

Values Based Coaching and the Coaches Role in Moral Development

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this manuscript is to highlight ways in which coaches can support moral development in their athletes through Values-Based Coaching (VBC). That is, by placing ethicality, excellence (i.e., of character and thought), and empowerment (i.e., the Three E's) at the forefront of their practice. In providing a theoretical framework that explains the interactive processes that influences coach-athlete moral development and how the moral atmosphere may be [co-]constructed, the present manuscript provides a foundation from which researchers can understand and explain the creation of normatively appropriate, morally enhancing, and empowering coaching environments. Our attention then focuses on the tangible processes that may be used to aid the development of the Three Es within both individuals and groups. It is hoped that by enhancing our understanding of the Three Es, coaches may be better supported in their endeavours to promote moral development and empower athletes to stay engaged in sport. Furthermore, in presenting a theoretical framework, it is expected that the present manuscript will initiate discussion around normative standards.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is in many ways, a dress rehearsal for life; be it receiving feedback, learning about one's roles, responsibilities, obligations, and expectations; developing discipline, organisation,

and communication skills; or experiencing the highs of victory or the lows of defeat. As a social context capable of impacting others' rights and wellbeing, sport also represents an important setting for the development of ethical thought and action (Bandura, 1991). Despite this important function, few have sought to study why some in sport value development over winning, service over self-enhancement, empowerment over domination, and care over abuse. Fewer still have sought to examine how the personal values people hold and the cultural values they operate within impact upon and shape attitudes and behaviors. Sagiv, Roccas, Ciuciuch, and Schwartz (2017) define values as what is good and worthy. Cultural values are those that represent the goals of a social collective and are thought to guide and justify social behaviour (Schwartz et al., 2012). Personal values are the value systems individuals hold and are viewed as guiding principles that both influence goals and direct intentions to act. Personal values both shape and are shaped by preferences and behaviour over time and across situations (Schwartz et al., ibid). In sport, values are co-constructed by those who play, coach, officiate, pay the bills, and dictate the policy through to those who prepare the kit, cook the food, support the hurt, and cheer from the sidelines. Sport, then, provides opportunities for those on and off the field to experiment with ethical norms and test the limits of their personal value system (McFee, 2004). Be it the player taking a dive or the fan acting violently, sport acts as a form of naturalistic moral laboratory (McFee, ibid).

Whilst sports may act as laboratory, contrary to popular opinion, it is unlikely that sport in as of itself, is a teacher. Sport merely provides opportunities for moments of tacit or explicit learning. It is how we think and act in these moments, that, over time, shape who we are. As Durant (2012, p. 96) notes, "we [do] not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but rather because we have acted rightly, virtues are formed through our actions. We are what we repeatedly do." Both ethicality and excellence, then, are not an act, but are in part, the result of habit. Although the notion of habits has been a controversial topic within psychology (see Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006), the emergence of social cognitive theories have gone some way in resolving previous concerns. By examining the formation of habits through, for example, the Schema Model of Self Concept (Markus, 1977), the development of moral character can be broken down into cognitive units (i.e., schemas and prototypes) that emerge from repeated experience, guided instruction, observation, and immersive experience (for a full review see Leary, 2007). Through this process, habits continually evolve through training and competition. As such, participants' understanding of contextual standards of right and wrong and the ability to make moral judgements (i.e., Bandura, 2006; Van Bavel, FeldmanHall, & Mende-Siedlecki, 2015) may be influenced by their involvement in sport. Thus, sports coaches are likely to play a critical role in the moral development of those who participate in sport.

Researchers in both developmental and sport psychology have previously emphasised the important role coaches play in the socialisation of young people within sport and the influence the habits they form both in terms of skill development and moral functioning (Lyle, 2019; Côté, Bruner, Erickson, Strachan, & Fraser-Thomas, 2010). Be it through tacit gestures, explicit endorsement, or the modelling of appropriate and inappropriate behavior, coaches are thought to play a key role in developing moral agency and constructing the moral

environment to which participants of sport are socialised (Weiss, Smith, & Stuntz, 2008). Given the civic importance of this function, it is unsurprising that researchers interested in sport-focused moral psychology have allocated considerable efforts over the preceding decades to develop our understanding of individual differences in moral processing within sport (for a full review see Boardley, 2018) and how this combines to create a moral atmosphere (Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996; Kavussanu, Roberts, & Ntoumanis, 2002; Shields & Bredemeier, 2007; Benson, Bruner, & Eys, 2017). Despite these efforts, however, the role sport plays in the moral development (i.e., learning socially accepted values and behaviours [Bandura, 1977]) of sport participants is often overlooked both in terms of coach education and applied practice.

