

REBOUND

TRAIN YOUR MIND TO BOUNCE BACK
STRONGER FROM SPORTS INJURIES

By Carrie Jackson Cheadle and Cindy Kuzma

Written by a leading mental skills coach and a contributing writer to *Runner's World*, *Rebound* is a practical guide to building the mental skills athletes need to recover from injury and rebound stronger.

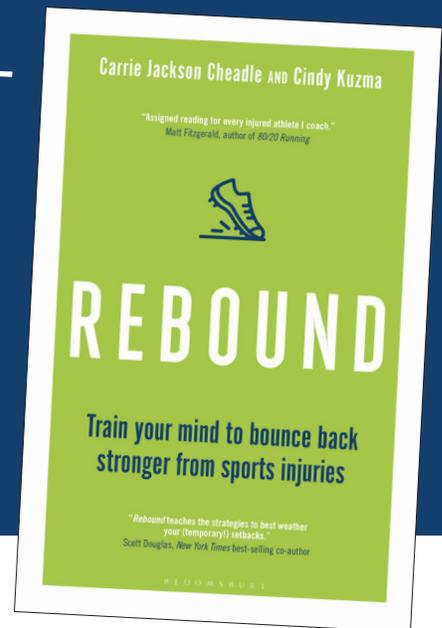
Injuries affect every athlete, from the elite Olympian to the weekend racer. In the moment, a traumatic crash, a torn muscle, or a stress fracture can feel like the most devastating event possible. While some athletes are destroyed by the experience, others emerge from their recovery better, stronger, and more confident than ever.

Rebound offers a roadmap to work toward a swifter, stronger comeback using mental skills, psychological tools that allow you to take control of your recovery and ultimately use the experience to your advantage.

Weaving together personal narratives from more than 40 athletes, scientific research, and the specialized clinical expertise of certified mental performance consultant Carrie Jackson Cheadle, *Rebound* contains more than 45 Mental Skills and Drills athletes can use at every phase of their recovery process. These same strategies can help athletes who aren't currently injured reduce their vulnerability to injury and enable any individual to reach new heights within their sport and beyond.

Injury and other setbacks are inevitable—but with training, you can learn to overcome them skillfully and confidently. *Rebound* will show you how.

Learn more at www.injuredathletesclub.com.



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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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CARRIE JACKSON CHEADLE lives in Northern California and is a mental skills coach and certified mental performance consultant through the Association for Applied Sport Psychology. She is author of the book *On Top of Your Game: Mental Skills to Maximize Your Athletic Performance* (Feed the Athlete Press, 2013). A popular source for media, Carrie has been interviewed for publications such as *Men's Fitness*, *Women's Health*, *Outside Magazine*, *Shape Magazine*, *Runner's World*, *Bicycling Magazine*, and *Huffington Post*.

Carrie received her bachelor's degree in psychology at Sonoma State University, California and her master's degree in sport psychology at John. F. Kennedy University, California. She has been teaching and supervising masters students in the sport psychology program at that same university since 2006. Carrie consults with athletes of all ages and at every level, from recreational athletes, high school and collegiate athletes, to elite and professional athletes competing at national and international levels. In addition to being known for her expertise in sports performance and psychological recovery from injury, she is also one of the foremost experts specializing in mental skills training for athletes and exercisers with type 1 diabetes, and is the director of the Mental Skills Training Program for Diabetes Training Camp. Carrie has her own personal commitment to lifelong fitness and when she isn't working with athletes, you might find her running on a trail, playing guitar, or hitting the slopes on her snowboard.



CINDY KUZMA is a Chicago-based journalist with a specialty in fitness and health, a contributing writer at *Runner's World* magazine, and co-author of *Superfood Swap*. She earned her master's degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and has spent the past 15 years writing for national print and online publications, including *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Prevention*, *espnW.com*, *VICE*, *SELF*, *Prevention*, and *USA Today* magazines. She has also contributed audio reporting to *The Runner's World Show* and *Human Race*, podcasts produced by *Runner's World*, and is the producer and co-host of #WeGotGoals, a podcast by Chicago-based aSweatLife.com.

