RESILIENCE IN SPORTS TEAMS & ORGANIZATIONS

Hello everyone, welcome to this session on Resilience and Mindfulness in Sports. I am Priyanka and in this particular session you are going to be learning about understanding resilience and we are going to be looking at how we can build resilience at a team and an organizational level. Before we start the session, I want you to take a minute. I invite you to come into your quietness. Come into the quietness of your body. Gently take a deep breath.

Come into the present moment. If the thoughts come in, let them come in. There is no need to be judgmental about any of your thoughts. I want you to think of your strengths, your personal strengths.

It could be courage. It could be the way you assert yourself. It could be anything. I want you to just come back into the space that you are in. Be more aware of everything around you.

I hope you feel more connected to yourself. So, in this particular session as I have already mentioned, we are going to be talking about resilience. I am just wondering how did you feel? Especially while thinking about what made you resilient. You know what are your strengths? So, if we actually look at the very understanding of the very term resilience, it is derived from a Latin term resilia which means to rebound, to spring back or to jump to. So basically, if you actually look at what resilience means, it is, coping from an adversity.

We all have come across a number of situations where we are faced with a number of challenges in our life and we also know how to bounce back and move forward from them. So, in this particular session, we are going to be looking at what are those things which actually give us strength in order to move forward in our life. In the field of sport, just like in

life, people face challenges, athletes face challenges. In life, the challenges that make it extremely difficult could be losing somebody we love or basically going through a divorce or going through a breakup or it could be losing a job. And all these situations really require us to tap into our inner strength and move forward and face things. And in the field of sports, just like in life, athletes also face a number of situations which are extremely tough for them to handle.

It could be something when they make a mistake or probably they are in a slump continuously for a very long period of time and the performance is really not happening. It could be bouncing back from an injury or it could be a team really not performing exceptionally well for a prolonged period of time. Resilience is the strength which actually helps athletes move forward and cope with any form of adversity. So, let us just understand the definition of what resilience is. In the field of sport, we use this definition quite a bit and for this module, I am using this definition.

Resilience is the role of mental processes and behavior in promoting personal assets and protecting an individual from the potential negative effect of stressors. So, of course, there are multiple approaches to build resilience. People can be resilient basically by working on their individual strengths and competencies. It can be worked on individually or it could be built by teamwork or you can actually build resilience by building an organizational culture where there is enough strength for people to manage any of the challenges which comes their way. So, now moving forward I am going to be using it especially to talk about resilience.

One is I am going to be using the organizational constellation approach. So, I have also been fortunate to be trained in family constellation as a facilitator from Spanda Asia and Ochre Ireland and in this particular module, I am grateful that I have had Colette Green from Ochre Ireland supervise me and I have also used her research paper in order to develop this module. So, I have given the source of the research paper I have actually used by Colette and Sebastian Green. So, basically let us talk and understand about what a systemic and family constellation is. So, this particular modality of work was developed by Bert Hellinger.

Bert Hellinger was a German psychoanalyst and the principles that Bert Hellinger has given could be also translated into the organization. We will look at what kind of principles he

actually gave us with respect to understanding the family. So, one thing I want to talk about systemic and family constellation is, it helps us identify hidden dynamics and also recognize the unconscious patterns and bring order to the organization. In fact, a number of organizational consultants are actually using this particular approach in order to help an organization become more resilient. So, basically here we can look at what are the principles which are required of a family which was given by Bert Hellinger.

So, the same principles can be applied even in the organizational context. What Bert Hellinger says is that every family has a natural order and when the natural order is actually disrupted, the flow can be felt across subsequent generations. The disruption, what impact it has can be felt across multiple generations. Just like family is a system, an organization is also a system. The principles which can be applied in the family can also be translated into the same thing at the organization level.

If you look at the order in the family, the parents come first and then the children come in. In the same way in the organization there is a hierarchy which needs to be followed. In the family every member has a right to belong, every member has to be included. In the same way even in the organization every person has the right to belong and to be included. And you know in the family in the principles of relationship there is a giving and taking which happens.

In the same way when in the organization there is giving and taking which gets translated. So, let us just move forward and understand more in terms of, what is organizational resilience. We have Dr. Kavitha Rai Sinha who is going to be talking to us about what is organizational resilience and the need for it especially in an organizational setting.

