

SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS AND THEIR APPLICATION
TO COACHING BASKETBALL

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to examine small group dynamics essentials and their application to coaching basketball.

Beal, et. al., (1965) "Leadership and Dynamic Group Action", was used as the source of the group dynamics essentials while basketball coaching texts and periodical literature were examined to illustrate the application to coaching basketball.

Conclusions arrived at as a result of this study were, first, the dynamics of non-athletic groups are very closely related to the techniques of coaching basketball. In many instances the two resembled each other almost identically. Secondly, the behavior of individuals is very similar in nature and the treatment is quite the same in athletic as well as non-athletic endeavors.

Recommendations made as a result of this study were as follows: (1) the basketball coach should examine the similarities of human reactions in athletic and non-athletic groups; (2) the dynamics of non-athletic groups should be analyzed by basketball coaches and thoroughly considered in their coaching techniques; (3) the preparatory education of basketball coaches should include course work in the study of group dynamics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
Chapter I	
NATURE OF THE PROBLEM	1
Introduction	1
Methods	5
Chapter II	
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF GROUP DYNAMICS AND THEIR APPLICATION TO BASKETBALL COACHING	7
Group Atmosphere	8
Group Communication Patterns	11
Group Participation	17
Group Standards	20
Group Social Control	24
"We-Feeling" or Identity	28
General Role Definitions in the Group	32
Chapter III	
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS	36
Summary	36
Implications	37
LITERATURE CITED	39

CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

This study is designed to explore the field of small group dynamics and its application to the profession of coaching basketball. These two areas of human interaction appear to have much in common in that they deal with human emotions, desires, ambitions, and conflicts. This investigation will review the forces of group dynamics, the elements involved in coaching basketball, and the interapplication of these principles.

Humans respond and react socially in varying ways. The forces behind the resultant behaviors must be understood in order to have a successfully functioning group. Similar basic desires are prevalent whether the situation is non-athletic or athletic. Human nature and its many avenues of expression influence virtually every group situation in existence. Thelen (1963) refers to the overall picture of group dynamics as the accomplishments or failures of a group as dependent on the many variables that are unique to the particular situation. Group dynamics and their utilization within the group are dependent on what actually occurs and what the ultimate goals of the group involve, and what is expected of the group to be successful in relation to what is the underlying desires

of each member. The end result, he suggested, is how these varying and often conflicting wishes are interwoven into a cohesive unit. Thelen went on to hypothesize that the processes of group dynamics depend perhaps upon the life styles, backgrounds, desires, and ambitions that are peculiar to each individual. Self discipline training, learning, relearning and self dedication are the obstacles that must be conquered in order for the group to achieve ultimate success. The resultant outcome will be dependent on just how efficiently and how diligently the members have progressed in regards to the situation, each other, and future endeavors of a similar nature. Thelen stated further that cohesiveness is imperative within the group and must exist collectively as well as individually. All individuals possess varying backgrounds and personalities. With this in mind the leadership and communications within the group must satisfy and compliment the individual's own needs while ever striving to combine these needs collectively for the benefit and satisfaction of the functioning group. This is not always an easy or even possible task, but it must remain the objective if the group is to function effectively. The individuality must be present and recognizable, but the outcome must be known by all if these traits are to augment each other and not oppose or restrict each other.

Basketball also deals with human behavior, and the coaching principles involved may have lasting effects on many individuals.

Coaches sometimes think of their team as a mechanized group of robots, specifically trained to do a particular job. However, there appears to be more to the game than that of calculating every move on the court. It is often the off-court, behind the scenes, work that develops the effective, cohesive ball club.

Group processes, as mentioned previously, are quite comparable to the processes involved in coaching basketball. Many of the conflicts and accompanying problems seem to be quite similar and in many respects warrant the same adjustments. Veller and Hayes, quoted below, substantiate the views that dynamics are definitely prevalent in coaching.

