



THE INSTITUTE OF
SPORTS
PSYCHOLOGY

To Coach Your Best, Be Your Best

By Robert Andrews, MA, LMFT, CSC

It is possible for coaches to learn how to coach at their best when things are at their worst. Robert Andrews with the Institute of Sports Psychology in Houston uses the CORE Map Personality Profile to help coaches understand and utilize their most effective and empowering performance and coaching personality traits. .

It is possible for coaches to learn how to coach at their best when things are at their worst. We teach you how to recognize how stress, pressure, and fear are derailing your natural coaching talent. Learn how to maintain a sense of focus and remain centered in the face of tremendous challenges.

Coaches all face varying levels of stress and pressure in their work with athletes and fellow coaches. Situations change quickly in the world of sports. It makes sense to utilize your best strengths, qualities, skills and traits when teaching, leading, and managing athletes and working in the world they perform in. Our program empowers coaches:

- Motivate your athletes from an effective leadership style
- Learn how to lead from your best temperament as a coach
- Get your point across to fellow coaches and athletes in an effective manner
- Learn how to lead by example
- Show up authentically and empower others with your congruency as a coach
- Learn how to handle conflict in a way that gives life to your organization
- Learn what derails your effectiveness as a coach and how to avoid those pitfalls

Coaches create the space that either opens athletes to their full potential, or shuts them down, creates unnecessary pressure, and inhibits performance. Coaches create an atmosphere that the athlete lives and breathes in. This atmosphere gives life to the athlete and their abilities, or creates a suffocating space that diminishes potential and limits performance.

The 2010 Men's NCAA basketball final between Duke and Butler was one of the greatest basketball games I have had the pleasure to watch. Before the game Duke Coach Mike Krzyzewski was asked how he wanted his players to play in the championship final.. He was quoted as saying "I would like for them to be themselves. Who they have been has gotten them this far. I wouldn't want them to be anyone else tonight".

I believe "Coach K." is saying that his athletes play their best when they are being their best. If they change anything about how they show up on the court they might not perform at their best. By showing up authentically, as the same players who got Duke to the NCAA Final they increased their performance potential. They won the championship proving this theory correct in this instance.

There has been a wave of coaching vacancies in the last year because coaches from all parts of the country have been called out for crossing the lines when it comes to treatment of players. If you were to ask them what led to their dismissal I am sure you would find that they were under increased levels of stress and pressure. As a result they changed key aspects of their personality and began to cross moral and ethical lines that led to behaviors that cost them their jobs.

When things are going well it is easy to show up at your best. When you are winning, the team is working as a unit, coaches are getting along, and the athletic department and fans are happy it is easy to maintain a sense of balance and a feeling of being centered.



The Institute's founder and director Robert B. Andrews MA, is a certified sports counselor, and licensed therapist. Robert has woven his passion for sports and experience as an athlete, together with 18 years of experience in personal empowerment. He has created a dynamic facility for athletes desiring to break through performance ceilings, and maximize their athletic potential.

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But what if you lose a few key players to injuries, find yourself in the midst of a losing streak, or experience a few bad seasons in a row? The fans, players, and media are frustrated. The leaders in the athletic department or organization don't seem to be as warm and patient as they have been in the past. You might find that you are not sleeping as well as you did when things were going well.

Increases in stress and pressure can create significant shifts in personality that block the ideal coaching personality from working effectively. Some coaches begin to show up as impatient, sarcastic, demeaning, condescending, and disempowering. Others shut down and lose confidence, withdrawing under increasing levels of stress.

When fear, stress, and pressure build they increase the odds that less desirable parts of your personality will begin to work their way into your coaching style. In most instances it has the exact opposite effect on athletes than what is desired. Athletes react to these changes with their own increased levels of stress and pressure. Performance suffers, and the cycle continues in a downward spiral.

I have been to many baseball games where a pitcher is struggling. When the coach makes a visit to the mound you can tell by the pitcher's body language what is being said. If the words are strong, but empowering and encouraging you usually see the pitcher regain their composure and pull it together. If the words are harsh, shaming, angry, or condescending you usually see the pitcher's performance get even worse.

Coaches can create higher levels of success by learning their personality strengths. By recognizing what triggers set them off they can stay in their optimum internal state regardless of what is going on externally with players, the game or match, with fans, administration, or the media.

When coaches understand how to stay centered themselves they help their athletes stay centered as well. When an athlete is centered mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually they perform at extremely high levels. The athlete's performance peaks and to the fan watching seems effortless. Athletes describe these performances as "surreal" and incredibly enjoyable.

They also describe higher functioning, lighter and more invigorating relationships with their coaches.

Remember, where the mind and heart lead the body will follow. When you show up as your best performance is at its best.

For more information about this powerful assessment tool please contact us. This assessment is having a profound impact on the coaches and athletes I have worked with, and is changing an important paradigm in coaching and sports performance across the country.