

## **S2 E13: Burnout in Coaches with Ben Woodruff**

Ricky Snodgrass 0:00

Hello, and welcome to this episode of the coaching podcast from British canoeing.

Ben Woodruff 0:07

Hello, and welcome everyone to the coaching podcast for British canoeing. I'm Lea Pooley, the head of coaching and qualifications. And this podcast, is a podcast that we've put together to explore a recent piece of research that examines what factors predict burnout in sports coaches, and exploring the role of personal and situation stressors. I'm really delighted that the author now works with British canoeing, which is absolutely fantastic, within the coaching department. And Ben has joined us to chat with us on the research and mechanisms that coaches could adopt to cope with the demands on their role. So a really interesting, an interesting podcast for people to delve into and listen. And I'm also delighted that Ben's agreed that this research will also be on the British Canoeing Digital Library. So if you need any further, sort of reading into it, and looking into more detail than we can cover on this particular podcast for the next 30 minutes, is delve into the digital library. So welcome, Ben. Great to have you great to have you working at British canoeing. You'll tell us how long you've been working for working at British canoeing and your role there. But I think what would be really useful is if you provide an introduction to yourself a bit of your background, and then why you chose this particular study.

Yeah, lovely. So first of all Lee, thank you for having me, I'm really looking forward to getting into this topic more, I think it's going to be really beneficial for a lot of coaches, I think they'll relate to a lot of the things that we'll discuss. So as Lee said, I'm Ben Woodruff, I joined British canoeing nearly four months ago now, I'm in the coaching department, I work as eLearning and digital developer within the team, so looking at ways to upskill coaches and, and new creative, innovative ways to keep people engaged and learning throughout their coaching journey. So this research study itself was part of my study at the University of East Anglia. I finished my undergraduate degree there. So this was my undergraduate dissertation. And I was looking at burnout within sports coaches. Now, for me, it was a really important topic, because I burned out as a coach, when I was 18, I was working 30 hours a week at college, then 40 hours a week.

On top of that, as a coach, I was 18, doing 70 hour weeks. And I didn't understand burnout, I didn't know what it was, I didn't even know as a thing. I thought I was invincible. I was only 18 and I thought, I can keep going. This is brilliant. This and I ended up burning out. And I'm living with the repercussions three years on from it. So for me, it was a way to understand what happened to myself, but also to help others who find themselves getting towards that situation. So they don't reach the stage where I did, where it was a horrible experience, they can get out of it, and then recover and come back from that burnout before hitting that stage. In terms my backgrounds, I've been coaching since I was 13. So that's crikey, Eight years now. I've coached various different sports, throughout various different settings all the way from sort of grassroots up to an elite setting. So yes, coaching wise, I've been coaching a while, and yeah burnt out, unfortunately, and then some quite harsh lessons through that.

Oh, thanks, Ben. And, as always, many thanks for your honesty of how, you know, how the study come about, I think what's really important as well, as you know, you know, reading the research and thoroughly enjoyed thoroughly enjoyed the paper, we know that some research papers can be quite hard work and digest. So then, thanks for keeping me sort of engaged in the way that you wrote the wrote the report. But what I thought was really important to put across right at the very early stages is of this podcast, is this is not just for coaches, you know, this is for employers, deployers, to understand, to enable them to help able to support the health and wellbeing of coaches that they have within their within their organizations, whether it's being a voluntary, or whether it's being in a paid capacity. So I just wanted to make sure that right at the very early stages that, you know, anyone listening, this is not just for coaches, you know, and employers and deployers have a real, you know, moral and legal responsibility to have to look after the coaches within their care. So just thought I'd put that.

