Mindfulness Training for Emotion Regulation in Athletes: A Narrative Review

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INTRODUCTION

Emotion regulation plays a key role in athletic performance. Mindfulness-based training emphasizes present-moment awareness and acceptance, differing from traditional control-based psychological skills training. This review examined the effects and mechanisms of mindfulness training on emotion regulation in athletes.

DIFFERENT POINTS

1. Distinctiveness of Mindfulness: Unlike control-based strategies, mindfulness enhances psychological flexibility and acceptance.
2. Sport-Specific Application: Precision and self-paced sports may particularly benefit from mindfulness-based approaches.
3. Coaching Integration: Coaches are encouraged to incorporate mindfulness into routine psychological training, rather than as a standalone intervention.

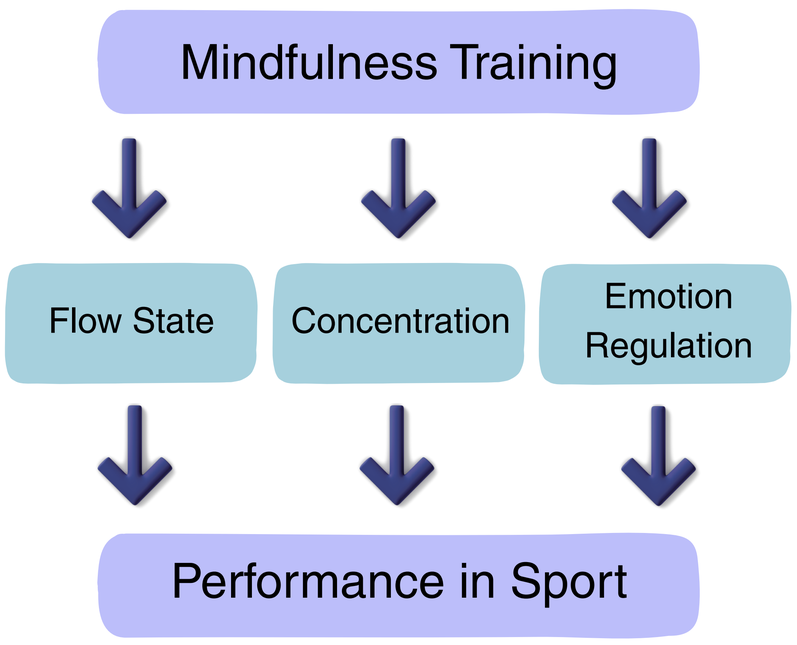
METHODS

This narrative review examined the effects of mindfulness-based training on emotion regulation in athletes. Relevant empirical studies published between 2016 and 2022 were identified through academic databases, and six randomized controlled trials were included for analysis.

Authors (Year)	Topic	Research subjects
Zhang et al. (2016)	The effects of mindfulness training on beginners' skill acquisition in dart throwing: A randomized controlled trial	Beginner dart throwers
Josefsson et al. (2019)	Effects of mindfulness-acceptance-commitment (MAC) on sport-specific dispositional mindfulness, emotion regulation, and self-rated athletic performance in a multiple-sport population: A randomized controlled trial	Multi-sport athletes
Röthlin et al. (2020)	Differential and shared effects of psychological skills training and mindfulness training on performance-relevant psychological factors in sport: A randomized controlled trial	Competitive athletes
Wu et al. (2021)	The effects of mindfulness-based intervention on shooting performance and cognitive functions in archers	Archers
Hut et al. (2021)	The effects of mindfulness training on mindfulness, anxiety, emotion dysregulation, and performance satisfaction among female student-athletes: The moderating role of age	Female student-athletes
Oguntuase & Sun (2022)	Effects of mindfulness training on resilience, self-confidence, and emotion regulation of elite football players: The mediating role of locus of control	Elite football players

RESULT

1. Mindfulness-based training showed positive effects on athletes' emotion regulation and performance-related psychological factors.
2. It reduced rumination and experiential avoidance, while enhancing attentional control and emotional awareness.
3. Compared with traditional psychological skills training, mindfulness demonstrated advantages in reducing emotional interference during performance.
4. Intervention effects were moderated by athlete age and training dosage.



CONCLUSION

1. Mindfulness training enhances emotion regulation in athletes.
2. It supports stable performance through acceptance and psychological flexibility.
3. Age and training dosage should be considered in practice.

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