. Which leads onto the second reason I embraced this approach: it enables you to investigate literature in a way that can add knowledge across research facets, including producing a synthesis which advances knowledge synergistically. Putting these advantages together, I could envisage that the synthesis of my findings could provide a position of relevance to the broader research groups realist synthesis and consequently the DSEP position statement. To that end, I would have designed, conducted, and delivered an SLR capable of knowledge generation, originality, impact, rigour, and that met the threshold standards of assessment and learning outcomes of the doctorate.

For my two empirical studies, the process of identifying my research topics and methods was an altogether more intimate affair. That is, for the most part only myself and my research supervisor (David) have driven the agenda forward. I can say in unequivocal terms that I have found supervision in the research process to be indispensable. With regard to sharing ideas, receiving feedback, uncovering biases, seeking support, and more...the significance of a research supervisor has never been clearer since conducting

my level 8 endeavours. Without the knowledge, guidance, and support of my supervisor I simply could not have done nor learnt as much as I have.

Using my two empirical studies as an example, I was aware that I wanted to study the chimp model to help address some of the shortfalls and questions aforementioned in this commentary. However, it was the erudite questioning of David which helped expand my vision of thought so that I moved from a narrow (chimp model) focus to a wider (service model) perspective. Likewise, through his recommendation to engage with case-study style texts, like Sacks (1985) and Yalom (1989), I found affinity with the narrative approach and soon recognised the rich contextual considerations such embellished accounts can afford (Fishman, 2011). Pairing my consumption of those journalistic accounts with a deeper dive into the research literature concerning narrative inquiry in sport psychology (e.g. McGannon & Smith, 2015; Smith & Sparkes, 2009), I had identified the methodology of my two empirical papers. I could explore why people embrace and adopt their service models and how they story such events, including their accounts and experiences of working with them.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Write-Up: Pains and Gains

In all three of my research endeavours I have employed new strategies, resources, and techniques to help with data collection and analysis. In my SLR for example I learnt the hard way that EndNote is a *wise* investment for anyone conducting a broad search protocol. I was four solid days into my search process before I realised I should have been saving my returns. I subsequently purchased EndNote and enrolled on a training course at the LJMU library to upskill on search strategies and management. The course really was helpful and saved me time and effort in spades across my SLR and subsequent academic efforts. You laugh and learn.

The conduct of a new style of interview was also an advancement of my research skill over the research process. Explicitly, I studied, practiced, and grasped the conduct of a narrative interview (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). A narrative interview is quite

different to the question and answer type approaches I had been familiar with before. A key difference I learnt is the general absence of questions, given the focus of a narrative interview being entirely on the participants own stories. Practicing this approach with a colleague from Chimp Management proved particularly useful. I learnt a great deal about listening without leading and about asking questions to invite others' perspectives without 'leading the witness' (e.g. "is there anything else you would like to add?" vs "is that why it works for you?"). On reflection, I think my interview skill in that regard continued to improve throughout my data collection and has transferred well into the active listening and non-judgemental aspects of my applied work. For example, I find myself more aware and able to listen, rather than lead.

Not everything is plain sailing and pleasurable afternoons in the research process of course! Similar to the monotony of the SLR search process, the process of transcription for my interview-based studies was (to be restrained) tiresome. That said, I am (following this year's efforts) a true advocate of doing the transcription of research interviews yourself. That reflection evolved after a conversation I had with PhD peers this year who said they used a transcription service to save time and maximise their efforts elsewhere. For me, aside from ethical concerns of sharing recordings with third parties, the act of fully immersing yourself in the interviews, recordings, and verbatim transcription process is the only way to really familiarise yourself with the data. For example, the re-reads and corrections you inevitably have to do are all part of really processing, deliberating, sense-making, and interpreting your dataset. I have learnt, and believe, that there really is no shortcut for doing research properly.

Another reality I have learnt however is that regardless of all the pains of searching, reading, transcribing, indwelling, writing (and back again); the gains in knowledge from research involvement are worth it. To expand on this point, both my SLR and qualitative studies have really contributed to my reflective and applied practice as a trainee sport psychologist. As an example of the reflections my SLR spurred, I have attached an extract

from my reflective practice diary entered February 2018 (Table 1). I feel the reflection really captures the interplay of what my research was highlighting and what I, as practitioner, was experiencing first-hand and attempting to synthesise into my identity and practice.

Likewise, when it came to my interviews with experienced practitioners for the two qualitative studies, the insights gained were priceless. The lessons I learnt from listening (and analysing) practitioners' stories of their training, practice, professional judgements, successes, setbacks, and more, really helped me to reconsider and crystallise my own consulting philosophy and approach. A fuller account of that process is offered within the Reflective Practice Commentary, submitted within this portfolio (p.457-473). The key point to emphasise is that throughout the research process applied practice has influenced and informed my research; here at the end of my research journey I can truly recognise and appreciate that research has positively influenced and informed my practice.

