

'When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.' (1 Corinthians 13:11)

This passage is an apt metaphor in the debate over educational philosophy, the nature of the child and what he/she needs moving from child to adult. This debate has been underway for centuries and can be summarized as a discussion between 'progressive' and 'classical' schools, with an integral element being the teacher's role in the process. There are no 'black and white' answers to this; the answers come from society and the stage of a child's development.

Progressive education – 'constructivism'– postulates that only knowledge one finds for oneself is genuine and lasting. Progressivism found its roots in Rousseau's 'natural' child and features, among other ideas, the cultivation of individual creativity in learning. Today, it is the basis for 'inquiry-based learning' where students take more responsibility for their learning. John Dewey, the father of modern American pedagogy, stated in his 'Pedagogic Creed' that an active role in learning was essential:

"The child is thrown into a passive, receptive or absorbing attitude. The conditions are such that he is not permitted to follow the law of his nature; the result is friction and waste."

According to Prince and Felder (2007), "...evidence favoring inductive learning over traditional deductive pedagogy is unequivocal."

Critics have doubted whether children actually know enough of themselves to be appropriate drivers of learning. E.D. Hirsh, a prominent supporter of 'traditional education' – the Classicists - believes that we must demand a rigorous core of knowledge. Classical study stimulates students to connect their learning. Hirsch draws on Plato and Aristotle, stating they:

"...based their ideas about education, ethics, and politics on the concept of nature. But while a classicist knows that any attempt to thwart human nature is bound to fail, he does not assume that a providential design guarantees that our individual natural impulses will always yield positive outcomes.'

There is, of course, middle ground. Okenshott (1989) stressed the balance between 'self-realization' and 'succeeding to his inheritance of human achievement,' the 'inheritance' here meaning 'classical' knowledge. The goal of education was always to increase one's capacity for growth while recognizing the legacy of those who came before.

Beyond pedagogy, education is about relationships within the classroom and 'moral education.' In this, the teacher's model is paramount. There must be

vested interest from both sides in learning. Noddings (2005) saw this as the 'caring' dynamic - 'caring' in the sense of an emotional connection with the student, so the student chooses to actively participate in learning;

"the caring teacher strives first to establish and maintain caring relations, and these relations exhibit an integrity that provides a foundation for everything teacher and student do together."

This provides a model for 'moral' education - integrity through action. Dewey believed that reformed pedagogy would remake the roles and activities of both students and teachers and that 'moral' education came from the natural course of school life:

"...the best and deepest moral training is precisely that which one gets through having to enter into proper relations with others in a unity of work and thought."

KIN855 - Coaching Behavior Analysis paper

"Introduction

As the financial rewards for sport success have risen, and sport has taken an ever increasingly prominent role in society, so too has the demand for training programs that are based on measurable metrics, rather than intuition and what a coach 'thinks he/she knows,' rather than subjective ideas or 'intuition' and 'just knowing.' This is based on the assumption that an important determinant in athletic participation is the coach/athlete relationship. (Smoll & Smith, 2002, pp.211-212) Within this context, it is important to note that the "...ultimate effect of coaching behavior is mediated by athlete recall and the meaning they attribute to the coach's behavior." (Smoll & Smith, 2002, p.213) An important aspect of coaching assessment instruments is objective, 3rd party assessment, as coaches often cannot accurately assess the impact and perception of their behaviors. (Smoll & Smith, 2002, p.217)

Understanding the coach/athlete relationship is important because this relationship is a key aspect of athlete motivation, and thus performance. Coaches who create an environment for intrinsic motivation – cultivating and promoting the development of autonomy, competence and relatedness – are more likely to yield motivated athletes. According to Mageau and Vallerand (2003), “The coach–athlete relationship is one of the most important influences on athletes’ motivation and subsequent performance.” (Mageau and Vallerand, 2003, p.884) While Smoll and Smith’s (2002) research did not show marked difference in win/loss records between coaches who are ‘liked’ or ‘disliked’, a positive environment that facilitates competence and autonomy is more likely to lead to intrinsic motivation and keeping athletes involved, particularly at younger ages. (Ryan & Deci, 2007, p.3)

Further, an underlying assumption and factor in understanding the coach/athlete dynamic is the level of ‘care’ in the relationship. The educator Nel Noddings was a prominent proponent of the ‘caring’ idea. In it, she differentiated between the teacher (coach) who ‘cares’ in the ‘virtue’ sense – they “...conscientiously pursue certain goals for their students (athletes), and they often work hard at coercing them to achieve those goals.” and those who pursue ‘relational’ caring where the “cared-for” – the student/athlete recognizes and caring and responds in some detectable manner...an affirmative response...” (Noddings, 2005) Noddings stressed the difference in these two different forms of caring when she stated, “researchers... devise instruments that measure to what degree teachers (coaches) exhibit *observable behaviors*. (Italics added.) A high score is taken to mean that the teacher cares. But the students may not agree.” (Noddings, 2005)

Measuring this ‘care’ therefore is the crux of any assessment and in measuring the coach/athlete relationship.”

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“In the introduction to this paper, two key aspects of coach/athlete relationships were discussed: caring and motivation. The Dualistic Model for Passion attempts to measure a coach’s passion – in essence his/her ‘caring’ – but behaviors are the ultimate indicator of passion and/or caring. Athlete motivation can only be seen indirectly, via the effort and commitment that an athlete exhibits. Unfortunately, motivation can wax and wane, depending on the task, and it too is only seen via athlete behaviors and outcomes. Not CBAS, nor any of the other assessment tools, accurately measure these.

Finally, there still remains the overriding concern with attempting scientific measurement of something as subjective and complex as a coach/athlete relationship. Smoll and Smith (2002) acknowledged this when discussing the cognitive processes at work in a coach/athlete relationship, admitting that there are “...other factors, such as the athlete's age, what he or she expects of coaches (normative beliefs and expectations), and certain personality variables, such as self- esteem and anxiety.” (Smoll & Smith, 2002, p.215) Add gender and/or how accomplished the athlete (Thompson, p. 20) and the difficulty of nailing down causality increases. It seems artificial to attempt to quantify something that is as personal and subjective as a relationship between a coach and athlete. Any interactions between humans are complex, and involve dynamics and factors that cannot be accurately and objectively measured via a quantifying questionnaire,

dynamics that include the history of the relationship, gender, the level of athlete, each person's styles and preferences, or just whether they are having a good day or a bad day – limitations that each piece of research acknowledged. While societal and financial pressures will continue to demand some sort of quantifiable measures of a coach, there is more to being a successful coach than what is tabulated in a research tool. Gallimore and Tharp's (2004) research into the legendary coach John Wooden pointed to qualitative aspects of examining coaching behavior, when they said,

“...Exquisite and diligent planning lay behind the heavy information load, economy of talk, and practice organization. Had qualitative methods been used to obtain a richer account of the context of his practices, including his pedagogical philosophy, the 1974-1975 quantitative data would have been more fully mined and interpreted.” (Gallimore & Tharp, 2004, p.119)

These do not show up on a quantitative tally sheet. Maybe ‘what a coach knows’ does have some logic.”