Veller (1958) of Florida State University believed that there are important facets to successful coaching other than those of offensive and defensive strategy. He said, "Call these factors psychology if you may, but the term 'horse sense' is perhaps more apropos". Veller singled out the term "team rapport" to be the single most important factor in the establishment of successful coaching techniques, in that, if the players get along together as a unit as well as like and respect the coach, they will give their all for both the ball club and the coach.

Hayes (1958) of Southern Methodist University had this to say about his coaching ideas:

We want our players to profit by their experiences; we talk to them about a proper philosophy of athletics and make an effort to influence them in such a manner that they can profit to the fullest extent from their experiences in athletics.

I studied a little psychology when I was in college, and I learned something about individual differences. I make a very definite effort to find out what makes each of my players 'tick'. I try to find out how to get the very best out of him. I know positively that if there is any one reason for our success it is that we have been able to get the best out of our players. My players have solved problems out on the court that I did not know how to solve for them. This good fortune resulted from my giving them the type of training that I have spoken about.

I know there are coaches who disagree with my philosophy of coaching. I know there are coaches who are real tough. They use abusive language; they are very cynical critics; and they are hard on their men. My philosophy is that a player loves basketball or he wouldn't be out there and he is going to give his best efforts if you are cunning enough to get the best out of him. Most players go out on the court with a big desire to win, but I do not believe you can drive a basketball player to victory; it is a lot easier to lead him.

It has been the intent of the above introduction to examine briefly the overall picture of group dynamics and their possible relationship to coaching basketball. The purpose of this investigation, reported on the following pages, is to list in detail the essential elements of a functioning group as identified by Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh (1965) and to analyze basketball coaches' writings to determine the extent to which they report that these elements are essential to their own coaching practice.

Methods

Sources of information. Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh's (1965) text, Leadership and Dynamic Group Action, was chosen as the source for the essentials of small group dynamics because of its clarity of expression and appropriateness to the study. Coaching ideas were taken from various coaching textbooks and periodicals. They were chosen because of their nature, their origination, and their application of essentials of group dynamics to coaching.

Collection of information. The information pertaining to small group dynamics essentials was obtained from Beal, et. als., text, Leadership and Group Action. These essentials were as follows: (1) group atmosphere, (2) group communications, (3) group participation, (4) group standards (5) group social control, (6) group "we" feeling or identity, and (7) general role definitions in the group. Each of these essentials were reviewed and the important elements, as described, were presented in this paper.

The coaching applications were obtained from various basketball coaching textbooks and periodicals and are presented in both quoted and paraphrased form in this paper. These articles were collected in relationship to the essential dynamics listed above, with insight as to their application on the coaching of basketball.

Collation of information. The aforementioned information was collected and organized in the following sections: (1) review of

Beal, et. al's., essentials of small group dynamics, (2) comparisons of coaching philosophies to the group dynamics essentials, and (3) a summary of the interapplication of group dynamics procedures and basketball coaching techniques. This information was organized in such a manner as to present the similarities between group dynamics and basketball coaching methods.

CHAPTER II

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF GROUP DYNAMICS AND THEIR APPLICATION TO BASKETBALL COACHING

The chapter is organized such that each of the dynamics principles will be the heading of a separate section. Each section will contain, first, Beal, et. al's., description of the principle; secondly, application of the principles as revealed in basketball coaching books and articles; and finally, summarization of the section.

Beal, et. al., (1965) explained in the introductory chapter of their book that each individual brings certain characteristics, peculiarly his own, to the group which pertain directly to the development of the aforementioned seven essentials of small group dynamics. They went on to explain that these characteristics are composed of interests, abilities, desires, and wishes as well as blocks and frustrations -- in other words "personalities" -- which are forces which contribute to the dynamics of the group. In addition to these forces, others seem to develop as a result of interaction between individuals. These forces are a property of the group as a whole, the summation, integration, and resolution of which have been labeled the internal dynamics of the group. The word dynamics denotes all the things implied in its use -- that is, the energies and forces derived both from individuals and from interaction of individuals with each other and the summation and

resolution of these forces into active as opposed to static behavior.