Where I Am Now

Having professed at the start of this commentary my disconnection from sport psychology research some 28 months ago, I am glad to reflect my current standing is significantly improved. I have enjoyed learning, first-hand, strategies such as effective literature searching; methodologies such as meta-methods and narrative inquiry; skills, like academic writing; principles, like why publication standards are needed for a realist synthesis; and disseminating my findings with researchers, practitioners, and clients for critical comment. Across all of these areas I have grown to better understand the research process; and myself as researcher and person within that process. For example, I am much clearer of the characteristics I would like to uphold, which include maintaining a knowledge base of contemporary research findings and agendas!

There is still very much I could learn, of course. I would like to understand how statistics could complement my work for example. I am aware that many clients will seek a numerical perspective of the work we undertake throughout my career, and I would like to

develop my understanding of options, obstacles and other particulars of quantitative research. Furthermore, if I had my chance again at the last two years, I would enrol on a writing course much earlier. As a dyslexic, I have always found serious challenge in converting my thoughts into written word commendably. In honesty, the writing element of my doctorate work was my biggest fear on entering the process. The one thing I can say now at the end of the research process is that I have a much greater appreciation of writing as a skill. That's liberating really, because it gives me hope that I could continue to learn and improve at it. The research process has helped me relate to research on a different level therefore, and I certainly do not plan on disconnecting with it over the remaining years of my career.

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Table 1

A Reflective Diary Extract Demonstrating the Interaction Between Research and Practice

Date	Subject	Reflection
February 2018	Early SLR research findings and implications for my practice	<p>I'm not going to use Gibbs model for this reflection as I think it would actually stop me from reflecting effectively on what I want to try and capture and organise (in my mind) so I'm going to use my own reflective questions and structure instead.</p> <p>Having started extracting raw data (from my retrieved studies) into my data table I'm starting to notice things that could be helpful to me as a practitioner. Thought best to reflect on it more formally to capture the key learnings for me, and to try to avoid imposing what is helpful <i>just for me</i> on the wider audience.</p> <p>Hopefully by getting this down on paper I can share the reflections with my research supervisor so we can use the reflections to help guide further analysis and the write-up.</p> <p>What am I seeing that could advance knowledge and understanding for the field?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First observation is that the 'fixed characteristics' research (e.g. Lubker and colleagues) is showing that things like race, gender, age don't hold massive impact on peoples' choice of practitioner. Especially not when compared with other more changeable things (like communication, knowledge and trustworthiness). This should give people hope, I think! - Next up is that the overriding key characteristics emerging are trustworthiness and the ability to build relationships and fit in – offering good advice. Trustworthiness emerges time and again, so I think that echo's the importance of ethical practice. - Soft skills, like showing empathy, communicating well, building rapport, all feature very strongly. That fits with the Wampold & Budge research (from counselling lit) which suggests that common factors are as important as active/specific factors. That's cool to know in sport too. A good SPC seems to be characterised as much by how they are, as what they know/do. That reminds me of / is backed up by Tod (2017) book chapter which says sport psychs' are characterised by what they know, do and 'are' (qualities). That said... - Is there a difference between who we are and what we do? (i.e. how we label ourselves tends to relate to what we do, e.g. 'being honest'). Does a trait influence behaviour, or is a trait something that we label a behaviour / grouping of behaviours? ...at present: this is something to possibly have in my discussion. - The frequency of many characteristics is skewed from the survey data which limits response options e.g. "fitting in with team," "useful knowledge," and "easy for athletes to relate to" will recur due to the CEF, or, the fact that they <i>are</i> prominent (though this is not the case in non-CEF studies, with the exception of 'easy to relate to'). Not sure

