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Navigating Lost Move Syndrome with an Elite Trampolinist

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Background and purpose: This case study details client, practitioner, and coach reflections on an evidence-based sport psychology support programme with an elite woman trampolinist. The support was facilitated over a period of six months: four months preceding the trampolinist's first international competition and two months post-competition. During the support provision, the trampolinist experienced, for the first time in her career, lost move syndrome (LMS; e.g., Silva, 1994). The purpose of this presentation is to detail the development and effectiveness of, and reflections on, the therapeutic alliance.

Method: Informed by a detailed case formulation and underpinned by cognitive therapy-based techniques (e.g., cognitive restructuring; Beck, 1967), the sport psychology support programme addressed thoughts and inferences about the trampolinist's self, the coach, others, and future expectancies to subsequently address feelings of anger and embarrassment. The aim of the cognitive restructuring technique was to address the trampolinist's behaviour and to facilitate meaningful pursuit of her goals related to the imminent international competition.

Conclusions: Reflections from the client and her coach throughout the support programme both complemented and challenged those of the practitioner who maintained a reflexive stance throughout the therapeutic alliance. The authentic and candid sharing of reflections from each member of the alliance bolstered the effectiveness of the support programme and contributed to a purposeful and transformative relationship. Programme evaluation and competition performance suggested that the intervention was successful; the gymnast recovered from LMS and achieved a personal best score in her target competition.

References

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