

Discussion Guide



From One Coach to Another: A Story of Transformational Coaching in Disability Sport

The creative nonfiction, “From One Coach to Another: A Story of Transformational Coaching in Disability Sport,” is an evidence-informed learning tool for disability sport coaches. The goal of this story is to demonstrate and provide information about coach behaviours that facilitate quality experiences for athletes with disabilities. Specifically, this story models coach behaviours consistent with Transformational Coaching—a follower-centered approach to coach leadership characterized by the use of empowering and inspiring leadership behaviours that serve to develop athletes into future leaders. The story is comprised of four chapters, each corresponding to one of the four types of Transformational Coaching behaviours: *Individualized Consideration*, *Intellectual Stimulation*, *Idealized Influence*, and *Inspirational Motivation*.

The purpose of this discussion guide is to stimulate reflection and dialogue on the situations and behaviours described in the story. The discussion guide prompts readers to examine and challenge assumptions about disability and disability sport, consider the experiences of athletes and coaches in disability sport, and explore when, where, and how to apply Transformational Coaching behaviours in any sport setting.



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Chapter 1: Individualized Consideration

Chapter 1 demonstrates coach behaviours that convey *Individualized Consideration*, the dimension of Transformational Coaching in which coaches show genuine care and concern for each athlete's unique needs.

1. Why might Logan feel uncomfortable or out of place observing practice with Jamie's team?
2. What makes Logan realize that he may need to reconsider his initial assumptions about coaching athletes with disabilities? What assumptions might he have held, and how have they been challenged?
3. How did Logan learn about Jamie and the Marlins Para-Swim Club? Why did Jamie invite Logan to observe her practice?

4. Despite years of experience coaching able-bodied swimmers, Logan is nervous that he might not have the knowledge or skills to be a good coach for a swimmer with a disability. How might coaching able-bodied athletes and athletes with disabilities be the same or different?
5. How does Jamie show *Individualized Consideration* for her athletes? What does she say or do to show genuine care and concern for each individual?
6. How do the athletes respond when Jamie shows care and concern for their health, wellbeing, or lives outside of sport? Why is this important?



Chapter 2: Intellectual Stimulation

Chapter 2 is focused on *Intellectual Stimulation*, the dimension of Transformational Coaching in which coaches engage athletes in the learning process to encourage critical thinking and creativity.

1. Why does Jamie ask Sam to lead Alex and Taylor through the dryland exercises he learned at training camp?
2. What are some of the benefits to having athletes take the lead during practice? Who benefits—the leader, the athletes, and/or the coach—and how?
3. How does Jamie engage athletes in the learning process? What does she say or do to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and connections between skills and concepts?

4. Why is it important for Jamie to work with athletes one-on-one throughout the practice?
5. When Jamie provides the swimmers with options and choice, elicits their input, and provides opportunities for leadership, she is sharing ownership of the practice with them. What do coaches “bring to the table” during a practice or training session? In contrast, what do the athletes bring?



Chapter 3: Idealized Influence

Chapter 3 is centered on Idealized Influence, the dimension of Transformational Coaching in which coaches gain their athletes' trust and respect by acting as positive role models.

1. When Jamie gives the swimmers their choice of stroke for the last set of the workout, she asks them to think about (a) their training and competition goals, and (b) what they think they need to improve on the most. Why are these important questions to ask? What other questions might a coach ask to prompt athletes to critically engage in their training?
2. What is Jamie trying to do when she shares a personal story about her experience as an athlete with Taylor?
3. What types of positive behaviours does Jamie model for the swimmers? How does she model these behaviours?

4. What are some other ways that coaches can communicate expectations about positive or prosocial behaviours with their athletes?
5. When Taylor apologizes to her teammates for her behaviour at the end of practice, how do her teammates respond? What does this say about the culture of the team?



Chapter 4: Inspirational Motivation

Chapter 4 portrays *Inspirational Motivation*, the dimension of Transformational Coaching in which coaches inspire athletes with a compelling vision of the future by fostering perceptions of meaning and team unity.

1. How does Jamie express confidence in the swimmers? What is Jamie showing when she expresses confidence in them?
2. What types of goals and expectations does Jamie discuss with the swimmers at the end of practice?
3. How does Jamie bring the team together at the end the practice? What are some other strategies that coaches might use to foster team unity?

4. How would you describe Jamie's approach to coaching?
5. At the beginning of the story, Logan feels uncomfortable and out of place. How does Jamie make him feel included throughout the practice?
6. At the end of the story, Logan states that one of his biggest learnings was that while coaches might know a lot about the sport, the athlete is the expert in their own body—and they can work together to adapt and address the athlete's needs. Throughout the story, what examples of how the coaches collaborated with the swimmers stand out the most?



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Canadian Disability Participation Project

Le projet canadien sur la participation sociale
des personnes en situation de handicap