Absolutely. And I'll just jump in there quickly because I mean, for me lawyers and deployers there's so many benefits to this because like you say, there's that moral obligation to look after the people that are in your care that you are employing, you are deploying. But also from a standpoint of actually, its continuity of coaching and delivery, because you've got the same individuals delivering rather than high staff turnover. It's the fact that when they're happy and, and feeling good, and their wellbeing is good in their job, they'll deliver to a

higher standard as well, which means the participants will enjoy it more. So the knock on effect is massive. And the same thing goes for volunteers, because they might only coach oh say only five hours a week. But that's on top of a very busy life as well, where they've got to balance work and life, and then voluntary coaching or assistant, anything along those lines. And they can burn out as well, because it could be their background in life. And that will affect their coaching. And it's then finding ways to get around that to get the most out of that coach to make sure that they are keeping well. Their wellbeing is good. And they're keeping coaching and enjoying what they're doing. The last thing we want is to force loads of coaches, paddlesport assistants, anyone involved within sport out of sport they love because they're burnt out.

Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. So as I said, is the research the research project was what factors predict burnout in sports coaches, and then exploring the role of personal and situation stressors. So obviously, that was probably a question within the research. So could you explain the methodology used? So you started, you started putting this project together? And I think it's really important that listeners understand the type of methodology that you use to approach this particular piece of research.

Yeah, of course. So for me. So I'm a very statistical guy. I like statistics. I like data. I like the clarity that that brings. It's a simple yes or no. So within research, there's two paradigmatic positions. So basically, a paradigmatic position is where you sit on the research spectrum. So at one end, you've got data quantitative, which is very one right answer, yes, no, this is what the data shows. And then the other end of the spectrum, you've got qualitative, which is rich, often spoken data, so transcripts of interviews and bits and pieces like that, that you can take lots of different ideas and views from so it's that there's not just one way answer, there's lots of different bits. And then in the middle, you've got people who use the data, and then use the words to explain what happens in the data. And that's then mixed methods. So for this, I was quantitative. This was statistics. Because it just worked better. There was scales to measure burnout. And there were scales to measure my stressors and the dimensions of burnout, which just helped me massively. As a person, I'm quite realistically sat on a spectrum. And for me, I like to have that yes or no, I like to have the data that is clear, as day this shows this, this shows that I like to know what's going on. So from a personal sort of standpoint, that's why research was taken with the

numbers with the data is quantitatively. The actual research itself is broken down into three areas. So we've got the stressors, the moderator, and then burnout itself. So I researched the different stressors that affect burnout, most 20/30 overall, and pick the three key ones that were most relevant to this study. So I picked entrapment, which is essentially how trapped you feel in a situation that you feel you can't get out of it. Coaching stress, which is stress, specific to a coaching situation, and then perceived stress, which is the level of stress the individual perceives themselves to have. But that includes life issues as well, which is really important to consider, because that could all contribute to the burnout. Then we had a moderator that we wanted to test. So a moderator is essentially something that affects a relationship. So for example, it could affect the relationship of coaching stress to burnout. And I'd expect it to because essentially, with social support, you're supporting someone and giving them help you're giving them aid someone for them to talk to show it should reduce the effects of that coach and stress on burnout as a whole. And then with burnout there were three dimensions. And for me, I wanted to measure the three dimension separately, because it allowed us to predict more accurately what a coach's burnout was caused by. So the three dimensions of burnout are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. And now what essentially the idea of the study was through the methodology was, we would see which of the stressors, so entrapment, coaching stress and perceived stress linked to each of the three dimensions of burnout. So that when we created a model, we could trace back the path and see. So, we'd test a coach, for example, for that burnout level, it might be that they came up as emotionally exhausted, and not the other two dimensions, we could then trace that line back and see which of the stressors was causing that, and then use that to reduce that stressor to reduce their chance of burnout. So essentially, it just gave us a way to predict and mitigate against burnout more. So, after coming up with all of this was sent quite I sent questionnaires out, it was convenient sampling, because I knew coaches. And basically, it went to coaches aged 18. And over, of course, various levels. So right from grassroots, to elite, it was a self-administered 20 minute questionnaire. And, at the end of it with all of the questions, and every field, we had 5400 data points to sort of use, which was brilliant, because it was plenty to look at. Then we had to analyse the data. That's another massive part of the methodology. So we used a program, called SPSS is basically a statistical analysis program. Basically had to format the data, creating means for all of the data and then we ran, this is where it gets a little bit heavy, so bear with me, three multiple linear regressions, it's essentially just a form of data analysis where you take a variable and see if it affects

another. So what we did was we took each of the three stressors in turn. And we saw if they affected each of the dimensions of burnout, that's essentially what those regressions were, we found some significant correlations, which we'll talk about in a minute. And then we look for the moderation effects. So by looking for the moderation effect, essentially, what we're doing is we're looking to see if social support makes it easy for a coach makes it less like a burnout. And again, that was just another moderation analysis, called a two stage hierarchical analysis for anyone interested, I won't go into depth.