		<p>I want to include survey data as only the first paper (by Orlick & Partington) had original themes – the rest are predetermined or seemingly picked out the air!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It's great to start to be able to identify the prevalence of different characteristics, the question I'm thinking for the field though is <i>how</i> can these characteristics be improved? For example, Sharp, Hodge & Danish (2015) stated: "Furthermore, practitioners must ensure that they have adequate training with respect to employing genuineness, openness, and self-referent responses within their practice." (p.362). This is a good example of how the lit is stating it's important to work on personal characteristics, but not suggesting how. I'll bet most programmes teach knowledge (i.e. theory) and even practice (e.g. how to hold an intake session), but do they focus on how the person 'is' within that session? Are they aware of the key characteristics, let alone how to develop them, and assess improvement? - For me, the idea of covering this at Uni + Stage 2 is important, but so too would be going into therapy yourself as a psych, as that should cover things like authenticity. What is the real you? Are you living it out? What is interfering, sabotaging, hijacking you? Is that something to resolve/overcome/manage...these are questions that might scope beyond the range of current supervision around 'best process'. It maybe even outstretch peoples' comfort or boundaries of what the supervision role is? Also, few experienced psychs continue supervision. So where are they addressing things such as authenticity and any barriers to it? This ref also works with the previous point: "Researchers have previously argued that being able to listen to clients, SPCs must understand what they are doing, and also how they are doing it and have highlighted the importance of self-awareness training (Petitpas et al., 1999, p.363)". This quote/reference works too: "Gelso and Carter's (1994) concept of a real relationship and within that the value of genuineness which is reflective of "the individual's ability and willingness to be what they truly are within the relationship – to be authentic, open and honest" (p.297)." ...again, how can people ensure they are doing that if they aren't checking in with a supervisor? - Finally, desirable characteristics don't seem to change much over 30 years of research. That is, they seem stable /recurrent across time and relatively stable between groups (e.g. athletes, coaches, SPCs). That suggests that research in this area might well be done now! Or at least that we need to stop asking the same questions or looking at it in the same way (e.g. could we use different methods?) <p>What am I seeing that has implications for me and my practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The big stand outs for me have been around the importance of trustworthiness (Professional, Ethical), Empathy (Respectful, Supportive - of people and environments), Authenticity (Courageous, Presence), Credibility (in the form of good knowledge) and being able to provide a good <i>practical</i> service. I know that might
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		<p>seem like a list of the ‘top characteristics’ but I think seeing them listed out really makes me stop and say, “Okay, so where am I in relation to those?”. So..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trustworthy – I think I’m really clear with my confidentiality, which is a positive. But one thing I’ve noticed this year (mostly from my work in the U18s, and with Insights) is that some people’s preference will be a quiet, considered psych – not always a high energy “I’m here – let’s go!” persona. It struck me in my review with Dr Caddy when she said, “sometimes you want to know you can go home and relax, not have to worry about being or doing something”. That was a lightbulb for me and these findings are making me think about that in the applied practice sense. Sure, energy and enthusiasm also show up (high) in the desirable characteristics list, but I think I’m just going to be a little more mindful of deliberately dropping my energy from time to time. To ask a few more people “how are you getting on?” in a genuine, but perhaps less energetic way. I want them to know they can trust me, and research suggests that’s as much about their impression of the type of person I am as opposed to any promises about confidentiality. - Empathetic – I’d say this is good for me, based on client feedback and the training in EUAR skills from ChMx. It’s not something I’m going to target to improve for now therefore, but definitely something to maintain. - Authentic – this is one to work on. I often feel like I can either be ‘fully there’ or holding back a bit. I know I hold back because I’m trying to build a fuller picture or am not quite sure I have something to offer. The U18 coaches help me by setting their ‘offer ideas in’ culture, so that’s somewhere I can feel my authenticity growing – but there’s time (say like on the Warriors team bus) when I’m towing the line between being myself and being professional. I’d like to work on being less conflicted and making a more mindful choice e.g. “I’m not engaging in that, because it wouldn’t be appropriate – but that’s fine and right and is actually therefore authentic”. I often just find myself in freeze mode instead (like at the first few Pathway Management Meetings) where I was more Chimp than authentic. Something to work on... - Credibility / knowledge – hopefully I’m continuing to build this all of the time. I am happy with the 1:1 and team consulting knowledge I have – but I enrolled on the PhD to keep improving nonetheless. The title of Chartered Psych is also something which I know will settle my chimp. Ridiculous really, because I’ll probably do 70% the same stuff, but knowing I’m chartered and with that extra 20% growth in knowledge hopefully I’ll have a 10% growth in confidence too – just ‘feeling more credible’ to give out advice when asked. - Practical service – think this is one I could improve on, but it ties into the last point. Hopefully through my PhD and career I’ll keep picking up interesting ways to work with athletes and helpful approaches / ideas to share. For now, it’s just helpful to remember that people are saying they like a practical service, so when I’m consulting I can check-in with people what areas they would like practical
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		<p>ideas and make sure we explore them in our work (i.e. not everything can be a thought exercise, sometimes I'll need to do things like breathing, or visualisation, or effective communication audit, etc).</p> <p>Analysis Looking at this list now I don't think the things that appeal/apply to me are a problem for my research – in fact the opposite. One of the issues my research is bringing up is that not many papers give practical ways of developing the desirable characteristics, so my reflections of how I would do it could be a prototype for ideas offered later in my write up. I guess my research is informing my practice, and my practice is informing my research.</p>
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Reflective Practice Commentary

Reflecting back at the end of my professional doctorate journey, it has been a fantastic catalyst for personal and professional growth. Throughout this commentary I intend to identify and reflect upon key learning moments, recognitions, and developments across the journey. These instances, along with many others beyond the capacity of this summary, have helped me to better understand my field, my practice, and myself. The culmination of this process has been the crystallization of my professional philosophy and practice approach which I have shared in the final section of this record.

