



POSITIVE MOTIVATION

Getting the Best from Today's Athletes



**POSITIVE
COACHING
ALLIANCE**

March 3, 2025

Jon Harris

DISCUSSION | Coaching today's athletes

Think about some of the characteristics you have noticed in this generation of athletes.

- What are some positive attributes?
- What are some challenges?





DR. DAN GOULD, PhD / PCA National Advisory Board Member, Michigan State, Institute for the Study of Youth Sports

POSITIVE MOTIVATION

Key Takeaways for today's athletes

- Explain the “WHY”
- Communicate Effectively--Be Direct
- Build Independence
- Promote Resiliency

DEVELOPING COMPETITORS

THROUGH POSITIVE COACHING



**ELM Tree
Of Mastery**



**Filling
Emotional Tanks**



**Honoring
The Game**



TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

**POSITIVE
COACHES**



**HELP ATHLETES
FEEL:**

SAFE

SEEN

HEARD

VALUED

LEARNING PRINCIPLES



1. We are smarter **together** than apart
2. We learn by **experiencing**, and **doing**
3. We learn by **listening** and **sharing**

LEARNING AGREEMENTS



1. Try on **the process**
2. Take care of **yourself** and **others**
3. Make **space**/take **space**

POSITIVE MOTIVATION



- 1** MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE
- 2** HIGH CHALLENGE HIGH SUPPORT
- 3** CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

1

MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE

DISCUSSION

Name someone in your life who motivated and inspired you?

What did they do?



HOW DO YOU MOTIVATE YOUR ATHLETES?

POSITIVE CLIMATE

Effort & Process
Trust & Belonging
Autonomy and Meaning

VS

NEGATIVE CLIMATE

Focus only on outcome
Dysregulated coach
Lack of safety and belonging

POSITIVE COACHING DEFINITION:
EMPATHIZING, NOT DICTATING

JESSE MERMUYS

POSITIVE CLIMATE TOOLKIT

Opening circle

Set expectations

Ask for input

Give voice & choice

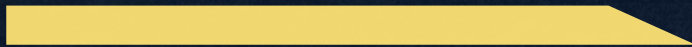
Welcome
activities

Positive Inclusion

2

**HIGH CHALLENGE
HIGH SUPPORT**

DISCUSSION



Can a coach be intense and positive?

How so?





Janine Tucker

JANINE TUCKER / PCA National Advisory Board Member, former NCAA Coach



**I've learned that people will forget
what you said, people will forget
what you did, but people will never
forget how you made them feel**