The seven sections of this chapter, in order of appearance, are group atmosphere, group communications, group participation, group standards, group social control, group "we" feeling or identity, and general role definitions.

GROUP ATMOSPHERE

Description. Beal, et. al., defined group atmosphere as the prevailing mood, tone, or feeling that permeates the group. They explained that when individuals meet and work together they should no longer behave only as individual units but respond as a collective whole to the prevailing group atmosphere. An individual's behavior is often determined to a large degree by his perception of the reaction of the group toward him. The person who feels insecure, self conscious, and inadequate will gain very little from those around him. The individual who feels secure and perceives himself as having adequate group skills more often takes the lead in group activities. The whole feeling of the group will be improved when all individuals are confident of their ability to contribute and question as they progress toward their goals.

The authors explain that underlying the establishment of a warm, friendly, permissive feeling are certain fundamental considerations that all group members should possess: there must be a basic belief in the value of each fellow individual, a sincere

feeling that each person is basically good, and an honest respect for each individual's point of view should prevail. Group members should develop a feeling of social sensitivity towards others involved in the group. This sensitivity (the understanding of individual personality traits and social interactions) should enable group members to determine and respond to the concerns, desires and needs of the group in the best manner possible. The ability to see beyond one's own needs and desires to the wider range of others and to the group as a whole may well be the most important step in the establishment of desirable group atmosphere.

Application to coaching. Watts (1963) correlated the aforementioned points quite closely to the coaching profession with these words:

To develop a healthy atmosphere of mutual respect, the coach must make a close study of each player, learning as much as possible about his ability, personality, interests, and idiosyncrasies. This will not only enable him to meet the boys' specific needs but, even more important, will build the boy's confidence in the coach's leadership. This is absolutely essential in creating a teaching climate in which both the individual and team can flourish.

Strack (1968) felt that the player was the most important person connected with any team. It is the coach's job, he explained, to field the best team he can with the material available but it must be done by respecting each player and showing prejudice toward none. A basketball team by its very nature (12-15 men) is a close relationship and the coach must do 'all in his power to make it such.

Metcalf (1964) had this to say about creating good team atmosphere and feelings:

A person must believe in himself and have confidence in his abilities. Once this is accomplished by a group of men then they collectively believe in themselves as well as their teammates. My men felt they were far better as a team in 1963-64 and it resultantly led us to the Southwest Conference Championship.

Rupp (1958) explained that group atmosphere actually involved two types of relationships: player-player and coach-player relations. About the former he said:

I think the ideal relationship or atmosphere is one in which the boys have all selfishness removed from their team play and have learned that the success of one is the success of all. Basketball, like all other forms of education, should not only present a mass of knowledge but should impart a spiritual view of life so that the individual may see that there is some sense in his existence. An individual who has not learned to cooperate with his fellow players has certainly missed the greatest fundamental of the game.

He described profitable coach-player relations as follows:

I believe that a coach of an athletic team has one of the finest chances for leadership that exists, and that he must realize he is building citizens as well as athletes. We don't care for the boy who just wants to get by. We want a boy to realize that success is gained by hard work both individually and for the team. Give credit where credit is due but don't give undeserved credit.

Summary. Beal, et. al., stated earlier that atmosphere refers to the prevailing tone, mood, or feeling that permeates the group. This "feeling" seems to be a vital part of group functions in non-athletic as well as athletic endeavors. Coaches obviously deal with atmosphere in their work with players as revealed in the above

statements. It seems to matter little whether the goal be winning the conference title or arriving at a solution to some social problem. Either group will experience many setbacks along the way if the work atmosphere is not satisfactory.

Individual differences and the channeling of these differences into acceptable and desirable ends appears to be the objective in both athletic and non-athletic groups. In either group those concerned must first be considered as individuals and secondly as a collective group working for a common cause. These individual peculiarities must be manipulated in such a manner as to have all concerned utilizing their innate qualities for the benefit of all involved.

