Maintaining Momentum

Since the unexpected happened with all athletic seasons coming to an abrupt end this month, it’s understandable if you find yourself feeling shock, frustration, or feelings of grief. As classes resume this week, you might be questioning how you can remain focused on your studies and adapt to these new norms when one of the most significant parts of your day to day routine has been disrupted. If you feel this way, we wanted to share some strategies that may help you maintain momentum toward your goals in the coming months.

Give yourself permission to grieve

What you have lost is important and has definitely had an impact on your life. So it’s okay to accept the reality that this hurts right now. The pain you feel is valid, and it’s important that you give yourself permission to grieve your loss by expressing your feelings in healthy ways. There are many ways to do this. Some ideas include:

- Talking with a trusted friend, teammate, or coach
- Journaling or other forms of creative expression (art, music, poetry)
- Exercising or getting outdoors

Stay on top of your mindset- Managing your self-talk & sense of identity

Self-talk is the inner dialogue we have going on in our minds and can either help us or be an added obstacle when navigating difficult times. Thoughts about unfulfilled dreams and “what-ifs” can be particularly frustrating and difficult to manage. Some strategies that may help manage negative self-talk include:

- Reframing your thoughts (exercises to help with this are located on the Sanvello app)
- Relaxation Techniques & Meditation (audio exercises are located on the Sanvello app)
- Keeping a gratitude journal

It’s also important to remember that your identity as an athlete is not the sum of your total value and achievements. You have always been more than the role you serve in your sport. Sports has been an important part of your life that has shaped you and provided you with powerful tools you can apply to other life challenges and goals. Use the lessons and skills you have learned as an athlete (Resilience, Determination, Adaptability, Sacrifice, Passion, and Persistence) to help you navigate these current challenges.

Keep a familiar schedule

As a lifelong athlete, you are used to having a daily routine. Your times for practice, class, homework, and meals are generally all set and in the past, have had little room for flexibility. Now that classes are online and team practices are no longer in person, your routine may feel completely disrupted. One way you can start to feel a sense of control is to get back to your
normal routine as best you can. This can help reduce the impact of all of the changes you’ve had over the past few weeks and help refocus you on the remaining goals you have for the rest of the semester.

If you are struggling to find motivation for your remaining semester goals without the fulfillment and excitement your sport and season brought you, remember that feeling is totally valid and normal. It’s okay to acknowledge that it may take more mental and emotional energy to move forward and find the motivation to stay focused on your school work. Remember to stay connected with your professors, scholastic supervisors, and tutors as they are able to help and support you!

**Maintain your training momentum**

You’re already used to spending several hours of your week training and conditioning your body. Consistent exercise helps reduce tension and stress and contributes to positive mood and productivity. Additionally, suddenly stopping your workout routine may lead to a loss of energy, feelings of irritability and sadness, or a loss of motivation. While you may not have the same access to the equipment and coaching you are used to, consider ways you can adapt your workouts in fun and creative ways. Also, remember the value of social support in your workout routines. Consider ways you can connect with your teammates virtually. This can allow you to set goals, report progress, and have some friendly competition and accountability with one another.

**Find new ways to feed your competitive spirit**

If you thrive best in competition mode, challenge yourself to find new ways to compete and grow. Take some time to brainstorm ways you can add some competition into your life over the next few weeks and months and consider inviting some friends, teammates, or family members to join you. These may be physical goals, academic goals, or even learning a new skill or hobby. Regardless, the goal is to reconnect with the competitive spirit that drives you.

**Finally- Remember that what you’re experiencing is difficult but not all is lost**

We recognize there are lots of difficult realities you are coping with during these challenging and uncertain times. We know that there is nothing that will change the reality that your season ended abruptly and forced you to put your dreams and athletic goals temporarily on hold. However, we want you to know your story is not over. We know your training as athletes has prepared you well to handle adversity and conquer challenges, no matter the odds. We know you have many amazing goals left to accomplish and look forward to seeing you meet them. You are also not alone. If you find yourself deeply struggling, reach out and make an appointment. There’s no shame in asking for help!

**To schedule an appointment, contact:**

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