Well, then, as I said, before, reading the research, and it will be available on the, on the awarding body website, is that actually all of that all that data is really well represented within charts and tables, within the research, big sample size, you know, really credible sample size. And here, those are the things that we would tend to look at in terms of, you know, its, its value. So I think what's really important is, you know, there, there is no real solid question that we know, is an important area to identify and for us to understand better in terms of what is the stresses on coaches, and, and etc. But for me is, so what? And, you know, so what were what were the significant findings within this research, you know, what, you know, what did you come up with, which is significant, rather than, you know, we always come up with some thoughts when we do research, but what was the significant pieces that came to light?

Yeah, so, again, completely agree, really, there's always lots of different little bits, but it's, the challenge is always picking the significant things, and then focusing on them and how they can then impact the wider field and in my case, hopefully help individuals. So I ran the regressions and essentially created a model. And that model would again, be on the Digital Library, I'll put that on a page really clear for everyone to see, it's the best way to represent the data because it's visual. As a learner, I like seeing things visually, I know a lot of other people do as well. So the key sort of findings were the entrapment, correlated to every single dimension of burnout. So if a coach was burning out, it was very highly likely caused by entrapment. So in layman's terms, essentially, if a coach was burning out, so that could be feeling really tired, poor diet or anything like that. I'll talk more about the symptoms in a bit. It was mostly caused by feeling trapped in a situation they can't get out of. This was something I experienced to coach and this was the primary cause of my burnout. I felt trapped in a situation I didn't want to leave because I fought I let down my employers, I thought I'd let down

the people that we're delivering sessions to, when in reality, I wouldn't have done because there was another coach who could have stepped in and covered those sessions and I could have looked after my wellbeing. But in my head, I couldn't see that way out. I saw that I was trapped in this situation. I was there and had to see it through and had to complete this for my participants for my employees. And that's what a lot of coaches fall into with their burnout and that's what this research has shown. So every aspect of burnout so reduced personal accomplishment, depersonalization and emotional exhaustion. Are all caused by entrapment. So breaking that down reduced personal accomplishment essentially means that you feel you aren't achieving much. Depersonalization means that you don't see people as individuals anymore, you're more likely to snap at them, and potentially say some words you might regret. And then emotional exhaustion, you feel completely drained struggle to function unmotivated. So entrapment leads to all three of them. We then looked at perceived stress that only correlated to emotional exhaustion. So essentially, the amount of stress you think you're experiencing within your life will cause you to be emotionally exhausted through your burnout. So if we tested a coach for burnout, and they were emotionally exhausted, it was highly likely that they would be that would be caused by perceived stress. So the stress that they're finding, so how we would then combat that as we would look at their stress levels, try and work out where their stress is coming from and reduce that interest in the coaching stress didn't correlate to any of the aspects of burnout. So stresses in that single coaching environment appeared to be dealt with by coaches, some initial of the job, and some they didn't find an issue in terms of burnout, which again, was really interesting. So the main thing to look at, to consider if you're an employer, Deployer, coach, or volunteer is that entrapment? Don't ever feel you can't get out of the situation, because there's always a way out. Because if you feel that, it's likely you'll stay there, and you'll stay the course all the way, till burnout. And that is my interpretation on it is when you're in when you interact, you almost stay the course, you're there for the length of it till you hit burnout. That's when it all explodes. That's when it stops. But as coaching issues, it's just that one session may be something you're thinking between, but that will blow over in a couple of weeks version trapped will last a long time. And then the last sort of...