Coaching basketball may appear to many to involve merely the shrewd handling of physically superior individuals on the court. This is generally not the case. The basic entities that apply to group atmosphere, whatever the project may be, are very similar in nature to the principles of coaching and developing rapport among team members.

GROUP COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

Description. Beal, et. al., defined group communications as the process whereby we convey ideas, sentiments, or belief to others. We usually envision communications in terms of speech or language but we may also communicate by visual signs, gestures, and imitation.

Through these medias we learn to know people, share experiences, ideas, sentiments, and beliefs.

Many group problems, the authors explained, are a result of the inability of group leaders and members to communicate effectively. Ideas and feelings are often conveyed in manners which are not fully understood by the whole group. The same words may mean quite different things to different people. Individuals may respond indifferently to suggestions. These differences must be understood by the leader or a communications problem will result. The old axiom about army orders is quite appropriate, "If it can be misunderstood, it will be misunderstood".

Those groups that are most productive have a more adequate communication set-up than those that are less productive. Successful supervisors and leaders often achieve their results by considering not only the members as individuals, but also the relationships, interactions, feelings, and communications within the group.

In most group situations a decrease of interactions will bring about a decrease in the strength of interpersonal feelings and sentiments and will decrease member identity with the group. The results of many studies show the necessity of trying to communicate in the language that other group members can understand and accept.

Application to coaching. LaGrand (1967) had this to say about on-court player communications in basketball:

Communication in war, business, politics, or athletics is essential to keep morale high and effort at its peak. This fact is graphically illustrated by the teams who are constantly talking on defense and the way they adjust on offense and have good words for fine passes or plays that come to fruition. Such talk is an intangible asset to team play and should be encouraged at all times. Remember: talking lifts the spirits, is essential to executing certain skills, and of equal importance, can have a demoralizing effect on the opposition who hears and sees the unity and efficiency of team communication.

Newell and Bennington (1962), when referring to group communication patterns, explained that a basketball coach may be possessed of a sound philosophy and his theory may be fundamentally sound, but to be successful he must have the ability to teach and impart his knowledge effectively. The material should always be presented to the squad at the level of understanding of the entire squad, not just a limited few. His approach should be simple, his presentation clear and concise. The successful coach transmits his theory to his squad. While games are won and lost on the court the squad's understanding of the coach's objectives will enhance the chances for victory.

Perkins (1963) referred to communications somewhat differently:

Don't kid yourself that winning basketball is just a matter of coaching skills. To be successful, a coach must have the active support of many people: his players, the faculty, the student body, the opposing team and coaches, the parents, the fans, the alumni, the press, and officials. When you say "public relations" to the basketball coach, you are talking about all of these people. The communications line must be an effective one or these media may be overlooked. We feel we have good public relations here at Chapman College. Listed are three of the things we do.

Where friction exists between the faculty and athletic department, I think you'll find its usually due to lack of communication. We make sure the faculty knows what we are trying to do, and we have no problems. We go a step beyond and try to include the faculty in our athletic programs wherever possible. For example, our scorekeeper is a professor of philosophy and our timer is a professor of psychology.

The alumni, community groups, high schools and other interested people make great demands on a coach's time for speeches, presentations and so on. These usually come during the season when time is of an essence. There is no way out but to give your time and give it willingly. We feel that, in order to maintain proper rapport with these groups we must accept as many speaking engagements as possible. We also invite alumni to our locker room after ball games and to our annual awards banquet.

In a small school press relations are vital. Although the main interest of sportswriters is the major colleges, the smaller schools can come in for their share of the publicity. We try to attend local sportswriters luncheons, encourage full local coverage of all games, invite the press to our locker room after games, and hold a "picture day" at the beginning of the season. Good press relations are vital for team exposure and overall team morale.