The purpose of this manuscript, therefore, is to introduce a new way of thinking about coaching that places ethicality, excellence (of character and thought), and participant empowerment at the forefront of sport. It is hoped that by providing a simple initialism in these three Es, coaches, clubs and sports organisations will be able to easily recall the content discussed here and use this as a basis for reflecting upon their motives, goals, and behaviours. Given the enormity of this topic, a broad discussion around descriptive, normative, applied, and metaethics will not take place here. Instead, this manuscript will focus on introducing factors relating to moral development that fall within normative ethics; specifically, Deontology (Kant, 1796/2002), Consequentialism, and Virtue Ethics (Aristotle, 4th Century B.C.E./1998). These theories provide the requisite conceptual backdrop to the underpinnings of moral philosophy and cover the vast majority of psychological research interested in moral judgement and action. Unlike others who discuss empowerment from the perspective of motivational climate (Appleton & Duda, 2016; Duda & Appleton, 2016; Duda, 2013), here, self-worth and self-efficacy are viewed as the determinant of empowerment (Conger & Kanungo, 1998) and as such the antecedent processes of ethicality, and excellences of character and thought are discussed.

As the application and importance placed on moral ideologies and foundations differ between sports, coaches, athletes, and teams, the topics presented here are done so as to provide a guide to aid in the re-evaluation of constructing normatively appropriate standards relevant to specific contexts. With this in mind, VBC is defined by identifying normatively appropriate standards that guide the formation of personal and collective goals and the actuation of subsequent behaviour. It is important to note, however, that whilst ideologies and the importance placed on individual values and ethics differ, their inclusion as the foundation to moral systems largely do not (Graham et al., 2013). Through enhancing our understanding of the expected values and ethics of individuals participating in sport and recognising cultural differences in the rules, expectations, obligations, and outcomes associated with sporting participation, we can begin to develop new approaches to moral education that help redress the ethical issues currently experienced within many sports.

The Three Es of Values-Based Coaching

Ethicality

The question of how we ought to act and make judgements, that is normative ethics, has been discussed by philosophers for centuries (e.g., Aristotle, 4th Century B.C.E./1998). The earliest and arguably most influential theories of moral development in psychology (i.e., Piaget, 1932/1965; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984), were heavily influenced by Kant's (1796/2002) deontological ethics. For Kant, the moral status of an act is judged in terms of the rules, duties, or obligations that constrain action (Kagan, 1997). From a Kantian perspective, actions that violate these constraints are viewed as morally prohibited. Within this view, it is implied that responsibility for action is derived based on the freedom of will. In other words, an individual is morally blameworthy if they freely contravene the rules or their duties and obligations to both themselves and others.

In sport, this view of morality may be demonstrated by the blame attached to single or repeat users of prohibited forms of performance enhancing methods or substances. One is often met with a degree of sympathy, while the other is vilified for knowingly and willingly contravening the rules and foregoing their associated duties and obligations. Laboratory based studies examining how blame is attributed and the influence blame has on perceived moral character support this notion (Siegel, Crockett, & Dolan, 2017). How blame is attributed, however, may be dependent on the context and ethical position of those applying blame. Unlike deontology, for example, consequentialism makes no distinctions regarding rules, duties, and obligations. Instead, actions are morally justifiable according to whether they yield favourable or unfavourable consequences. Consequentialism is often viewed as a cold and calculating ideology that seeks to maximise good while minimising harm (Smart & Williams, 1973). However, consequentialism comes in many forms, including, but not limited to Utilitarianism, Ethical Egoism, and Teleological Ethics. In the interests of brevity, each form of consequentialism will not be outlined here. Instead, see Smart and Williams (1973) seminal text for a review of these approaches. Within all forms of consequentialism, however, the intent or will of the person is of little importance as it is the act rather than the individual that is judged. For example, Tamburrini (2000) argues that, from a Utilitarian perspective, Diego Maradona's infamous Hand of God Goal against England in the 1986 World Cup is morally vindicated as it had a positive effect on football and helped diffuse international tensions around the Falklands War. In this example, Tamburrini is primarily focused on judging the outcome of the act by its consequences and not by its adherence to the rules, duties, or obligations, or by Maradona's character as a person.