The Beginning: Why I Went on This Journey

At commencement of the professional doctorate I entered the programme with clear motivations. Although I had a reasonable work history in sport psychology, I have long wanted to conduct due diligence around my knowledge base, skills, and approach. For example, I started with a list of questions I hoped to resolve: is my consulting process sound? On what grounds? What sits within and outside of practice with the chimp model? How can I better identify and build from my strengths? What are my blind spots? Overall, I considered the professional doctorate an opportunity to progress my competence and confidence as an applied psychologist.

The structure and accountability of a formal training programme offered the right mechanism to address such goals. The professional doctorate also offers opportunity to achieve chartership and HCPC registration; though I can honestly say that I've always coveted the learning more than the titles. I wanted to widen my horizons, to solidify my evidence-base, to refine my processes, and to know myself that I am fit to practice. I hope the following commentary gives a fair representation of how I have met those goals.

The Middle: What I Experienced and Learnt on the Journey

The last 24 months have been brilliant for my learning and development. One of the earliest exercises I undertook was to run checks and balances regarding my ethical and professional practice. I've been lucky working with Chimp Management for most of my

career in that many of the systems and resources you need for consultancy are established and to hand (e.g. screening processes, consent forms, referral networks). It was June 2017 however and I was imminently due to start work with England Rugby. I wanted to use the commencement of both that contract and my professional doctorate as a catalyst to take ownership over my own ethical and professional practice components.

I subsequently undertook an audit of my ethical knowledge, processes, and resources. One of the related exercises was to revamp my information and consent form, which proved a valuable reflective and applied exercise. It led me to read around core considerations of ethical practice (such as confidentiality in multiple-stakeholder contracting; De Hann & Sills, 2012; Jenkins, 1999; Mellalieu, 2017; Stapleton, Hanks, Hays, & Parham, 2010) and also to scrutinize core components of my identity and practice (such as how would I describe myself, my services, and my approach to clients). My June 2017 reflective entry (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, June 2017: Ethical Practice Audit) and Client Information and Consent Form (appended to the Consultancy Contract Report) give a fair summary of how I went about answering those specific questions. Overall, I feel the biggest development from that period was that I came to understand and *own* my ethical standards. Ethics was no longer a stipulation, but instead felt like an extension and representation of my own values, morality, and personality.

A subsequent service request really helped to operationalise my professional, ethical and moral principles. It was November 2017 and I received an email from a solicitor acting on behalf of an athlete I had previously supported. I was requested to provide a consultancy report and professional opinion regarding the athlete's wellbeing and state of mind when we worked together. The report would potentially contribute as evidence in a legally represented insurance claim, on the athlete's behalf. As explored in my reflective diary (Consultancy Reflective Log, November 2017: Insurance Company Consultancy Report Request), given the novel and specialised nature of the request I put my professional and ethical decision-making processes into practice. I had, for example, an

ethical decision-making protocol which helped me establish my thoughts and position from an ethical, professional, and moral standing. I also raised the matter with my supervisors to share my thoughts and seek their opinions.

I subsequently agreed to submit the report and I reflect back now on the whole experience as an excellent opportunity to test and advance my ethical practice. One of my biggest reflections from across that period is the importance of being able to explain and evidence sound reasoning, morality, and legality in your practice. That included everything from keeping comprehensive session notes through to presenting objective and subjective feedback in a robust manner. I definitely came out of 2017 feeling confident in my processes for approaching consultancy requests and incidents both within and outside the typical scope of sport psychology.

In early 2018 I was well into my consultancy contract with England Rugby and data collection for my systematic review. The combination of applied consultancy and research was really helping to grow and shape me. For example, some of my coaching colleagues at England Rugby were passionate about how we engage with athletes, constantly encouraging a stimulating but caring work environment. Training camps and international fixtures were a real-time opportunity to put into practice the considerations I was drawing from my systematic literature review.

Specifically, reviewing every research paper ever written concerning the characteristics of effective sport psychologists was always going to be valuable! What it gifted me, however, was a deeper awareness of the desired and accepted characteristics of top sport psychologists. From there I was able to conduct my own reflections of how I fared in regard to those characteristics (Research Reflective Log, February 2018: Early SLT Research Findings and Implications for my Practice). I observed for example that trustworthiness, empathy, authenticity, credibility and being able to provide a good practical service featured strongly in the research literature. From there I was able to reflect

on my own strengths and development areas in regard to those characteristics; which I subsequently carried over into a development plan and my delivery efforts with clients.