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TOGETHER, they're the co-hosts of **The Injured Athletes Club** podcast and moderate an online support group for injured athletes.

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PRAISE FOR *REBOUND*

“From this day forward, *Rebound* will be assigned reading for every athlete I coach who gets injured. The evidence-backed guidance in this long-overdue resource is as crucial to managing the mental side of injury as good healthcare providers are to managing the physical side.” –*Matt Fitzgerald, author of 80/20 Running*

“A refreshingly innovative approach to injury rehab. *Rebound* teaches athletes how to leverage the power of mindset to face injuries head-on, harness their own resilience, shift momentum, and journey down the most direct route to recovery—skills that are invaluable long after the physical wounds have healed.” –*Mackenzie L. Havey, author of Mindful Running*

“Successful athletes overcome injury with the same tools they use to reach peak performance, including good goals and the right mindset. *Rebound* teaches the strategies to best weather your (temporary!) setbacks.” –*Scott Douglas, contributing writer for Runner’s World and New York Times best selling author*

“As a mental performance consultant, *Rebound* will be my go-to guide for injured athletes. It provides the essential mental skills to help athletes thrive in recovery in an easy to use, practical guide. A must-read!” –*Cindra Kamphoff, Ph.D., Certified Mental Performance Consultant, speaker and author*

“This book is an outstanding resource for not only for those in the process of bouncing back from an injury, but for every coach, athletic trainer or parent who aims to help their athlete navigate the psychological aspects of rehab. Carrie provides insight on what to expect when you get injured and action-oriented steps on how to not just come back, but to come back stronger than you were before.” –*Justin Su’a, M.S., Tampa Rays Mental Skills Coach*

“*Rebound* is essential reading for any athlete that is injured or going through the physical rehabilitation process. This book is basically a psychological playbook about how to not only recover from the injury setback, but also to thrive during the process to come back stronger and better than before the injury took place. This book needs to be in every athletic trainer and physical therapist’s office.” –*Joshua Lifrak, M.S., director of mental skills program for an MLB Team*

“As a pro athlete who recently endured a devastating injury, and as a coach who has supported athletes through injuries and on the road back, I found *Rebound* to be a wealth of knowledge and resources. *Rebound* provides athletes of all levels with actionable tips and mental skills to guide them back to a healthy mindset while they rehab and recover. A must-read for the injured athlete, and highly recommended for coaches as well—I plan to utilize the mental drills in *Rebound* in my own coaching.” –*Kaitlin Gregg Goodman, pro runner for the Boston Athletic Association High Performance Team and adidas, coach at Training Joyfully*

“As a sports medicine doctor who has cared for many thousands of runners, and as an avid runner myself, this terrific new book focuses on an under-appreciated but essential aspect of sports medicine, the athlete’s brain.” –*Jordan D. Metz MD, 35-time marathon runner and author of Dr. Jordan Metz’s Running Strong*

REBOUND Q&A

What are the key themes of the book?

These four key facts:

- ◆ Injuries suck, and the impact is mental as much as it is physical.
- ◆ Focusing on mental fitness as well as physical rehab is critical to a successful recovery.
- ◆ Few injured athletes receive psychological support as they navigate the process.
- ◆ Those with superior mental skills often come back mentally and physically stronger — within their sport and beyond it.

What are the most common ways injuries affect athletes psychologically?

Injuries can cause an emotional rollercoaster—and every athlete is on a unique ride. The same person can even respond quite differently from one injury to another. That said, there are some emotions and concerns many injured athletes have in common, including:

- ◆ Anger or disappointment about how this will change their upcoming season, or even their entire athletic career
- ◆ Distress about being sidelined and losing fitness while others are gaining it
- ◆ Isolation from their team and support system
- ◆ Concerns about whether they can trust their body and fears of getting re-injured
- ◆ Worries about whether they will be able to perform as well as they did prior to injury
- ◆ Some sense of relief at not having to train or compete, often followed by guilt at having this thought
- ◆ A loss of identity; they may think: “Who am I if I’m not training or competing?”
- ◆ Anxiety and depression, especially if they’ve experienced these conditions in the past or have a predisposition to them

These emotions can come and go throughout the injury and recovery process. An athlete might feel them all within the same day, or even the same hour.