Both of the views presented thus far have been act/rule-based, rather than based on the person. Within virtue ethics -- the third approach to normative ethics discussed here -- the primary concern is to do the right thing, at the right time, and for the right reason (Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011). As a person-based approach, virtue ethicists argue that a person's traits, dispositions, and character should also be factored into consideration when evaluating moral

issues (Uhlmann, Pizarro, & Diermeier, 2015). Specifically, virtue ethics emphasises the character of the agent and whether they possess desired virtues. Further, they propose that moral evaluations should focus on local features of an act and agent (e.g., whether the action violates a rule, whether the agent's mental state at the time of the action allowed for alternative actions, or whether the act caused harm). As such, virtue ethics is sometimes referred to as the 'third way' of normative ethics (Stan Van Hooft, 2014). Although this approach fell out of favour in moral philosophy and psychology during the early twentieth century, in recent times it has seen something of a resurgence (See Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011).

From a sporting perspective, differences in these philosophical positions can be observed in the way coaches approach athlete development. Within a recent debate in the sports leadership literature, Cruickshank and Collins (2015, 2016, 2017) and Mills and Boardley (2017a, 2017b), highlight differences in philosophical approaches to moral investigation. On one side of the debate, Mills and Boardley (2017a, 2017b) champion a person-centred and virtue ethics based approach to the study of sports leaders. On the other side of the argument, Cruickshank and Collins (2017, p. 573) advocate an outcome-based and consequentialist approach:

"For clarity, we still see that work on the full spectrum of leadership behaviour, including that of a socially undesirable nature, plus a consideration of the cognitive drivers of leadership behaviour, are essential routes forward if researchers are to make a significant stride in practically meaningful knowledge; in short, what leaders do. On the basis of their calls to explore attitudes, character, morality and value congruence, it seems Mills and Boardley are perhaps more focused on who leaders are."

Although these approaches often lead to the same outcome, the process can be markedly different. For example, in attempting to encourage athletes to achieve high performance outcomes, Cruickshank and Collins (2015, 2016, 2017) advocate the use of manipulative, deceitful, cunning, exploitative, cynical, distrusting, controlling, and domineering coaching behaviours. Such behaviours, however, are incompatible with virtue ethics and contradict three decades of research into social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) and leadership ethics (Barling, 2014). That said, Arnold, Fletcher and Hobson (2018) offer support to the idea that there is a positive side to negative and abusive coaching. Based on a qualitative study of 11 former Olympians, the athletes interviewed suggested that negative and abusive coaching behaviours may have a positive effect in supporting the development of resilience and preparing athletes for hostile competitive environments. However, given that these athletes had achieved a successful career (see Arnold et al., 2018), such beliefs are likely to be influenced by survivorship bias.

Placing this criticism to one side, judging the ethicality of an outcome based on the personal success achieved would appear to fall within a sub-discipline of consequentialism called ethical egoism. In contrast to other consequentialist approaches to ethics that refer to maximising the greatest good, ethical egoism suggests that moral agents ought to act in their own self-interest (Smart & Williams, 1973). In this instance, a coach may be abusive towards an athlete in the name of achieving personal goals. Although such coaches may also argue that

they adopt such methods for the good of the athlete – by pushing them to achieve – one must question the toll in enduring abuse to those who survive. We must also consider what might have been for many athletes whose performance suffered due to such behaviour. Rather than extolling such behaviour or accepting them as the norm, we should consider how it may damage the coach-athlete relationship and affect an athlete's wellbeing (Jowett & Cockerill, 2002). Everyone enjoys winning, but how one wins is important too. For someone who aligns with this view of ethical egoism, winning through manipulation, abuse, and exploitation to advance one's ego may result in the same level of satisfaction as winning in a virtuous manner. may to others. Similarly, for deontologists, the act of exploitation, for example, often breaches moral obligations and expectations. This again limits what can be considered ethical behaviour within deontology. Given these differences, those involved in sport should be mindful of their own ethical position and of those they work with. Consideration should also be given to, not only if they wish to succeed, but the process in which they wish to work towards success.

Moral Excellence

Excellence of Character.

Aristotle suggests that there are two different kinds of human excellences: (1) excellence of character, and (2) excellence of thought. Excellences of character are often referred to as the embodiment of moral virtues such as fairness, trustworthiness, and honesty. According to Blasi (2005), however, excellence of character can be defined by three higher order virtues: (1) integrity (i.e., self-consistency), (2) moral desires (i.e., possessing moral goals and ambitions), and (3) willpower (i.e., the ability to resist the temptation to morally disengage or transgress). Although to some these may seem similar to the description of ethicality, this view is framed by your dominant ethical position. Those who favour utility, for example, may differ from deontologists in that they view fairness as equity rather than equality. For Blasi, willpower, integrity and moral desires are less susceptible to such debate. Given their global importance to the self, higher order virtues are positioned as a core aspect of the self-concept. Although lower order virtues, such as honesty and fairness are important, Blasi (2009) argues that they are largely context specific. Lastly, deficiencies of character may reflect egoistic or misguided moral desires or as a failure of will (i.e., insufficient determination, perseverance, or courage to act consistently with one's ideals; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995).