Hello, I am Dr. Kavitha Rai Sinha, an industrial psychologist and today I will be giving a perspective on how a resilient organization impacts individuals or its employees. Well, essentially when we talk about resilience or resilient organization we are talking about a culture, culture of resilience, a culture of withstanding, a culture of adapting, a culture of recovering during disrupted times or from crisis. There are few elements, see a resilience is made up of few components in an organization. One of the most important components is leadership, a supportive leadership. In a resilient organization it is seen that the leadership is supportive, leadership encourages open communication.

They are more people centric, they believe in the psychological well-being and safety of their employees and then what happens? In an organization where employees and the leadership is looking after the well-being and is more approachable, employees feel supported, employees feel that they have the space to grow and they feel safe, it is a safe environment for them. They also derive a lot of inspiration looking up to their leadership. Second, a very important component is a culture of learning and adaptation. Interestingly in a resilient organization it has been observed that failure is not seen as a failure, a setback is not something that just pulls you back, rather it is seen as an opportunity. In a resilient organization there is a culture of learning from your setbacks and taking it in your stride and moving forward.

Third component is about problem solving skills. In a resilient organization they encourage people to come up with unique ideas. There is a huge scope of creativity and in a very innovative manner, in a very creative manner how can they solve or how can they overcome this crisis. So there is a huge encouragement given to that kind of thinking, critical thinking and innovation. Now, put all these three things together.

The leadership, well-supported leadership, culture of learning and adaptation and unique problem solving skills. How does it impact when you have all these components as part of the culture of an organization? It actually impacts an individual by giving them a very robust coping mechanism and self-efficacy. And overall when an individual has a good coping mechanism and crisis during times when you are, you know, during trying times, during disruptive times, you have a coping mechanism that is basically the deal maker or the breaker because you feel that yes, you are well equipped to overcome that problem and self-efficacy is basically the belief in yourself. You believe that yes, you have the potential to overcome these problems. That gives you so much confidence and you approach something with whole zeal or whole attitude of resolving it or overcoming those problems.

So yes, we say that the entire idea or entire component of culture becomes very essential. So resilience is essentially a culture and when an individual works in that culture, he or she gets impacted by that. And that is not just seen in their professional domain but it's also seen in their personal domain. A resilient culture is not only about a business strategy but it is about impacting an individual and it has the potential to impact the society. Thank you.

Moving forward, you know, when we are, I think we have all understood the organizational culture that Dr. Kavitha Rai Sinha has actually spoken about. And what I want to say is, you know, an organization is massive. So let's look at how we can actually build resilience in an organization. So just like any other organization, a sports organization also has a central body, and under it a number of other associations or federations or other sports sub-organizations come in.

So you have the main organization and then you can actually see that you have the main governing body and then you have various disciplines like hockey, badminton, tennis, volleyball, athletics, table tennis, multiple sports. I have only used a few sports here but all the other sports come under the main governing body. So you can imagine how huge the organization actually is. So now what we could do is we can just consider one particular organization. So let's take a particular organization.

Here is the president of the organization. You also know this could be the vice president in the organization and this can be the treasurer of the organization and you can have the administrative and the support staff in the organization. And this can be the coach of the organization and the coach has his support staff. There can be the captain and vice captain of the team. There can be several senior players on this team.

There can be, you know, the mid-level players and also every team has a junior player. So let's just try to understand this particular organization. So you can see that there are several principles that we need to understand. There is a hierarchy which has to be followed here. That is what we also have to understand is anything that happens here has a huge impact on the players of the organization.

What we also need to understand is, you know, that people of power need to really serve the players on this particular team. And what also we really have to understand is that, you know, whether they are creating safety for everybody on this particular team, whether they are working for the benefit of them. Anything that can happen here can have a huge impact on the performance of the players here. So for a resilient organization, everybody really has to work towards a similar vision, mission and, have a unity and also have an understanding with which they can work together. So also what we need to understand is every organization

really has to respect and honor the ancestors of the organization.

For example, I was watching this particular interview of one of the sports persons and I actually appreciated what he said. He said that, for us to be where we are today, we really want to thank and honor our ancestors for the role that they have played. It is mainly because of their performance and their contribution. We have played, you know, we have been able to play this particular sport and that is something that we really have to do. The past has to be honored, you know, for the future to become better and for the present to become better.