Bonder (1958) reviewed the always vital coach and parent line of communications by suggesting that parents are not your natural enemies as some coaches are prone to believe. Parents will support you as long as they believe your work is in the interest of their son and not at his expense. You must first understand that parents are not trained as coaches. They judge everything through eyes which tend to view mainly their own offspring. If you can integrate parental interest by helping

them interpret the game through your eyes you will seldom be affected by their occasional selfish desires. Learn to disagree with parents agreeably, he suggested, Antagonism of parents is often generated by the way coaches explain things or convey feelings of a certain game or situation.

The lines, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world," were written many years ago, but time has not dimmed their importance. The relationship of the coach and parent is a most vital one.

Summary. Adequate communications appear to play a very important role in any group setting. However, this marvelous world of sound, sight, expression, and interpretation is one which we too often take for granted.

Communications are often disrupted by thoughtless words, expressions or deeds. Insight into one's own manner of expression and its resulting effects is a must if we are to effectively convey our ideas. Individuals, in turn, must be able to understand what is expected of them and the content of what is being conveyed to them. This reflects back to knowing and understanding people. Effective communications are a result of absorbing the knowledge of human behavior and in turn using this knowledge to make suitable applications for healthy relationships.

In coaching basketball neither knowledge nor press clippings automatically insure success. All the fundamentals, techniques,

and strategy known to the game may go for naught if its application cannot be conveyed effectively. The coach must be able to teach the game and at the same time evaluate the apparent effects and responses of his ball club. This is not always an easy task but it is one that should not be overlooked. Basketball coaches too often ignore the individual, the team, and the realistic aspects of the situation. Too often they attempt to impart only what they want to without considering the reactions, responses and results.

Communications may go far beyond the realm of the particular group, whether it be a local service or the local college basketball team. In coaching basketball these relations carry over into many direct and indirect associations. If these associations (parents, alumni, press, faculty, townspeople, etc.) are not maintained, then vital supporting forces may be lost. The basketball coach must be relatively close to these supporting forces if he is to enjoy ultimate success.

Whatever the case may be, the communicative process must be a well organized force. It must be examined, evaluated, and adjusted to insure against forming detrimental gaps in the group.

GROUP PARTICIPATION

Description. Beal, et. al., stated that one of the most important internal forces in group participation is the personal and psychological involvement of individuals in the affairs of the group. We generally think of group participation as an overt, observable expression through speech or actions, they explained; however, there are many subtler behavior patterns in terms of gestures, attitudes, or manners that constitute participation. We often think of participation as member involvement through speaking and entering into the discussion; we may think in terms of the breadth of participation - how many group members take part; we may think again of the intensity of participation - how often various individuals take part or how emotionally involved they become; and we may think of participation patterns - how people respond to each other. The more a person participates, they thought, the more favorable are his attitudes toward the group, and the greater his feeling of concern for the identity with the group.

Finally, those members who participate the most are those who understand the basic purposes and functions of the group, have clearly in mind the group's expectations of its members, feel secure in playing their membership roles, and can see how their member roles contribute to the over-all purpose and functioning of the group.

Application to coaching. Metcalf (1964) felt quite strongly about whole team participation. He said that:

Use of all my players whenever possible and practical builds team morale greatly both in game and practical situations. The feeling that there is always a chance one may play creates much better team spirit and desire.

Luce (1968) considered active participation to be a vital ingredient in building good team "morale". He felt that every team member must understand his position and place on the team as well as give 100 percent all the time to contribute to the success of the team.

Veller (1958) felt that one of the more serious blunders a coach can make is to play too few boys. Let the subs play at every opportunity. This will make a lot of parents and players happy, give experience for future years, and endear yourself to the opposing coach (by not running the score up). In addition, the game will be more interesting to the fans.

Underwood (1967) quoted Dave Thomas of Houston University as saying this about team participation:

We have these meetings, the boys all call them prayer meetings. We sit around and we talk about how to live and the dreams I have for them and for myself. The boys catch on and really get the idea of being a group. I can get to them. By participating as a group in off the athletic field situations you achieve a lot of good feeling for on the field endeavors. I think when you worry about kids and are dedicated to them they know it.