Although moral character is viewed as complex and multifaceted (Walker & Hennig, 2004), the core of character is relatively straightforward. When dealing with others, consistency in words and actions (integrity) and a belief that they hold moral intentions are of primary concern as they build the perception that the individual can be relied upon (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Similarly, lower order virtues (e.g., compassion and conscientiousness) and emotional responses that indicate empathetic reactions (e.g., care and concern) are viewed as valuable indicators of character (Uhlmann et al., 2015). Further, such responses act as a useful source of social information and permit the perceiver to gauge intent towards prosocial action, whether the individual is worthy of investment, and likely to behave in a considerate and

cooperative manner. Based on these evaluations, we may decide that an individual is a 'bad' character if they appear manipulative and untrustworthy (i.e., Machiavellian), self-aggrandizing and acting in their self-interest (i.e., Narcissism), or behaving unfairly to others and lacking empathy (i.e., Psychopathy; Pizarro & Tannenbaum, 2011). Equally, this may extend to perceptions of the individual's intent (i.e., moral desire) and a perceived lack of willpower to resist the temptation to act in a normatively inappropriate manner. The frequency and impact of the action also acts as social information in the evaluation of character (Uhlmann et al., 2015). Deliberate acts that can be explained via multiple motives and are of low impact are thought to possess low informational value. In contrast, automatic decisions that are taken with ease (Critcher, Inbar, & Pizarro, 2013) and acts that are harder to explain or have high impact are perceived as character defining (Uhlmann, et al., 2015).

Coaches, therefore, should be mindful to maintain consistency in their words and actions. It should go without saying, but coaches wishing to develop positive and long lasting relationships with their participants should avoid using manipulative, exploitative, or deceptive means. Honesty, trustworthiness, and fairness should be the norm rather than the exception when coaching (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Coaches who place 'me' above 'we' are likely to be viewed skeptically by their participants, who may assign negative attributions based on the social information self-aggrandizing conveys (Mills & Boardley, 2019). Ultimately, participants will use this social information to make inferences around the coach's motive and character (Mills & Boardley, 2017b). A lack of willpower, particularly around the temptation to win by any means, may also influence such perceptions. Those who forego their usual ethical standards in order to seek a competitive advantage may also raise concerns around the coach's character. This, of course, depends on whether a similar win at all costs position is shared by participants (i.e., value congruence), but any drastic deviation from consistency is likely to be viewed skeptically. Lastly, coaches who demonstrate the types of questionable behaviours described are likely to find that long term relationships are eschewed by their participants (Mills & Boardley, ibid).

Excellence of Thought.

Next, Aristotle proposes excellences of thought to be intellectual virtues such as technical expertise and practical wisdom. Despite nearly 40 years of research, defining technical expertise within the realm of sport coaching has been problematic. Authors have historically used win-loss percentages, athlete attributes, length of time in coaching, and level of competition as approaches to define coaching expertise. Côté and Gilbert (2009, p.316) have attempted to integrate these definitions and suggest that the effective implementation of coaching expertise requires "the consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts." Although the mention of character here is welcomed, possessing virtuous qualities is just one aspect of moral development and fails to consider moral functioning (i.e., moral sensitivity, agency, motivation, and intent) and the alternate philosophical positions available. Should the coach and athlete share similar

motivation for moral excellence, they may begin working together to co-construct a moral atmosphere. If not, either the coach, athlete or both may seek to re-align their moral self-concept to find a shared position or one or both may wish to leave the group (Mills & Boardley, 2019).

In terms of practical wisdom, coaches and athletes require a combination of perceptual attunement, complex understanding, motivation for excellence, and the capacity to use this expertise to demonstrate normatively appropriate decision making and behaviour (Narvaez & Rest, 1995). Based on Rest's (1986) Four Component Model of Moral Functioning, coaches and athletes should first be sensitive to environmental cues and consider the impact of any potential action on the welfare of others. Sometimes interpreting the situation permits a deliberate and considered response (e.g., the decision to engage in or report prohibited forms of performance enhancement), however, other times require a snap judgement (e.g., purposefully initiating contact with an opponent to solicit a foul). In these examples, the athlete is seeking to gain an ill gotten advantage, which may or may not fall outside of the social norms for their specific sport.