Sorry, but and just to sort of, you know, there is there is a, you know, research out there that actually the coaching, the coaching stress that you've been, you know, sort of mentioned it is actually that's what coaches thrive on, and actually

makes them a much more rounded, engaged coach. So those stressors actually are, although they're stressors, sometimes seen as a negative word actually creates thriving activity within the coaching within the coaching relationship.

Yeah, I completely agree. And I mean, on a personal level, I love that as a coach, I love having the challenges. It makes it more interesting. It gives you something to do and to think about, and we all like that as coaches. And that's something we all have in common is we like the challenges of working with different individuals that we're working with coming up with new ways of getting them to engage.

Lee Pooley 17:41

Sorry, I agree, sorry for interrupting.

Ben Woodruff 17:44

Oh no, I completely agree that was a really valid point. And actually, that's something that I've suggested later on, that is looked at for in further research, because it might be that aspect is what's keeping coaches in it, it might be linked to entrapment, because they're enjoying that aspect is something to discover more. And then the last key finding was that social support moderates to relationships. So it moderates the relationship between entrapment and depersonalization and entrapment and emotional exhaustion. So put simply, if you're entrapped in a situation, but have someone to socially support you, so that could be your employer deployer, it could be a significant other, could be a close friend, it could be another coach, it means you're less likely to experience that depersonalization, you're less likely to be angry at lots of people shouting, saying things you regret seeing them as not individuals. And also with that second relationship with emotion exhaustion, it means you're less likely to lose motivation, because they're there to motivate you to pick you up. And that essentially, is what that shows with that moderation effect. It means that having someone there for you to support you, someone who you trust, and it likes a career significant other, a good mate, another coach who get on really well, we'll reduce the impact of those two elements of burnout.



Well, and you know, this is obviously a continuation of Kelly's. So 1994, isn't it?  
94?

Yes, yeah.

Lee Pooley 19:09

Research about social support. And, you know, saying that, you know, identified within that research was the effective emotional support to help maintain coach's wellbeing wasn't it? And I think that's really prominent in this particular area for, you know, employees employers and I say that because it's obviously a volunteer and professional occasion I say is, you know, within our clubs within our talent settings and our talent programs and also our world class programs, is actually ensuring that there is effective emotional support to help maintain that, that that, that that, that coach's well being

Ben Woodruff 19:50

100% and actually is something that I looked at within this study. So we found that coaching is widely regarded as a stressful position both in professional and voluntary settings. Typically more stressors occur at higher levels of coaching, with coaches feeling depressed, emotionally exhausted, because of targets and having their job on the line. And the voluntary grassroots coach has also experienced various stressors created through variables such as lack of support, in contrast to that professional setting, with entrapment felt within that voluntary role compared to their work life conflicts as well. And again, there's a bit of research in there looking at Robbins, Stebbings and others. So again, if you want have a read of it, and you'll see that actually, it does affect coaches for all levels.

Okay, well, so everything, you know, when you know, my sort of take on stuff, and you know, you've been with us four months, but I think you get into the way that understanding how I think is, is you know, yet again, I go so what, yeah, and you know, for me is Alright, great. So how can we give anything? Can we get one? Can we give anything on this podcast that get gets both coaches and deploys? To recognize burnout? So what you know, how do we recognize burnout?