A meaningful recognition from that period is that good sport psychology practice can be just as much about how you are as opposed to what you know or do. Of course, there is huge overlap between these factors. Yet in a guest lecture with Dr Martin Littlewood I remember the point really hit home for me that you can be yourself and share a bit of yourself in your practice (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, March 2018: LJMU Taught Day - Dr Martin Littlewood). It was a profound realisation really. I had been reading so much about authenticity, colleagues at work promoted everyone 'being themselves', and there I was watching an established sport psychologist talk about sharing his story, his vulnerabilities, his *identity* with clients. I reflected, "I'm going to just start being myself!".

I later built on this recognition by listing out my personal values and the number one characteristic that kept emerging across the different walks of my life was: caring. It's really hard to put a conceptual recognition into words here, but for me the recognition that I could and should be myself in my practice, and that means just being authentically caring, was a really significant and *settling* event in my development. I just knew that I didn't need to worry about my practice approach unduly anymore. I had sound ethical and professional standards in place - and I knew that I cared. From that position I couldn't be 'found out'; I would just be caring, curious, and honest with people. I found great contentment from that period of reflection and learning and to this day have enjoyed a much more relaxed and natural feel to my delivery.

As aforementioned, another source of significant growth throughout my professional doctorate journey has been my applied activities. Two particular undertakings have predominantly inspired me: my work in sport and my performance-psychology work in other sectors. Although my experiences and learnings from these areas far exceed the

capacity of this paper, I would like to draw on some highlights from across the experiences.

Beginning with my work in sport, the variety of people, cultures, and responsibilities I engaged with during my time with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) was priceless. The scale of the organisation for one thing is massive. When I joined them in July 2017 the first thing I was told by the Head of International Player Development, was: “Take your time. You'll want to do everything straightaway, but you will need to understand the culture, people, challenges, and opportunities first”. That was sound advice.

Reflecting back, it took me around three months to actually understand the full landscape and my role and responsibilities within the Union. During that period I did my best to capture formal reflections on activities such as attending my first training camp (Consultancy Log, September 2017: RFU U18 1 Day Camp) and visiting and contracting my delivery with every Premiership Club in England (Consultancy Log, September-October 2017: Club Visit Summaries). At the end of each month I attended a management team meeting at Twickenham where we provided each other an overview of our month's activities; my log could not have been fuller. It was a great time for exploring and absorbing different approaches to practice from across the nation.

Another of the great opportunities that working with the RFU bought me was the opportunity of a CPD budget to engage in formal learning opportunities. Gaining accreditation as an Insights Discovery Practitioner and Spotlight Practitioner (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, September 2018: Spotlight Training) were activities the RFU requested me to undertake. Both courses were interesting and I thoroughly enjoyed engaging with practitioners from different sports and sectors. The biggest learning I took from those experiences, however, was renewed certainty that good psychologists have a range of approaches upon which they can offer a service appropriately matched to their clients' needs. I was building my toolbox as an applied practitioner.

In November 2018 I undertook a different type of training, completing two courses in mental health understanding and support. As a likely consequence of training through a sports science route, I have always found mental health to be woefully represented in the programmes I have undertaken. These two training courses, one exploring adult mental health and the other youth populations, subsequently offered a welcomed opportunity. Within the training we covered the major mental health conditions and considerations, undertook reflective and interactive activities, and were provided with a substantial body of helpful resources. The programmes really were valuable to me, as I reflected in my Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log (November 2018: Mental Health First Aid). The principal outcome I felt the training gave me was a better understanding, and a demystification, of an area - which if I'm honest – I feel sport psychology has attempted to steer clear of for too long. I fully understand my boundaries and proficiencies as a sport specialist, but I'm much happier and more confident now to approach the subject of mental health in a role where I believe we have a responsibility to be ready and knowledgeable to support peoples' mental health needs.

Refocusing on my frontline delivery activities with the RFU, perhaps one of the most invigorating experiences was to part of the conception, design, and delivery of experiential learning camps for a targeted player group. Specifically, England Rugby were two years out from a Senior Rugby World Cup and I was given a remit to help prepare the country's top 25 U20 players for potential inclusion in the World Cup squad. The initiative was labelled the National Performance Programme (NPP) and we were granted access to the player group for three days, three times a year. For contact between those windows I could visit the players at their clubs, see them in England camps, or contact them out of such environments. England Rugby had engaged a Sport and Business Coaching Consultancy to assist in creating bespoke learning experiences for the NPP and I was bought in as the lead psychologist to steer the design, delivery, and follow up of the experiences (for an example reflection on such undertakings, see: Consultancy Reflective

Log, September 2018: National Performance Programme Recce: Homeless Hostel, London Westminster).

