

The Coaching Culture

Podcast Notes



Episode 209 How to Overcome the Trap of Permissiveness

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Highlights

- The importance of focusing on solutions.
- How to establish a permissiveness approach in your program.
- How to hold players accountable while maintaining the coach-athlete relationship.
- How to use progressive consequences in your program.

Permissiveness - How much latitude and freedom do we give players before we step in to enforce our standards?

1. One of the most common mistakes that coaches make is that they make threats but don't follow through with them.
2. Another area the permissiveness crimps in is when we observe unacceptable behavior; behaviors that we know are below the line or that they are harmful or detrimental to the program.
3. Some coaches have the tendency to try to beg or positively encourage their players to do the right thing, but they tolerate it and allowed it to happen.
4. One of the most common things that we can fall into as coaches whether we ignore, whether we beg, or plead or we make idle threats, at the end of the day we tolerate things, we are allowing our players to behave in a certain way, unacceptable effort, and then we complain to our fellow coaches after practice instead of stepping in and addressing the behavior.
5. There is a moment of misbehavior, and we are presented with that instant decision of, do I confront it, do I take it head on, am I going to tolerate this thing or am I going to lay down the law? There are many times that where is just easier sometimes to just let it slide.

Why is it that we feel tempted sometimes to let it slide before we try to reel things back in?

1. It takes a lot of energy.
 - a. Should I stop practice to address the issue?



- b. Have I adequately taught what the expectations are?
 - c. Can I hold them accountable to something that maybe I haven't communicated very well?
 - d. Do we pause? Do we stop? Do we let it slide?
2. Coaches are afraid that if they continually confront behavior, they might lose the trust, the respect, or the relationship that they have with their players.

How hard can I push my players and how demanding can I be with their attitude and effort?

- So often as transformational coaches we want to meet our players where they are.
- Instead of confronting it, we try to use positive reinforcement. I'm just to focus on the good things that are happening and I'm not going to focus on the negative behavior.
- The number one reason not to confront a players or certain behaviors is uncertainty. You just don't know how players are going to respond.
- We don't know how players are going to respond individual or collectively, also we don't know how the parents are going to respond.

What are we going allow? There is always this fear of impacting our performance. How much backing am I going to get from the administration if I hold a player accountable to standard or team rule?

Is there a place for permissiveness or do we have to confront every negative behavior or misbehavior in our practice as soon as it happens? There might be a reason why we are more permissive in certain situations.

When do we allow players to experience natural consequences?

- There is a difference between permissiveness and allowing them to experience natural consequences and walking with them and exploring those.
- We can't confront every single unacceptable behavior in our program. It's not just possible, it's not sustainable.
- We need to focus on certain behaviors that we would've addressed but also understand that there is great value in allowing our players to experience the natural consequences of their behavior.
- Coaches need to find areas of their program where they are not always going to step in for the players to experience natural consequences. They need to experience those natural consequences and focus on solutions.



- Too often as coaches we are afraid to be able to allow our team to experience some failure to create a little bit more validity about the conversation that we want to have about their execution, and their effort where there never going to understand until they experience a way that doesn't work.

The value of restorative discipline or restorative consequences.

Coaches need to be creative in ways that when they are discipline a player and they are thinking of a consequence; they are doing it not only to protect the culture, but also to restore that person's value or that person's belonging in the group if they violated one of the team's norms.

Progressive consequences - Have checkpoints along the way.

Whether you are using progressive consequences, restorative consequences or you are exploring the natural consequences; there needs to be accountability within a program. We need to hold players to a standard. We need to continuously be trying to raise the standard in our program.

Where do we focus our attention, which areas, which behaviors?

Coaches need to think about this in two ways:

1. **Find some non-negotiables.** What are two or three really important things as a coach that you need within your environment for you to effectively lead your team?
Examples:
 - a. Players on time.
 - b. Players to listen.
 - c. Players to not complain.
2. **Set team standards.** Focus on 5 things/areas of relevant behaviors, that are relevant to areas that they might struggle as a team, that they need to focus on if they want to achieve their goals that season.

Provide boundaries and non-negotiables.

- Agreed upon boundaries with a few non-negotiables in that area and allowing your team the freedom to explore and to play and learn in that environment.
- Fear of the loss of relationship. Players disconnect from us because we held them accountable to a standard.
- Establishing standards, team standards, non-negotiables up front then the players much less likely to respond in a negative way if they had input into the standards because they understand the very purpose and why they are so beneficial.



- If we want to have meaningful relationship with our players, then we have to hold them to a standard. If don't hold them to a standard and if we don't challenge them on certain behaviors that are harmful to them and other people in the team, those relationships will only go so far.
- Difficult conversations can enhance your relationship with a player as you are walking with them through whatever the situation or the decision that they have made that put them in that place.

Final Thought

1. Firmness (role of the coach) but walking with them in kindness to support the human being.
2. It's worth your energy, and your time, and your investment to bring everybody to the table; and to have the conversations to find a common place where this is what we want to be and these are the consequences that we want to be held accountable to, so that we can become that team/person/coach.

JP Nerbun

jpnerbun@thriveonchallenge.com

Twitter: [@jpnerbun](https://twitter.com/jpnerbun)

thriveonchallenge.com

Nate Sanderson

[@CoachNSanderson](https://twitter.com/CoachNSanderson)

NSanderson@ThriveOnChallenge.com