So now let us actually look at how we can build resilient teams. The same principles that we actually spoke about in the organizational setup can be used even in this particular context in building resilient teams. I want you to take a closer look at this image. You know, here you can actually see elephants, right, elephant herd. So you can see that, there are elephants who are senior, there are elephants who are also juniors, you know?

So in the same way, in a sports team basically you have a coach, you have the hierarchy of mid-level players, you also have junior players, you have the captain and vice-captain, etc. What I want you to understand from this particular image is that there is an order which is in play here. Everybody really has to help out and support each other for them to go out there and reach their particular goal. So resilience is also something that requires people to really work together. And I would like to bring in the example of our, you know, one of the famous cricketers because of whom we ended up winning the World Cup.

In an interview, he spoke about the fact that how everybody had to take on the responsibilities within the team and how every single person on the team had to contribute for the betterment of the team's performance. You know, only when individuals took on the roles and responsibilities was when the players on the team particularly performed better. For us, let us just understand this, okay. For us to build resilient teams, these are the questions which could be asked. Do you feel good enough? Do you feel your right size? Do you feel too big or too small? Do you feel hurt? Are you respected? Do you feel safe? Does your team fit into the organization? What I also want us to understand is probably take a look at this particular situation, okay.

So probably on this particular team, you have these players. So I just want you to look at

this particular image. Here is an athlete who has been taking a lot of load and responsibility from the team. He wants the team to perform exceptionally well. He wants every single person on the team to do very, very well.

And somewhere he is always managing everybody's emotions. He is trying to understand, you know, how people can do better, he is really supporting them in their problems. But what I also notice is this person is getting extremely frustrated and burdened. So if at all you think that this is a resilient team, it is not.

Because one person is trying to manage everybody. And if I take this person out of the picture, you can see what happens. These two athletes can be extremely confused and clueless. They may be extremely finding it difficult in order to move forward, you know, they may not know how to go about doing things, yeah, without the support of the main person. However, I am bringing this person back and probably if you think of it, you know, empowering them and making them realize that, okay, you have to take responsibility for the team's unity. If both of them are able to take responsibility for the team's unity, all the members are equally responsible.

You have a role to play for this particular team. You are important for the team. Then the burden on this person might reduce to a large extent. And these people will come to realize their importance on the team. So this is something that we really have to practice especially while building resilient teams.

Now, let us look at the same team. Maybe let us look at another example. So here is an athlete, yeah, who would like to discuss, you know, with these two players about certain strategies that he really has in mind and which can really be beneficial to the team. If the players on the team tell him that, you know what, what you are saying is not really worthy, you know, what you are communicating does not really help us, then what do you think he will feel? He is going to feel so sad. He is going to feel that nothing that I speak is appreciated or being valued.

People do not really view my opinions as being important. So maybe he may stop himself from communicating and that may not help the team in being resilient. However, you know, if at all they are supportive and they are encouraging and they also say that your opinions are

important for us, we are open to listening to you, we are very open to understanding what you have to speak, then, you know, probably the player may not be hesitant in order to communicate what he wants. He may be willing to express himself and with a little more support, he may also really feel, okay, I can actually come up with certain things that can really help the team. So I think in building resilience, creating a safe environment for the people of the organization is important and for the team, creating a safe culture for the team is important. Because when players really feel safe, they will be able to express themselves better and even if you look at some of the research studies, they also speak about the importance of safety.

And in this team, the more safety is provided, the player can come close and there is a sense of connection and belonging which ends up happening in the team. Like I said, every person on the team needs to be respected and every person has to be included for the team to be resilient. So I was talking about safety within the teams and you know, there are a number of research studies which have spoken about the psychological safety within the team which can also create resilient organizations. So with this, I would say that we have spoken, you know, about resilience in building organization, the importance of resilience in building teams.

So basically these are some of the things. I think it is important for people to take on the right size for them, making sure that they are taking responsibility, building trust, creating a sense of safety and also creating a sense of respect within the teams which can definitely build resilient teams and resilient organizations. So thank you so much for listening to this amazing session.