

# STRESSED EMOTIONS

Understanding your emotions before you compete will help you reach your goal



## Original Research

Cerin, E., and A. Barnett. A processual analysis of basic emotions and sources of concerns as they are lived before and after a competition. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 7:287-307, 2006.

YOUR EMOTIONS ARE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS. THEY CHANGE OVER TIME, AND THEY CAN BE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS. KNOW HOW THEY CHANGE AND WHAT SORT OF INFLUENCE SETS YOU UP FOR SUCCESS.

Training and competition are important to you, and you want to do as well as you possibly can in both. And if you are a coach, you want to be able to provide your athletes with a formula that stacks success in their favor. Since sport is performed with your body, you attend mostly to physical training and physical competition strategy. However, you should not neglect the impact of your thoughts and feelings upon your performance, regardless of how well your physical preparations are going. What is at stake is the impact of competitive stress on your emotions and performance. The demands and opportunities you see in competition, and what others say to you and expect from you, can strongly influence your thoughts and emotions, directly affecting your performance. Although many researchers in sport psychology have looked into this connection and recommended ways to deal with competitive stress, no study until this one has looked at the timing of competitive stress-i.e., what an athlete feels before and after competition and how this might impact performance. The findings of this study will help you not only understand your own reaction to competition stress, but also learn how to address it for maximal performance.

**Power Key:** competition, stress, emotion