Maya Angelou
American Poet & Civil
Rights Activist

DEVELOPING RESILIENCE

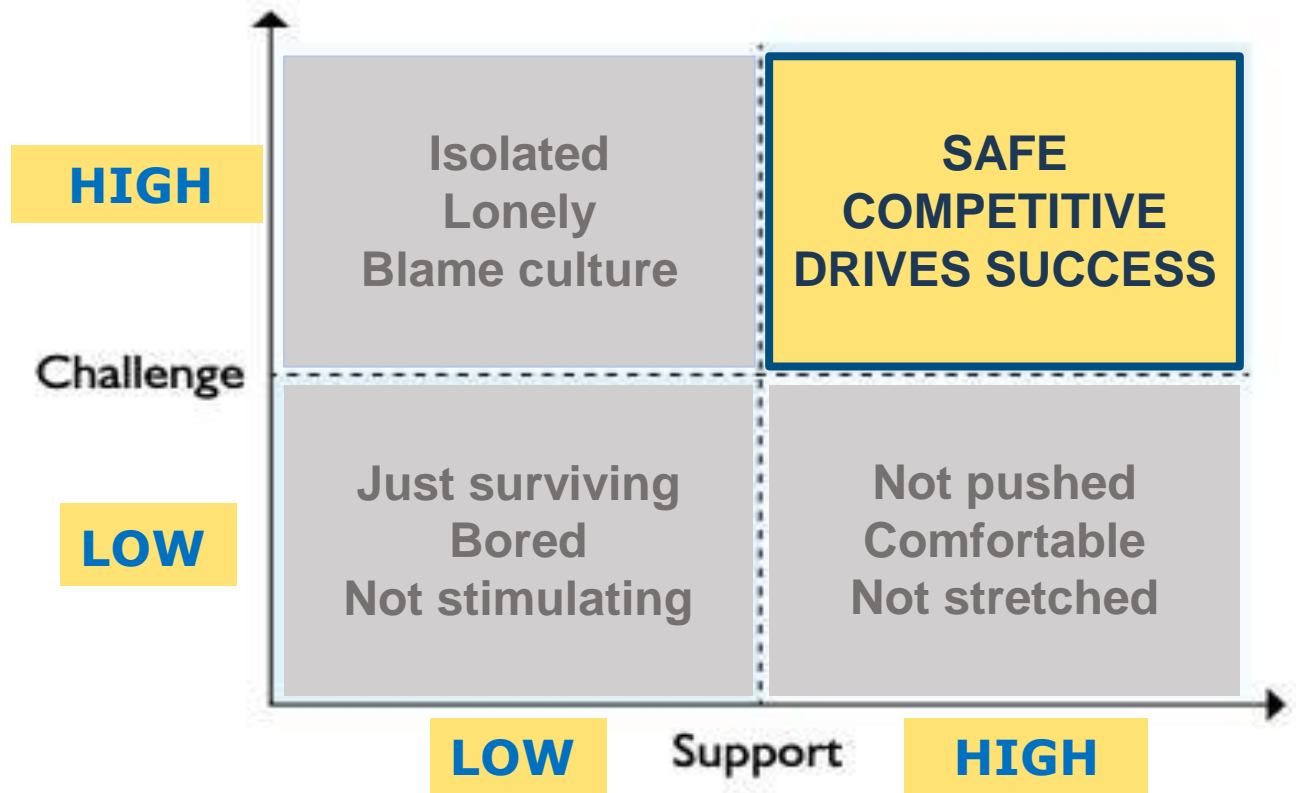


Figure 2. A challenge-support matrix for developing resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016)

HIGH CHALLENGE, HIGH SUPPORT TOOLKIT

Empathy with
accountability
Clear and consistent

If/then
statements
Check for understanding

Scaffolded
challenges
Celebrate small wins



Kelly Kratz | PCA

HIGH CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

How could you scaffold this activity?

How can you support the athlete during the missed attempts?



Sakar, Resilience in elite athletes, 2021

3

**CHALLENGING
CONVERSATIONS**

DISCUSSION

What is a challenging conversation you may need to have with an athlete?

What is important to keep in mind when having this conversation?





“

Hard conversations don't have to be mean conversations. They don't have to take on a detached or authoritarian tone. Holding people to their greatness is perhaps one of the most loving actions we can take. Real accountability isn't a 'gotcha'. It's an 'I see you'.

”

Amy Fast, Ed.D

Principal, Author, teacher, instructional coach,
McMinnville School District in Oregon

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION



- When/where would you have the conversation?
- What has the athlete been going through that may have led to the need for this conversation?
- How will you start the conversation with empathy?
- How will you respond if an athlete isn't receiving it well?

CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS TOOLKIT

Handle with care

Self regulation

Consider
impact vs intent

"I didn't mean it..."

Set a
positive goal

What to strive for



COMMITMENT



Which of these tools will you use this season?

- Opening circle
- Welcome activities
- Ask for input
- Empathy with accountability
- If/then statements
- Scaffolded challenges
- Handle with care
- Impact vs intent
- Set a positive goal

COACHING RESOURCES



Coaches Guide to
Supporting Athlete
Mental Health



Parent Meeting
Agenda



PCA Resource Zone



Positive Motivation
Toolkit

SIGN-IN FOR TODAY'S WORKSHOP

Scan QR Code:



Workshop Attendance Code: **57342**

-or- Navigate to: mypca.me/workshop

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The image shows a smartphone screen displaying a sign-in form for the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) Workshop Attendance. At the top left of the screen is the PCA logo, which consists of a blue and orange circular icon with a stylized 'C' and the text "POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE" to its right. Below the logo is a horizontal blue and orange bar. The main title of the form is "PCA Workshop Attendance" in blue text. Below this, there are two input fields. The first is labeled "Workshop Attendance Code *" and contains the placeholder text "Enter Provided Code Here". The second is labeled "Email *" and contains the placeholder text "Enter Email To Receive Certificate Here". Below the email field, there is a note in italics: "If pre-registered, be sure to use the same email address". At the bottom of the form is a blue button with the white text "Continue".

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUTH SPORTS

Please complete
the evaluation



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