Yeah, and this, this is massive. So burnout, in terms of burnout as a whole has been around for ages. So first discussed prominently within research by Maslach in 1982. And it's been discussed, plenty previous. But it's only recently been discussed as a mental I don't want to say mental illness because I don't like that word. That's a mental wellbeing issue in a workplace over the last few years by the Mental Health Foundation, so it's still relatively new for employers and deployers. So actually, it's really important to recognize the signs of it, because the coach himself probably won't realize. So again, I'll put my example, I didn't realize that I was burning out. But my tutor college did a stage you wouldn't believe I put on two stone in two months because of it, which was crazy. I hadn't recognized myself because I was so in that depersonalization zone, I was literally just seeing things as facts and figures and coaching and nothing else. I didn't realize what I was doing to myself, and he pulled me aside and said, Look, you're burning out you need to stop, I've recognized that we need to solve this. And actually having that ability to recognize is really important. So in terms of burnout symptoms, there's a wide scale, and you could have one, you could have all those unfortunate I had most of them. So I'll just give you a few. That actually, if you're listening to this, and you think actually this applies to me, it's worth going and having a look further, maybe a chat with your employer, the deployer, or if you're an employer, Deployer. And you think one of your coaches or volunteers is experienced this, again, maybe a chance and a look at their workload. So burnout comes in many forms, it could be feeling tired and drained all the time. And having frequent illnesses, predominately colds, and that's purely because they've got low immunity because of what they're putting their body through a change in habits. So they might sleep less, they might sleep more, their appetite will change again, either less or more. So in terms of me, it went more. Because I was so busy, there was a lot of McDonald's consumed a lot of takeaways, a lot of frozen pizzas. And that was a massive change my habit. That's definitely something to look for frequent headaches, someone's complaining about headaches all the time, again, could be a sign of burnout, feeling trapped and sort of defeated. Again, that link to the entrapment aspect of the burnout and that relationship, they're feeling detached, you're lonely, so it might be a chance to exclude themselves from chatting as a group of coaches. They just turn up, do their session and go home, not chatty. And again, sometimes people just have one off weeks. But it's more if it's a consistent showing a loss of motivation is a massive one. So it is a weird place. I had no motivation whatsoever. Yet, I still went out and coached 40 hours a week on top of college and it was it a tough one because you've got to get yourself up while

you're not motivated. Because you feel you have to do it, it just becomes a massive chore. You have an increasingly cynical outlook potentially, which again, could then impact your coaching because you're not then giving positive points to your individuals, your participants, you could be saying stuff that actually aren't of massive use to them. And procrastination is also an element. So I used to do this with my college where I procrastinate that massively. And then again, usually food and alcohol to cope. So one of my coping mechanisms was food. I ate a lot of food, a lot of junk foods, was not good for my body, but it was easier. I enjoyed it. It was one of the things I literally wanted the only things I enjoyed, and then sort of lastly, taking frustrations out on others. So in the worst scenario on participants on other coaches, on loved ones on friends and sort of pushing them away. So again, if you're a coach and you recognize another coach taking their frustrations out more than others, could be a massive sign of burnout. So it's definitely worth having a look into it. And I mean, obviously, have a look at this paper brilliant. Also research on mind on the Mental Health Foundation on calm the charity for living well have a look on these places for anything you can do to help individuals that you're in contact with. Because it will mean more to them than they will know. And I think the next big thing, obviously, you say what if little what, why? So what? I've just given all of the symptoms, why? Well, we want to stop what happens when you reach burnout. And that is this bit one of those horrible phenomenon, as you can see in the research that people completely regret doing it. And I completely regret putting myself at that stage. So why? Why do we want to stop it? Well, if you reach burnout, you'll get anxiety, depression, panic disorder, you live in unhealthy because of a poor diet and a lack of exercise, you have a loss of joy, and you don't really enjoy anything in life, which is quite horrible. You're a bit of a lost sheep. Yeah. When you've burnt out, you're sort of wandering around aimlessly, just getting on with life. And no one wants to do that, you know, lack of productivity, lack of that coaching continuity, you're not giving that same standard of coaching to your participants. And deep down you know, you want to you know, they deserve it, but you just physically can't get out. When you burn out. And I can't stress this enough is a long term impact, if not caught before you reach burnout stage. It's been three years since I burnt out a little over three years as I burnt out, and I still suffer. I personally because of it. Now I have to live with panic disorder, not something that's fun. Something like that I take medication for and bits and pieces like that, I'm very open with coaches, because I think that actually talking about my experiences should help them. Understand that if you burn out, it's not an I'll have two weeks off in the Caribbean come back fine. If you burn out, it's a long term impact is going to last you for years. And that is why we need to stop coaches burning out.

We need to stop this culture of working coaches right until they burn out. We need to keep them safe, safeguarded, yourself safeguarded. Your employees your volunteer safeguarded from this psychological phenomenon is burnout.

