

Our Roles as Coaches in Today's Society

For many years I have always pondered the issue of what our roles, as coaches, are in society. At the high school level, we don't make much money coaching even though we have a tremendous amount of responsibility influencing and guiding the youth of America. As we have discussed throughout this book, we are expected to be role models for the young students who we teach and mentor. Many times, we are the only positive adult influence a student may encounter in his every day life. Again, that is why we must hold ourselves to a higher standard and we must remain strong so that we will not fail or disappoint so many who look to us for strength and guidance.

Once this fundamental concept is accepted by us, as teachers and coaches, we can look beyond the every day life in the classroom, in the weight room, on the field, and in the gym. We can expand our horizons and reflect on what our overall role is in today's society.

What is our impact? What is our influence? In essence, and to answer that age-old human question, what are we here for? What is my purpose? When I am through with my career and I am old and retired, what was my role? What did I do during my career?

We may state many things when it comes to describing our roles as teachers and coaches that may include some of the following facts:

Roles as Teachers and Coaches in Today's Society

- To teach and coach today's young students.
- To do my best every day when I go to work.
- To guide and help mold young people as they progress toward adulthood.
- To be humble, professional, and positive every day.
- To work to improve my knowledge of the sport I coach.
- To teach and emphasize hard work and sportsmanship.
- To be fair at all times with the athletes who play under me.
- To treat others as I would want to be treated.
- To continue to work at my profession and better myself.
- To work with others successfully.

These are just some examples that I thought of off the top of my head that might describe what our roles are as teachers and coaches in today's society. This is something that I have put a lot of thought into as the years have passed. Whether I was coaching, working in insurance, or running my own business, I constantly thought about what I was doing and what kind of an impact I was having on and in today's society. For years, I have continued to ask myself the following questions:

- Am I doing the right thing?
- Am I happy with the job I am currently working?
- Am I satisfied with my daily life and am I productive in what I am doing?
- What kind of an impact am I having on the people who I work with?
- What kind of an influence am I having on the young people who play for me?
- Am I making the right choices regarding my career?
- Am I living in the place where I want to spend the rest of my life?
- Is this where I want to be and do I want more out of life?
- Am I being strong for the other members of my family?
- Am I consistently making a good effort or do I let myself slip and become weak?

These are just some of the questions that periodically I think about and reflect upon. After all of this pondering, thinking, and reflecting, I have developed my own personal philosophy of what our roles, as teachers and coaches, should be in today's society. This simple philosophy may seem basic, but when I add up all the things I think about, it all comes back to one simple thought and core belief that I have. The role that I have adapted for myself and the thing that I try and live every day of my life by, is this simple question:

Are we adding value to other people's lives by what we do?

Again, it's a simple thought and it's a basic idea. I can talk about teaching in the classroom, coaching on the field, interacting with students, working with peers, and socializing with friends, and the basic idea I always come back to is asking myself:

Am I adding value to the lives of the people I know?

Am I adding value to the lives of the students I teach?

Am I adding value to the lives of the students I coach?

Am I adding value to the lives of my relatives and family?

Am I adding value to the lives of the people I work with?

Am I adding value to the lives of the friends I socialize with?

To me, this is the fundamental question that every teacher and coach in America needs to sit down and ask. *Am I adding value to other people's lives by what I do?* If the honest question is "no", then you need to re-evaluate what you are doing and why you are in the teaching and coaching profession. Adding value to other people's lives has become the number one belief that I live my life by every day.

Adding value to other people's lives can be accomplished by so many methods:

- How you influence a student who looks up to you.
- How you talk with a friend who is going through a tough time.
- How you answer someone when things aren't going well for you that day.
- How you react when your team is defeated and how you learn from your mistakes.
- How you treat your kids when they need to be disciplined.
- How you talk with your spouse when you are tired and impatient.
- How you do your work when you are tired and fatigued.
- How do you treat the people you work with?
- Am I friendly to the people I meet on the street?
- Do I say hello with a smile, or do I put my head down and walk on by?
- Do I let the little things during the day bother me, or am I stronger than this?
- Do I yell at kids when they probably don't deserve it?
- Am I humble in victory?
- Do I run up the score on opponents?
- Do I congratulate those who beat me and work harder for next time?
- Am I petty in my dealings with people?
- Am I willing to share with others, or am I selfish?
- Do I listen, or do I just wait for my turn to talk?
- Do I take a genuine interest in the people I know, or do I just act like it?
- Am I phony with people or up front and honest?
- Am I arrogant towards other people?
- Do I think I am better than other people?
- Do I talk down to other people when I feel they are weaker?
- Do I take advantage of people I can intimidate?
- Do I go out of my way to make controversy and cause problems?

These are just some of many questions you can ask yourself when deciding if what you do adds value to other people's lives. Whether I coach, work in the corporate world, or run my own business, I always ask myself if what I am doing is adding value to other people's lives.

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