The NPP journey was fantastic. I became part of a team, we stretched each other's thinking, pushed the boundaries of experiential learning opportunities in sport, undertook some serious challenges, and had buckets of fun. It's hands down the best sport psychology delivery opportunity of my career. One of my premier reflections is the importance of the programme having a very clear remit, strong leadership, healthy resourcing, and a very open-minded planning team! We engaged third party stakeholders (such as the Met Police, Army, and homeless centres); players' parents, clubs, and schoolteachers; senior international players and coaches; professional actors; and more. The whole programme centred on helping the players to grow in ways which only life experience can give you, but which they won't likely get/have due to their talent and the environments that talent places them in. My work spanned existential psychology through to mental skills training; from throwing firebombs at players, through to 1:1 counselling. Perhaps my biggest takeaway from that experience was the value and possibility inherent in learning outside of the classroom. Outside of sport even. Doing something different; something challenging...but with a purpose of learning and growth. Quite metaphorical really! I can see a lot within the NPP programme that mirrors my undertaking and experience of the professional doctorate journey.

Moving away from sport and briefly onto my performance-psychology work in other sectors, the past 20 months have really progressed my service delivery acumen. In particular my work on project Fortress, a bespoke workshop and 1:1 focused delivery programme for a corporate organisation. Perhaps my biggest gains from Fortress have come around my proficiencies of orchestrating consultancies, including note taking and associated follow up actions.

For example, as part of the GDPR due diligence processes Chimp Management undertook in 2018 (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, Oct 2018:

Chimp Management Company Training), I found myself using new equipment, new session summary sheets, and uploading my session notes to a new remote server. Fortress 1:1's presented the perfect delivery project to experience and refine these processes in a real life, and high demand, setting. For example, seeing back to back clients, each with a clear agenda and intent to maximise the session time, was a new challenge and opportunity for me. I've rarely experienced days as full and structured in sport as I have in Fortress! I subsequently developed an efficient way of building rapport, covering consent, ascertaining goals, and commencing a history take, all in the first 1-hour session. So too, thereafter, refining my skill at delivering brief interventions over a structured 4-8 session delivery block. Again, this wasn't a structure or style I had experienced previously through sport, but the processes and practices I developed from Fortress had a direct impact on my subsequent sports-based consultancy (Consultancy Reflective Log, October 2018: Conducting a brief pitch-side consultation, using my internal framework).

Perhaps the greatest advantage of project Fortress was that I got to work alongside my peers at Chimp Management for the first time. That is, as a team of psychologists delivering within the same contract. I have often worked as the sole contractor to professional sports, but with Fortress I had the chance to engage with peers on the creation, delivery, and review of a project. In particular the learning gained from sitting with peers each evening, after a day of consultation, and holding peer reflection and supervision sessions has been invaluable. The day's work, thoughts, and feelings are so fresh in your mind that you can really unpack, explore, and process them 'live' and to good affect (Consultancy Reflective Log, October-November 2018: Fortress). Fortress has really helped me to reflect that so much of the work you do in sport psychology can end up being conducted alone, if you are not careful. Not because you choose to do so, but because sports often only employ one sport psychologist. I will be mindful and interested moving forward to seek out further opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on projects such as

the NPP camps and Fortress. The strengths and benefits of working within a team are clear to me.

Naturally, there have also been some setbacks across my professional doctorate journey. I delivered one session on project Fortress which wasn't well received for example – and boy do they tell you! Undoubtedly that is a comparison you can draw directly to professional sport: you need to deliver good content, in the right way, at the right time. I learnt a lot from the feedback Fortress gave me in that instance (Consultancy Reflective Log, March 2019: Standing in for a Fortress Group Session Delivery), but nothing more important than remembering to always involve the client in planning a session (e.g. aims, objectives, core content) whenever possible. Again, a lesson directly transferable into my sport practice – and certainly one I've been more watchful of since!

In a different setback, the burden of working across contracts and commitments really took its toll on my personal energy and enjoyment levels around December 2018. The RFU contract was requiring *a lot* of national travel each week, monthly residential camps, and plenty of case work. Project Fortress likewise meant regular international trips and lots of follow up work. My professional doctorate research and submission responsibilities needed attention; and other factors such as CPD endeavors, my personal life, my health (e.g. recovery from shoulder surgery), and more, were all factoring into a quite unsustainable load. I undertook a substantial self-reflective exercise in December 2018 (Consultancy Reflective Log, December 2018: Service Audit & Work-life balance) and took my reflections and concerns to supervision. Chimp Management were extremely supportive of me at that time. We agreed that I was overstretched and undertook some contract management to ensure my responsibilities would have more balance in 2019.