Yeah. Well, Ben, thanks for that. Thanks very much for your honesty. And, you know, I'm sure listeners, you know, you are really engaged in terms of, you know, your personal story. And I think, you know, just to reiterate, there are, you know, there are mechanisms that within employed, employed establishments, that you have got Mental Health First Aiders, but also, you know, within clubs, you know, it's something to really consider that, you know, is there a Mental Health First Aider within that within that particular club? And if there isn't, is there a mechanism that they've got that someone that they can actually talk to, and you know, yet again, as part of this podcast, there'll be links at the end that you can actually, that we've, we've provided before, in terms of if people want to talk to anyone, or any, or agencies that we have links with? So thank you very much for that. Ben. I think the last bit for me is what mechanisms Yeah, what are what could you what could you recommend as his mechanisms of coping with the demands of, of, of coaching, because coaching is, is complex, you know, and I've never made any, any apologize, apologies for not trying to simplify coaching, because coaching is a very complex activity. And to me, it is an absolute profession, whether you do a lot of voluntary or through paid, it is an absolute profession that takes many years to get to a coaching level. So, or a coaching standard. So what do you what would you be recommend recommended is mechanisms to cope of the complexities and demands of coach.

Yeah, so again, I've could not agree more Lee and this is the more I say joyful part because it's the way that you can detach from that coaching and you can keep yourself enjoying it because at the end of the day, we all coach because we absolutely love doing it. And the only reason I'm talking about burnout is because we want to stop people getting to the stage where they don't enjoy it anymore. I went for a couple years, I didn't enjoy it. I'm back loving it again. And we don't want people to miss out on time doing something they enjoy. We all coach because we love it. Just finding ways to cope with the demands. Like you say it's a massively demanding profession, volunteering capacity to have. So there's sort of four branches of mechanisms that are the best ways of coping in from my personal experience, and from sort of research and looking at other bits, like the Mental Health Foundation, mind, academic journals. So the first one

is to talk to others. That's, that's always the stereotypical one, it's towards whoever share your share your issues. And obviously, it's easier said than done. But you don't even have to share issues you're having, it's just reached out to the people closest to you spend some time with them, have some fun with them, have a laugh with them. Limit your contact with negative people. If you find those negative people in your life, limit your contact if you can, it's only going to drag your outlook down and make you into a more cynical person to that depersonalization aspect of the burnout. Just try and live that positive lifestyle. A good way of having that positive outlook in your life is to connect with a community or a charity, something that is meaningful and enjoyable to you. Preferably out of coaching, because it just gives you that detachment. So it could still be within the sport, it could be going into a primary school as an after school club, and to talk to people about paddle sports, because you're not coaching, it's taking you away from it's given you a bit of joy is altruistic. It's just something different other than coaching, it switches your mind off. But it's something you're passionate about and still engages you. That's the takeaway there. The second bit is reframe the way you look at coaching is really important. And I know you'll agree with this lee. So look for value and positives in every session, no matter how small, even if you think it was the worst session ever delivered, make sure you reflect on it and get to three, four, if not more, even if they're small positives and value from that session, because that will really help you a progression coaching, be avoid burnout. And see just enjoy every session a little bit more. Make sure you have a coach/life balance. Don't let coaching take over everything you do. And by this I mean, if you're a provider, make sure you switch your emails off at a certain time. Don't look at them at 11 o'clock at night, your voluntary coach, don't sit and plan a session at one in the morning, make sure you have a barrier, go to the pub your mates, head out for a paddle yourself without thinking about coaching, go for a kick around 5-a-side football anything like that, to just take a bit of a step away from coaching, and have that coach life balance and also take some time off. I'm not saying take off a year off, just take the week off here and there to allow you to recharge to recoup and to go again, spend some time with a family or friends, even just doing bits and pieces around the house. But taking time off is really important. I know you'll agree with that as well. And then sort of strand three. Again, similar to this re-evaluating your priorities. So set boundaries for coaching. Make sure you've got accessible hours, but don't push them something that I had to learn massively when I was a coach, I would be sat at midnight just in bed looking at emails and I'd be up at six the next morning ready to go and coach well actually that's not healthy. So now I made sure that come six o'clock. I don't look at my emails that then locks my

