

Becoming a Moral Exemplar Coach

Doing the right thing for the right reason.

Nicole M. LaVoi, Ph.D., University of Minnesota

*one develops virtue by
practicing virtue.*

-Aristotle

Disposition toward considering the needs and interests of others, and how one's own actions affect other people.

Motivation

[Consideration of Others]

Moral Character

Ability

[Self-Regulation]

Disposition toward regulating one's behavior effectively, specifically with reference to behaviors that have positive short-term consequences but negative long-term consequences for oneself or others.

Identity

[Moral Identity]

Disposition toward valuing morality and wanting to view oneself as a moral person.

“I have a moral compass, so ethical decisions are easy for me! I do the right thing all the time, no matter what. It's just how I was raised, it is who I am.”

“My responsibility is not to baby athletes so unless an athlete is an advocate for him/herself and takes care of their own injuries, my job is to win!”

Moral Identity



(Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton, in progress)

Moral Exemplarity

Who is a *moral exemplar*?

Someone who is:

- 1) Committed to moral ideals or principles
- 2) Driven to act consistently based on moral ideals
- 3) Inspires and influences others toward moral action
- 4) Humble and lacking concern for one's own ego or self-interest

(Colby & Damon, 1994)

Moral Exemplar Coaches' Understandings of Professionalism

Theme
Internalized moral compass and moral values
Coaching as teaching
Responsibility toward others
Care and respect for others
Ongoing personal and professional growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through self-reflection and learning from mistakes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through learning from others
High internalized standard of excellence for self
Internal reconciliation of conflict/paradoxes/polarities in personal and professional life
Coaching as a “calling”/Passion for one’s work

BOTH/AND

...striving for performance excellence and moral excellence is not mutually exclusive, it is inextricably linked.

G R E Y

A R I E A

- 1. Work strictly by the rule book**
- 2. Work in the grey area, interpretation matters**
- 3. Work within “the spirit of the rule”**
- 4. Work consistently within personal/moral values**

(Kihl, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009)

0

- Do what rule says: Avoid punishment, obey

1

- Do as I'm told by an authority figure

2

Do what is best for me: Eye for an eye

3

- Do as expected to be "good" or "nice"

4

- Do my duty and respect authority

5

- Do what is right and fair, for everyone

HOW TO COACH FOR MORAL CHARACTER?

- **Perspective taking & empathy**
- **Teachable moments**
- **Story telling**
- **Discussion**
- **Expectations**
- **Modeling**
- **Consequences & accountability**
- **Make part of every lesson = consistent messaging**
- **Make it part of your culture**
- **Establish strong & collective team norms**

Symbolic Value of Athlete Actions

Punishment is to address a breakdown of team discipline and solidarity.

Ideally punishment comes from the whole team, not the coach.

Opportunity to call attention to rules and expectations and how serve good of the team.

Opportunity for learning, growth and character development.

Character develops from the inside out

Character is not imposed

By rewards & punishments

By role models

By coach command

By peers

Character is developed

Through experiences

Through group processes

Through discussion & reflection

Through choices and decisions