Although some sports may be more permissive of such transgressions than others, Rest (1986) argues that the moral agent should consider whether the course of action is socially responsible, equitable, and how one ought to act. As you may note, such decisions are largely Kantian and may differ depending on the philosophical position one adopts. Kant (1796/2002) argues that the agent must consider the universalizability of their transgression. Using the doping example again, would the coach or athlete who is encouraging or considering using prohibited forms of performance enhancement wish to see everyone using such substances in sport? From a purely functional perspective (see Petróczi, 2013) the athlete may argue that they are purely motivated to use such substances to push the boundaries of their capabilities and would accept all others doing the same. However, those from a moral perspective may argue that, for example, such an approach would create an environment where using potentially harmful substances was a prerequisite -- thus limiting free will and moral agency. According to Kant, an action is deemed morally acceptable if it can be universalized. That is, everyone could do it. In this case, it is difficult to see how either deontologists, virtue ethicists, or consequentialists (excluding ethical egoism) could argue in favour of the latter.

Once the situation is assessed and a judgement around the moral course of action formed, one must then weigh up whether they are motivated to act. Before doing so, however, they must also consider whether competing interests are more dominant and whether the action is likely to garner either an intrinsic or extrinsic emotional response (Narvaez & Rest, 1995). On one hand they may be drawn by the perceived rewards and on the other anticipated guilt, shame, or fear social reprisal as a result of pyrrhic action. The coach and athlete must then draw on their resoluteness and persevere to turn these intentions into actions. Should one or more of these processes fail, it is likely that a moral failure will occur (Narvaez & Rest, 1995).

Empowerment

Conger and Kanungo (1987) define empowerment as the process of raising others' self-efficacy perceptions. However, Spreitzer (1995) has since broadened this definition to include collective efficacy and self-esteem. Self-efficacy is the individual's belief in his or her ability to successfully perform tasks (Bandura, 1986). Further, collective efficacy is similar to self-efficacy and is defined as a belief that a team or group can function effectively and perform its tasks successfully (Bandura, 1986). Coaches who encourage personal identification (i.e., with the coach) are thought to advocate dependency (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003). As such, collective efficacy may be more prominent within empowering rather than dependent environments. Finally, self-esteem has been defined as the extent to which an individual takes a positive view of their self (Gergen, 1971). The concept of self-esteem has been well examined within sport and exercise contexts, both in terms of a predictor of mental health (e.g., Standage & Simpkins, 2007) and an outcome of sporting participation (e.g., Slutzky & Simpkins, 2009). Because of its significance for mental health, wellbeing, and quality of life, self-esteem enhancement should be a priority for sports coaches of all levels, but particularly those working within grassroots sport (Fox, 1997).

An empowered athlete believes in his or her ability to perform successfully and understands their self-worth (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). Therefore, coaches can have an empowering effect on followers in terms of raising their self-efficacy beliefs by delegating responsibility to followers, enhancing followers' capacity to solve intellectually challenging problems, and through encouraging athletes to generate new and creative ideas (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). Further, athletes high in global self-esteem view themselves as important, influential, effective, and worthwhile (Rosenberg, 1965). Coaches can nurture athlete self-esteem by setting and supporting athletes to achieve high expectations, expressing belief in their abilities, setting intellectually stimulating challenges, and by demonstrating how activities help support the group's collective goals and values (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Should one attempt to seize power back from supposedly empowered individuals (see Cruickshank, & Collins, 2015, 2016), this would undoubtedly undermine the process. Further, by seizing control from their athletes, coaches risk developing deference and ultimately dependency in the group. Both of which are thought to stifle any empowering effect that may have previously been experienced (Kark et al., 2003).

If not managed carefully, however, feelings of empowerment may develop into self-righteousness (i.e., holding the view that one is morally superior; Haidt, 2012). To temper this, those involved in sport should be encouraged to show humility and resist temptation (i.e., self-regulatory efficacy) to gloat about their perceived self-worth and capability. Self-regulatory efficacy is a facet of global self-efficacy and beyond tempering ego, performs an important function in governing transgressive behaviour. For example, individuals high in self-regulatory efficacy have consistently been shown to resist personal and social pressures to engage in detrimental conduct (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Regalia, 2001). Within sport, this has primarily been examined in terms of doping (Boardley, Smith, Mills, Grix, & Wynne,

2017), cheating (d'Arripe-Longueville, Corrion, Scoffier, Roussel, & Aïna Chalabaev, 2010), aggression and other transgressive behaviours more broadly (Corrion, Long, Smith, & d'Arripe-Longueville, 2009). Although perceived self-efficacy serves a regulatory function in all developmental periods, adolescence is a key phase of enquiry (d'Arripe-Longueville et al., 2010). As a period often associated with exploratory engagement in high-risk activities (e.g., substance abuse, unprotected sex, and transgressive conduct in various domains, including sports), providing an appropriate and supportive example during this time may be of critical importance to athlete moral development.

