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Optimizing Strengths and Resources in a Memorial Cup Team: A Strengths and Hope Perspective

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In this case study, I explored the use of strengths and available resources linked to 'hope-in' a shared preferred future (Jacobs, 2005) within the Windsor Spitfires hockey club as they worked towards their participation as the host team of the 2017 MasterCard Memorial Cup tournament. I conducted two sets of semi-structured interviews throughout the Spitfires organization (set one was thirteen interviews and set two was twelve interviews). Interviews were conducted post-trade deadline and post-Memorial Cup. Participants were chosen from three categories: players and player support (7); staff (5); and management (2). Extending Snyder's (2002) research on high-hope individuals, I looked at ways the Windsor Spitfires produced a high-hope collective (Jacobs, 2005; Snyder, 2002) wherein they a) defined goals, b) created pathways to their goals, and c) believed in their ability to act along their chosen pathway to their goals. Participants reframed their collective goal to win the Memorial Cup tournament as the host team. The Spitfires used strengths such as hard work, adaptability, preparation, experience, leadership, and effective communication to buy into the team's shared preferred future, respond to adversity effectively and get around constraints, and show proactive behaviour towards reaching their collective goals. The coaching staff, trainers, players, billets, and family members all acted as interpersonal resources to one another, while drawing on external interpersonal resources such as colleagues, personnel with previous Memorial Cup experience, and a high performance psychology coach in order to further their existing strengths and build new strengths to help the team reach its collective goals.