# GENERAL SYNOPSIS (The Big Picture in 3-4 sentences):

# Swimming is a very stressful sport.

# Everyone has their own emotional/psychological journeys, and everyone reacts differently to challenging situations and stress. People tend put up walls. It is common that people put on a smile and a brave face, but are really struggling behind the scenes. We all need to be encouraging and supportive of one another because we don’t always see what someone is struggling with on the inside. Mental illness is not an injury/sickness you can see, but you still need to heal/recover from it, or learn how to cope with it.POSSIBLE MAIN POINTS OR TAKEAWAYS FOR…

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| LSC Board/Committee Members | Teams in WisconsinKeep the energy/practice environment positiveEliminate the negativity; no complainingEveryone matters. Everyone is a part of the family. Everyone is key. |
| CoachesPeople are often ready physically before they are ready mentally. Sometimes athletes need to slow it down. Physical capability is different from readiness. Ask yourself if the athlete is also ready cognitively and emotionally to take the next step in the sport. Know your athletes. | Officials |
| Athletes1 person can bring down a group, but it takes a group to bring up 1 personShare concerns with your coachBe the start of a little positive “momentum”; it will build and growIf you can’t be excited about a set, be excited about something else (10x400s vs more sun time!) | LSC OthersTry not to make snap judgements of people. You never know what they are going through behind the scenes. |

## Additional Notes:

It’s okay not to be okay.

Don’t be ashamed of seeing a psychologist, it is really nice to have someone outside of your daily life to talk to. We also need to understand that therapy, and the trust and the relief that comes with it, takes time. Seek a therapist who has a sports/swimming background and who will understand the stresses of the sport.

All transitions are hard. We are naturally afraid of change/the unknown. People tend to expect the same performance level/success, but we need to be patient to adjust to change. This can be the transition between competition age groups (12&U-13/14), between teams, between levels of swimming (age group - high school - college - olympics - “real world”).

Many athletes struggle to separate their success in the pool and their self-worth.

When overcoming a setback of any kind, don’t compare yourself to others. You are in a completely different situation than they are. Similarly, don’t match someone else’s goals, make your own, you will need to take your own path.

To help someone who seems to be struggling to open up, ask personalized questions, not just always “how are you?”; not yes/no Qs

 What did you do today?

 What was your practice like?

 What did you learn new today?

 How are you feeling today?

 What did you do this morning?...etc

 Did you have any classes? Which?

Don’t overload your schedule; learn to say no. You need rest before and recovery after any big events