Specific Considerations to Coaching

Within the coach-athlete relationship, consistency between words and actions is key. From the perspective of moral excellence and to be viewed as possessing integrity, this consistency in words and actions should reflect trust in athletes, fairness, and empathetic concern. For those responsible for recruiting coaches within the junior sport and for the coaches occupying such roles, the aforementioned qualities should be placed above all else. Although the ability to develop technical and tactical competency is of course a key outcome of coaching. Supporting in the development of moral functioning, that is, supporting athletes to interpret normatively appropriate standards of what is right and wrong, make moral judgements, prioritise moral motivations, and take responsibility for their actions, is of critical importance. This is not to say that moral cognition need always be effortful, deliberate, and conscious. On the contrary, much of our cognitive activity is characterised by processes that are tacit, impulsive, and automatic (Lapsley, & Narvaez, 2006). The coach still has a role to play in this process, however, as their words and actions will align with those of important others within an athlete's moral schema — potentially creating a heuristic for appropriate behaviour within set contexts. Equally, this is not to say that athletes are automatons mindlessly acting without thought. Rather, the ethicality of our conduct is governed by our belief, ability, and motivation to self-regulate these automatic responses.

Developing the Three Es

As mentioned earlier, sport is not in itself a teacher for ethical thought and action. It is those involved in sport, the athletes, coaches, parents, fans, directors, and everyone in between who create the learning environment. In this section, consideration is given to how the moral atmosphere within sport may be co-constructed and habituated (see Figure 1). Although these processes are relevant to all in sport, in the following section a particular focus is paid to coaches and athletes, as they, to the general public at least, are the main actors and outward face of sport. Further, within the early years, coaches are thought to be particularly prominent in shaping the moral education of their players through sport (Weiss, Smith & Stuntz, 2008). During an athlete's formative years, the coach plays a key role in setting appropriate standards and establishing an ethical culture. Although the directionality of these processes may be more one-way (i.e., an apprenticeship model) in the early years, as athletes

become more aware of themselves as moral agents, progressing towards co-construction of moral standards and a moral environment is key.

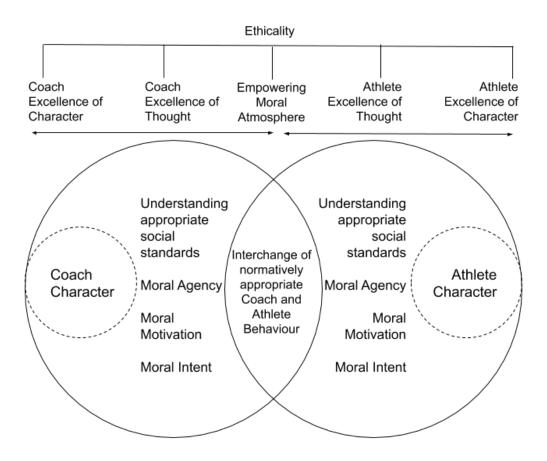


Figure 1: Interactive processes leading to coach-athlete moral development and atmosphere.

Individuals.

As Steutel and Spiecker (2004) suggest, the habituation of moral agency and function is best understood by role modelling normatively appropriate behaviour. Alas, this is not particularly a new or novel concept. Social Learning Theory is arguably one of the most well-known and influential theories in psychology (Bandura, 1986). Through consistent and regular practice and under the guidance of an ethical and empowering coach, normative standards can be produced and normalised within the moral atmosphere. Habits are then internalised leading to adaptations in the individual's character that occur and can be recalled spontaneously without reflective deliberation (Steutel & Spiecker, 2004). By practicing normatively appropriate standards, individuals acquire the skills associated with said standards. From a virtue ethics perspective, which is arguably the most intuitive of the

ideologies for moral education (Haidt, 2012), this may be the development of characteristics such as fairplay, integrity, and consciousness. Similarly, from a deontological position this may result in a greater understanding and respect for rules, expectations, and obligations. Lastly, those who align with a consequentialist position may learn to maximise good for all, the group (i.e., collective consequentialism) or the self (i.e., ethical egoism). Although these positions use different means and are presented independently here for the sake of clarity, they are not mutually exclusive and are often intertwined in application. It is also important to note that other factors such as: the individual's personality, background, the socio-economic environment they are exposed to, existing affiliations, and whether they derive value from achievement or social perception are also likely to influence the habit formation process. As such, understanding the uniqueness of individual athletes is also important. The challenge of coaching is to identify commonalities between individuals within one's team and to tailor their environment accordingly. However, such a challenge is not specific to developing the Three Es and is arguably a cornerstone of effective leadership (Bass, 1999; Barling, 2014) and Coaching (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019).