I learnt a few important lessons from that period. First, I'm glad that I took positive steps to address obstacles to my health and success. I had gotten myself overcommitted, but I was able to address the challenges proactively and professionally. I learnt the importance of managing your contracts and time prudently. I have aforementioned that you

are often the lone practitioner within a sport organisation and that can mean the requests and demands on your time are substantial.

Second, I was hugely appreciative to be able to operationalise the support networks I have in place. Supervision helped me to talk through my challenges and a good relationship with my line managers enabled me to negotiate much needed changes in my schedule and delivery load.

Thirdly, I learnt the importance and skill of saying no. Funny really! Seems so insignificant writing it in this reflection, but that learning has made a huge difference to my happiness, enjoyment and (I would argue) success over the past year. My progress stems from a greater appreciation and acceptance that overstretching and burning out serves no one in the end. I have learnt to appreciate that saying no to things, and managing your time effectively, are behaviours of successful, not lazy or indifferent people. I doubt I could have had such recognitions unless I had experienced the consequences for myself. Good lessons hard earned.

In addition to the contractual opportunities aforementioned, the process of writing up my consultancy case studies has also greatly bolstered my understanding and approach to applied work. In truth, the act of writing has never been my greatest love given my dyslexia, but I'll agree with one thing I've learnt from this course: the stories we tell describe and define the way we see the world.

Reflecting back, Case Study 1 was valuable for crystallising the nuts and bolts of my service delivery and extending my understanding of the theoretical principles related to applied sport psychology (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, July 2018: Submission of Consultancy Case Study 1). In particular, reading Keegan's (2016) book *Being a Sport Psychologist* helped me appreciate how my ontological and epistemological worldviews don't just relate to research, but also manifest within the core components of service delivery (e.g. intake, needs analysis, formulation, intervention selection and

planning, delivery and monitoring). My alignment to the pragmatist paradigm became clearer and firmer on the foundation of authenticity aforementioned in this reflection.

With Case Study 2, I built from Case Study 1 and advances in my knowledge over that period, to conduct (and hopefully demonstrate) a more complex intervention approach. In particular, whilst the client in Case Study 1 had requested not to include third parties (precluding triangulation), the client's needs and context in Case Study 2 was a perfect fit for an interdisciplinary approach. Case Study 1 had shown me that you can do good 1:1 work with an athlete, but Case Study 2 helped me advance my formulation, intervention, and stakeholder engagement processes.

To that end, from Case Study 2 I would say my biggest learning was the value of conducting a really thorough case formulation. I had recently created a case formulation framework (presented within the consultancy report) and was starting to take more time to examine my understanding of a client: their needs, agenda, history, strengths, challenges, mechanisms, supporting theories, etc. I was learning to be more considered in my approach to consultancy and to actively reflect on clients' needs and circumstance to have ideas to mind should they want them. I found that through conducting a more thorough formulation I was better prepared and more present when arriving back in front of clients to discuss where the consultancy might go next. I resolved from this period that people, and their agency, would always hold the focus of my consulting approach, but *I too* had a responsibility to remain active in their support. It was from this reflection that I coined my consultancy mantra of 'client-led, consultant-active'.

Case Study 3 presented quite a different growth opportunity in my journey. Following another employment of my ethical decision-making protocols I took on the support of an athlete whose mother was terminally ill. It was a case which required a different approach and I worked hard over the period to do all I could to help the athlete and learn from the experience. My Case Study 3 submission and multiple diary entries from February 2018 through to July 2018 explore at some length how I approached and

reflected upon this case. Looking back now and comparing that consultancy to where I was as a practitioner undertaking Case Study 1, I feel the difference is stark. In honesty, at Case Study 1 I was reflecting because I knew I had to. During Case Study 2 I felt I really knew what I was doing in Toms support and as such my reflective diary entries were lesser. However, by the time I had taken on Case Study 3, I was really putting reflective practice to its full use. I took that case to regular formal and peer-based supervision. I made weekly decisions guided by my developing personal and professional values and standards. I experienced and addressed countertransference within the relationship; including processing some quite powerful, but ultimately helpful, emotions around the loss of my own parents. I had to address evolving professional considerations, such as confidentiality, boundaries, and competence. The whole experience was rich, real, and rewarding.