What are the factors that influence the psychological impact of injury and how well an athlete copes?

Believe it or not, there isn’t a one-to-one correlation between the severity of an injury and how it affects an athlete’s psychology. Rather, how athletes respond depends a lot on whether they feel their coping resources match up to the challenges in front of them.

Factors that influence this balance include:

- ◆ The strength of their support system
- ◆ The coping skills they already have
- ◆ The timing of the injury
- ◆ The degree to which they possess hardiness, a personality type characterized by resilience under stress
- ◆ How psychologically flexible they are—in other words, can they adapt to changing circumstances by shifting their reactions, behaviors, and perspective?

Why do we need a book like this—why is it important to consider the mental side of recovery in addition to the physical side?

No previous comprehensive guide to navigating the psychological side of injury exists for athletes. But research shows athletes with positive psychological responses to their injury were more likely to return to their sport. What’s more, deliberate focus on practices like goal-setting, imagery, and positive self-talk can affect how well, and how swiftly, athletes recover.

Aren't some athletes just naturally tougher or better at staying positive than others?

Mental skills are similar to physical skills in that although some people may find them easier to understand or apply, they can be learned, strengthened, and refined with practice. You might perceive someone as being naturally better or tougher—but they may have in fact worked hard to develop those traits. You truly can “train your mind” the same way you train your body, and both techniques can build better, stronger athletes during recovery and beyond it.

Will this book help athletes eliminate negative feelings during injury and recovery?

No—no one feels happy at every moment, especially when coping with a difficult challenge like an injury. But the book will help athletes become more resilient. That doesn't mean you won't have times where you feel upset, scared, frustrated, or sad. However, when you are able to stay positive throughout your recovery, those moments are fleeting and you know what to do to move through them.

What does the title, *Rebound*, mean?

In physics, a “rebound” occurs after a collision. For example, if you were to raise a ball over your head and throw it sharply down, the ball speeds toward the ground, with all its energy moving downward. But at the moment of impact—when the ball hits the hard surface of the floor—there is a transfer of energy. The ball changes direction and accelerates back upward. That momentum shift is the rebound.

During the injury and recovery process, an athlete will encounter many tough moments, and setbacks can seem too momentous to overcome. In those times of struggle, your energy is moving downward. You may sink a bit deeper into doubt, fear, and depression. When you work on the mental side of your recovery, you can have a transfer of energy—you can rebound from that point of impact. Each time you take action by using one of the mental drills in this book, you are transferring energy from the fall to the bounce.

What if an injury prevents an athlete from returning to his or her sport, or is otherwise life-altering?

Many athletes who experience severe or life-altering injuries come back mentally and physically stronger, whether they are able to return to their sport in the exact same way or not. Some of the athletes interviewed in *Rebound* exemplify this—for example, an athlete paralyzed in a weightlifting accident who goes on to lead adaptive training programs, or a snowboarder with a spinal cord injury who goes on to win Paralympic gold in both basketball and skiing.

Can coaches, athletic trainers, other health care professionals, teammates, and family members also benefit from understanding the mental side of injury and recovery?

Yes! As coaches, athletic trainers, and other health care providers, you are part of the athlete's support system. If you understand the mental side of injury and recovery, the athlete will benefit tremendously. Not only will you be able to understand the importance and the impact the mental side can have, you will also have a greater understanding of what the athlete is going through and be able to better support their recovery. And, you'll be better able to motivate and guide athletes to stick with their training and rehab plans.

Are the mental skills and drills in this book only for injured athletes?

While the skills and drills within the book are framed to facilitate recovery from injury, they're useful long after athletes have returned to their sports or moved beyond them. In fact, many of the athletes we interviewed for the book outlined how the exact same mental techniques they used to rebound from injury helped them perform better when they returned to competition, as well as to cope with everything from job interviews to cancer diagnoses.