Within this complex set of social influences, the development of excellence and normatively appropriate standards of moral agency and function is a matter of perfecting interactive skills in perception, sensitivity, reasoning and judgment, focus and action. To acquire a virtue is to fine-tune your perceptual abilities such that you detect the relevant signals, then feel the right emotions, understand their meaning, and then act in the right way (Haidt & Joseph, 2004). For example, to show kindness is to demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of others, to feel compassion when warranted, and to offer your full-hearted support. Likewise, to be courageous, is to be able to detect very different kinds of threats and opportunities, and to respond in a very different sort of way (Haidt, 2012).

As coaches and experts in skill acquisition more broadly are aware, the practice of a skill leads to increased automaticity of response (Bargh, Lombardi, & Higgins, 1988). Through practice and competition, athletes develop intuitive responses that facilitate automatic judgements and behavioural responses (Narvaez, 2010). Although this is primarily discussed in terms of technical skill development and tactical decision making, the process is the same for moral development. That is, through frequent activation, moral processing around ethical dilemmas within sport may become incorporated within social cognitive schemas to the point of chronic automaticity (Lapsley, & Hill, 2008). In other words, athletes develop automatic ways of responding to ethically challenging situations within sport through repeated exposure, much in the same way as they automatically perform a complex skill. Coaches, then, can support moral development through frequent and consistent use of positive reinforcement, modelling appropriate behaviours, and consistently enforcing normative ethical standards (Bargh et al., 1988; Smith, Smoll, & Hunt, 1977). Recent development in coaching research provides tools that can be used to evaluate the associations coaches possess between true and pseudo-transformational leadership (Mills & Boardley, 2017) and interactions between coaches and athletes that are known to enhance moral development and ethical norms in sport (Côté & Turnnidge, 2019; Smith et al., 2015).

Groups.

The focus thus far has been on individuals, however, how one assimilates successfully into the group's culture is of equal importance. It is almost universally the case that the hiring process seeks a fit between the person and the organization, broadly defined as "the congruence of an individual's beliefs and values with the culture, norms, and values of an organization" (Koleva, Beall, & Graham, 2017, p526). Research conducted within the leadership domain suggests that value congruence may have a mediating effect on the relationship between perceptions of the leader's values and follower outcomes (Brown & Treviño, 2006). More specifically, should the group perceptions of the leader's value match their desired values, positive follower outcomes are likely to be demonstrated. In contrast, should the perceived values of the leader deviate from those desired by the group, negative outcomes are likely to follow (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Jung & Avolio, 2000). Similarly, Bretz and Judge (1994) and Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) have demonstrated a strong relationship between person organization fit, and numerous measures of employee satisfaction and job performance. Where there is congruence between individual and group values, a moral atmosphere is likely to follow (Motyl, Iyer, Oishi, Trawalter, & Nosek, 2014).

In order to maximise the benefits of moral fit, athletes need to not only uphold shared values, but rather live them (Koleva et al., 2017). From an external perspective, it would appear that many sports governing bodies and clubs have attempted to distil the core values they wish to espouse and construct a moral system at a superficial level, but fail to implement and embed the results of their efforts within their respective cultures. Such an approach merely attempts to transpose values onto others and fails to consider their existing internalisation. Further, it does not create a system that embeds the development of such values within the community. At an organisational level, endorsing honesty, for example, is easy. However, fostering an environment where athletes feel safe to freely speak their minds without fear of retribution is less so -- but it can be done. For example, facilitating a system to garner anonymous feedback is one mechanism. Encouraging a culture where all voices are heard and valued is harder, but again, processes can be put in place to create a more open environment (e.g., by soliciting feedback from subversive athletes, challenging domineering behaviour, or encouraging small group projects).

The first step for those involved in sport is, therefore, to reflect on personal standards both individually, as a group, and broader community. From there, individuals may work together to highlight desired moral virtues and co-construct cultural norms based upon moral foundations. Through this co-construction of normatively appropriate standards, those involved in sport can begin to find ways to incorporate moral skill development within their practice, and ultimately, within the self-concept. However, failing to achieve any one of these steps will likely result in a lack of moral internalisation.

Environment.