From an applied perspective, these three case studies, and many other clients I have supported over the last two years have presented me with such an array of needs, contexts, and learning. A key reflection for me therefore has been to really seek to understand what the client wants and needs. Everyone is unique, but across a consulting window you start to recognise patterns of what clients might want. Some want knowledge. Others seek skills. Some sought an empathetic ear. Others just wanted to discuss ideas or agendas in trust. Understanding this spread has helped me connect with my clients earlier. I'm much happier to ask the direction they want to take and flex my style accordingly and authentically. There was once a time that I considered such pragmatism as ill-informed or laissez-faire. I now consider it as an informed and tested protocol, which I stand by and for in my practice.

A final significant contributor in the advancement and crystallisation of my consulting approach was the research I conducted with applied practitioners. Explicitly, my two studies concerning practitioner's adoption and use of the Chimp Mind Management Model. I listed a question at the head of this commentary: what sits within and outside of practice with the chimp model? I could have just as easily written 'practice model', yet

I've consulted with Chimp Management for the best part of a decade and that has given me some amazing opportunities, insights, and an affiliation to the chimp model. I appreciate however the risk of narrowing your conceptual and practical acumen when working as part of an established organisation for so long. I wanted to use the professional doctorate therefore to really explore *why* I use the chimp model and *how* I could improve my consultancy with it. I recognised part of that process would be critically reviewing the model and my own use of it - research as such provided the perfect explorative vehicle.

From the two studies my primary recognition was to appreciate that my consultancy model and approach is *not* the chimp model. I see and understand my model of practice as much more now. It is an amalgamation of my values, beliefs, experiences, knowledge, skills, and behaviors as a person; all of which far exceed a single conceptual model. I'm not sure I would have appreciated that 24 months ago. When I think to some of the important recognitions I gained from interviewing applied practitioners about their consultancy, they relate to relationship building, decision making, individuation, and technical eclecticism. All of these factors concerned the art of service delivery; the skill and execution of *choice* in practice. I came to appreciate that having choice enables you to offer choice and that my practice model is infinitely more layered than a single model approach.

Drawing on a few examples, one research interview led me to reflect on the concept of dose in applied consultancy. That is, how much discussion, reflection, or otherwise can one person take within a session, and at what intensity, duration, and frequency? I began to constructively question what I expect from sessions, clients, myself, and the change process in general. I read around the area, spoke with colleagues and clients, and reasoned that the best thing to do is apply your expertise and seek regular feedback. Give the client choice and empower them in the process.

Another research theme that really got me thinking was the skill of helping clients to challenge their beliefs or behaviours but being understood to do so from a position of

support not judgement (Research Reflective Log, June-August 2019: Research Interviews informing my Growth and Practice). Again, I read around the area, practiced the skills, and reflected a lot! I would say my biggest gains came from feeling more skilled and hence comfortable at holding the mirror up for clients with whom I had built a good relationship. Likewise, I worked on having more of a voice in meetings with senior figures. It appears an interplay between the factors emerging from my research, practice, and reflection are coming together and it's something I'm continuing to work on to this day.

The Ending: What the Journey Has Afforded Me

In summary, it's great to recognise and appreciate that I have met the goals I had for the professional doctorate programme. Professional, research, and reflective activities have helped me to examine my consulting process, develop myself and my practice, enhance my confidence, and solidify my competence. Over the doctorate programme I believe I have undergone an individuation process; crystallising my theoretical orientation, honing my consultancy skills, and growing to enjoy my work more than ever.

Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) defined individuation as the development of coherence between a practitioner's ideologies and their service delivery practices. With effort to capture my learning, development, and individuation across the professional doctorate programme, I began a reflective exercise in May 2019 through which I have attempted to create a visual representation of my consulting model (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, May-June 2019: Creating my Professional Philosophy Visual). The resultant disc model has become a working document but is appended to this commentary in its current 'final state' (Figure 1). I'm sure it will continue to evolve, as I do.

Although the disc model is not a validated model as such, it is my model. In fact, that is the power of it. It is owned by me, makes sense to me, and is therefore significant to me. Its central focus of care and empowerment of people, established on foundations of authenticity and discovery, feels right. The adjacent rings house other integral elements of

my philosophy and practice; the origins of which sit firmly in research and practice as summarised within this commentary. I am comfortable that I have explored, employed, and refined various principles and practices within this framework and remain genuinely open and committed to continued professional growth.

Future Directions

In July 2019 Chimp Management revamped their formal annual appraisal and CPD process. The outcome was a robust individualised development plan for me and my peers, meaning I'm set to pick up where I leave off with this practice commentary (Ethical and Professional Competency Reflective Log, July 2019: Chimp Management Formal Appraisals and development of a new POT). There are new consultancy contracts on the horizon and new opportunities in research, dissemination, and CPD. I'm looking forward to them all and can honestly say I'll be going into them as a more sound, considerate, and confident practitioner.

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Figure 1

A Visual Representation of my Professional Philosophy and Model of Practice