screen time on my phone at six o'clock. I can't access it until the next day, which is sort of a really good practice going forward and manage people's expectations. Don't keep making yourself accessible within a minute of them asking because then expect it to all of the time. Take a break from technology, looking at screens and stuff over the day, take a break from it. Take a break from the negativity that some of that sometimes brings. Take some time to be creative and free. So it could be doing some art, some cooking. Again, head out on the water, have a paddle. But don't think about coaching. Just enjoy it and have that sort of side be creative and free. And then set specific relaxation times. Now this this for me was really important in rebuilding my coaching back up after burnout. It could be just sitting read in a newspaper, book, listen to a podcast again preferably non coaching because it switches your mind off a little bit. And there's a really good funny sporty ones on Spotify, on podbean, anything like that. If you want to relax the British canoeing coaching podcast, that's, that's always a good listen. And then stuff like yoga meditation. And my personal favourite. This was the one that that sort of really helped me an inflatable lazy spa hot tub can never underestimate the value of an inflatable lazy spa hot tub. And then yeah, just eating well getting plenty of sleep so seven to nine hours but aim for the nine. A lot of people aim for the seven every night. Aim for the nine because it gives your body time to recharge. It pumps spinal fluid for your brain resets that allows it to go again if you don't give that that opportunity burnouts, more likely. Which leads me quite nicely onto strand number four Which is exercise and diet so that can, if you get it right, boost your mood and wellbeing, make sure you're aiming for sort of 180 minutes of exercise a week, because again, it helps keep your body going and keeps it regulated is a really good stress relief, I can't stress that enough exercise the best stress relief you'll ever get. And then again, yeah, have better fuel in your body, it makes you feel better, it gives you more energy, you're much more likely to be up and about, and go in and move in. And I mean, I'm well, I've been talking a lot about this. But there's, there's, there's an analogy that someone once told me, I'm going to repeat it, because it helped me understand burnout and actually fuelling your body properly, and looking after your body so much more. So your brain is like an engine, the engine of the car. When you burn out, when you're at that stage of burnout, it's like you're driving everywhere. In second gear, 8000 revs, the engine is not going to last like that, it's going to explode eventually. So what you've got to do is maintain it well enough, once it's damaged, it's going to be incredibly hard to fix, it's going to take a lot of time to fix. So what you've got to do is look after it and maintain it in the meantime, needs regular maintenance. So for example, the engine needs oil and coolant to

keep it running smoothly to avoid it exploded and breaking. Well As humans, we need to exercise we need good sleep, we need good food, because that keeps us running smoothly, we need that break away from coaching from work, because that keeps us running smoothly. It lowers the revs lessens the chance of the engine exploding, that are being caused and some irreversible damage happening. So yeah, that that analogy is something that stuck with me. And it's, it's sort of a really good way to try and understand the impact that burnout can have on an individual.

Lee Pooley 36:44

Yeah, well, I really, really enjoyed that Ben and, you know, some of the things that, you know, sort of resonated with me is the, you know, as coaches, you know, is our role to work towards an individual's independence. And, you know, certainly I say regularly, you know, as coaches, we should be working towards redundancy, that they aren't as reliant on us. So, you know, managing expectations and actually, for them to make choices and you don't have to be, you know, have to be on the, on the end of the phone or available or times, I think it's really important. And one of the things that you know, over my time, coaching and, and now working at British canoeing, it becomes really obvious that, that individuals that get involved with coaching, tend to have less for themselves. And it's an it's a fine balance, isn't it that it's fine in time, but actually, we all got to remember why we fell in love with the sport and revisit that from on a regular basis. So, Ben, one of the things you know, thank you very much for your time, really appreciate it. I really do hope that all the lessons have enjoyed this podcast. And as you know what I've said and also you've repeated for me, which is very useful is that actually the research will be available on the British Canoeing awarding websites within the Digital Library. So after listening to this podcast, please delve into it and for everyone out there whether you're a coach with your own employer or Deployer. We have a responsibility of ourselves and others and for the health and wellbeing of coaches. So thanks very much then you take care

Ben Woodruff 38:37

Thank you Lee.

Lee Pooley 38:37

And hopefully people will be listening to our next podcast.