Beyond individuals and groups, structural modifications can be made to the competitive environment to enhance moral development. Most commonly referred to as competitive engineering (Burton, Gillham, & Hammermeister, 2011a), this approach advocates the modification of facilities, equipment, and rules to enhance participant motivation (Burton, Gillham, & Hammermeister, 2011b; McCalpin, Evans, Côté, 2017). Examples include: (1) permitting participants to select their own level of competition (e.g., playing up or down age-grades), (2) modifying facilities (e.g., playing on smaller or larger fields, courts etc.), (3) adjusting equipment (e.g., using smaller or larger equipment, balls that run faster or slower, or bounce higher or lower), and (4) altering the rules (e.g., every player plays at least half a game; Jones, Mills, & Sandercock, in review). Whilst competitive engineering has primarily been examined from a motivational perspective, there is no reason why similar structural changes cannot be used to enhance moral development. For example, ending a game and allowing participants to mix teams should one team establish an insurmountable lead (like many of us did on the playground as children), offering bonus points for pro-social action (e.g., helping up an opponent should they fall, being honest and showing respect to everyone involved in the competition, showing good manners), or removing officials entirely and encouraging the participants to self-police their competition.

Whilst a relatively young area of academic enquiry, Competitive Engineering has demonstrated promise in enhancing the types of positive outcomes that can be obtained through sport. Specifically, within engineered sporting environments, participants have reported increased engagement (Harwood, Yeadon, & King, 2018), technical skill acquisition (Morley 2016), and enjoyment and time on ball (Thomas & Wilson, 2016). However, competitive engineering goes beyond motivational and skill acquisition outcomes alone. Similar outcomes can be initiated within the domain of moral development should sports administrators provide younger sports participants with a structure that enhances moral development and encourages 'healthy competitive opportunities' over winning (Côté & Hancock 2016).

Conclusion

Coaching is a privilege that carries great responsibility, none more so than supporting the moral development of the people we work with. The greatest lesson a coach can teach is what it means to strive for moral excellence in an ethically appropriate and empowering manner. The aim of this manuscript was, therefore, to present an alternative approach to coaching that places the development of the Three Es at the forefront of coaching practice and research. More than that, it is a plea for coaches to reflect upon what they believe are the most important elements of their role as a coach. Historically, coaches have spent the majority of their time seeking ways to develop technical skills. Although important, such skills mean little without appropriate moral development and socialisation. Further, at youth levels, developing moral agents who understand normatively appropriate social standards and are motivated to

behave in a moral manner should be of equal, if not greater, importance to technical and tactical skill acquisition. That said, it is not a competition and just like personal, inter-, and intrapersonal skills, one process can be mastered alongside the other (Lefebvre, Blair, Turnnidge, Gainforth, & Côté, 2016; Evans, McGuckin, Gainforth, Bruner, & Côté, 2015).

Despite frequent admission of the importance of using sport as a vehicle for moral education, to date, these endeavors have lacked clear conceptualisation and direction. Through presenting both an argument for the importance of developing normatively appropriate ethical standards in sport and an explanation as to how such standards are cognitively incorporated within the self-concept, it is hoped that this manuscript goes some way in addressing these concerns. To further aid in this process a series of considerations are presented below. Most importantly, a framework outlining the development of normatively appropriate ethical standards is also discussed with a clear progression towards a system of co-construction to meet the changing needs and capabilities of the athlete.

Within this approach, the moral agency of the reader is considered and although normative approaches to ethics are highlighted and character development advocated, although specific standards are not prescribed. Instead, it is left up to the reader to reflect upon their own beliefs and consider how they may incorporate the concepts discussed here within their own practice. Presented are a series of tips below to aid this process:

- Consider your ethical position. Reflect upon decisions you have made and the motives for doing so. Openly discuss your ethical position and expectations for others. Work with your athletes to co-construct normative moral standards. Identify shared values, consider the group's habits, and where appropriate, make adjustments.
- Continually strive for excellence. Contemplate whether you are of integrity (i.e., consistent in your words and actions), have moral desires, and are able to resist the temptation to win by lowering your personal standards. Consider your lower order virtues and speak to others to gauge how the social information you present is being perceived. Reflect upon whether there is a discrepancy between how you think and act when stressed, tired, and/or under pressure compared to when you are not. If you make poor choices or behave in a way that you do not like under such conditions, try to limit their influence. Examine ways to develop your contextual understanding and explore opportunities to embed different forms of learning opportunities within your practice.
- Empower your athletes. Share power and responsibility with your athlete[s], set intellectually challenging problems to solve, and show support and encouragement for new and creative ideas. Nurture athlete self- and collective esteem by setting and supporting athletes to achieve high expectations, expressing belief in their abilities, and by demonstrating how activities help support the group's collective goals and values. Consider the level of value congruence within your club or organisation. Implement mechanisms that support the development of a moral and empowering culture (e.g., challenging behaviour that does not fit within the organisation's aims).

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