



Champion Coach Note: The Cardinal Virtues and GROW

Play Like a Champion coaches know a core tenet of our philosophy is the GROW approach to develop the whole athlete and prepare them for success both on and off the field. GROW is based on a simple equation:

Goals + Relationships + Ownership = Winning

If coaches follow this simple formula, their players will have the best opportunity to grow both as quality persons and fine athletes. This model helps athletes become Champions both on and off the field. We have just completed a four part series on the cardinal virtues and their role in sport. It is no coincidence that the elements of the GROW approach correlate with the Cardinal Virtues that we have highlighted over the last month.

FORTITUDE –Pursuing goals with courage and persistence (related to **GOALS**);

JUSTICE--Treating others with care and respect (based on building **RELATIONSHIPS**);

PRUDENCE –Sound decision-making based on the good (when athletes exercise **OWNERSHIP**);

TEMPERANCE –Keeping sports in perspective, maintaining control, and leading a balanced life (**WINNING** in the right way).

Virtues, like specific sport skills, can and should be taught. Coaches can achieve this by working to establish a positive team climate, or “moral team community” through each element of the GROW



"For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with kind affection, and kind affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

~2 Peter 1:5-8

Watch with your team this video of Tony Dungy, a coach who truly embodies the cardinal virtues.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5jeKbgeQh8>

Consider with your team:

approach. Goal setting with your team enables your athletes to benchmark for success as they set and strive to achieve their individual and team goals. While working toward these goals, coaches should applaud their athlete's courage to work hard and persevere in order to develop the cardinal virtue of **Fortitude** within their athletes.

As a champion coach, you must strive to develop positive **Relationships** within your team. All members of a "moral team community" must not only respect one another, but also love one another in a special way. A true team is a family, a community that fosters friendships and supports each and every member. This means ensuring that no one is bullied or feels left out or excluded. When coaches strive to create right relationships on their team, they are teaching their athletes the virtue of **Justice** and respect.

Players develop **Prudence** by having the opportunity to deliberate, to discuss, and to make choices together that are made not to advance individual agendas, but rather are made for the good of the whole team. In a moral community, all members share responsibility for the team, what they stand for, and the decisions they make together. Therefore, it is critical that coaches allow their athletes to provide input or suggestions for a course of action. Allowing your team to be involved in meaningful decisions will give them Ownership to grow the virtue of Prudence.

Finally, teams that are moral communities always give their best effort. They strive to **Win**, yet employ perspective and understand that discipline, self-control, and **Temperance** are all needed in both sport and in life.

While following the GROW approach as a coach, emphasize virtue-development to your athletes throughout their sport journeys. By placing an emphasis on GROW and on virtue, you will maximize the enjoyment and potential of your athletes and encourage them to grow as strong disciples of our church.

- What does our team stand for?
- Are we a community that supports each other on and off the field?
- How do we measure success as a team?
- How do we put losses in the proper perspective?