Gardner (1961) said that total team participation achieves

several goals. It develops bench strength, it rests the regulars, it develops team morale, and it builds confidence in younger players. All players deserve a chance to play when the opportunity presents itself. The adage "a substitute today, a star tomorrow" should certainly be part of a coach's philosophy.

Rupp (1968) felt that individual participation in the actual coaching of the team was vitally important. He said:

I stress player participation by using my own men as coaches during regular practice sessions. We sit down and discuss the practice session and plan it to the minute. The player then has a good understanding of just what I want to be accomplished on that particular day. They know they are expected to run a smooth workout and really do a fine job.

I feel this procedure has greatly improved our over-all team unity as well as built confidence in each team member through a real feeling of group membership. I know its gone a long way towards creating completely unselfish teams here at Kentucky.

Summary. Group participation appears to affect non-athletic and athletic endeavors in much the same manner. Most people want to be a part of the group and participation can achieve this desire.

The over-all group or team morale can be virtually assured when all individuals involved are participating together as a unit.

At times this is obviously impossible in athletic events if the team is to have winning as their ultimate goal. However, skillful handling in practice situations and counseling of non-playing personnel will help maintain healthy team feelings. The

men must have that inner feeling that there is always a chance to play and will play if the opportunity presents itself. In turn they must realize and accept the situation when they do not get into a ball game. Therefore, participation must never be overlooked in practice situations and handled wisely in actual game conditions. Never overlook the non-regulars on your team. They are a vital part of your program and quite possibly the "stars of tomorrow".

GROUP STANDARDS

Description. Beal, et. al., defined group standards as the level of performance acceptable to the group itself. Group standards may be either implied or clearly stated; nevertheless, every group has its standards which, when enforced by social control, become important factors in determining the performance level of each member as well as the group as a whole. These standards become the group's expectations of its members, they explained, and also determine the member's expectations of his group.

Standards, the authors suggested, must be realistic and within the level of attainment. They should be understood by all group members. Deviation from these expected performance standards, either above or below, is frowned on by the members, and the group sets up ways of securing conformance. If a member does not conform

he is rejected. In most cases group members are more clearly in agreement on what the group norms or standards are than their observable behavior would indicate. Behavior is seldom in strict conformance to the ideal standard, but the limits of toleration are fairly well understood. In terms of individual frustration or satisfaction, it is important that the standards are consistent - not rigidly enforced at one time and loosely the next.

In general, the closer an individual comes to living up to all group standards, according to the authors, the higher will be his group status, and his sense of satisfaction with his relationship.

Application to coaching. Silverberg (1962) used group standards as the guidelines to what is and is not acceptable for his ballplayers. He also referred to standards as the vital ingredients for future success and happiness. Those who find it tough to obey the rules will fall by the wayside while those who remain will work hard. These are the ones we want. Wherever the boundary lines are clearly delineated, both the coach and his players must benefit.

Mills (1958) believed that team members should always be aware of their obligations. They should know what their training rules are and why they are in effect. They should know what the locker room and practice field regulations are and how they are expected

to obey them. They should have full knowledge of game discipline and control. Just as the coach expects to be loyal to his team, he should demand the same loyalty on the part of individual team members to the team. It is not enough for the players to know their obligations, but these obligations must be enforced. All these things will contribute to the team's morale in a positive manner.

Hayes (1957) had this to say regarding team standards:

I do not think you'll have very many problems of discipline if you sell your players properly on basketball. We have squad meetings in which we talk to our players about what we expect of them. We tell them that we feel they are definitely and earnestly desirous of having a fine basketball team. We tell them that they are more than individuals; that they represent a team and a fine school and that wherever they go they are more than likely going to be recognized. We tell them their actions are going to formulate the opinions of people about us. For this reason their actions are very important. I am sure you can think of a community for which you have little respect because of the manner some team representing it has acted.

LaGrand (1967) believed that the pendulum of team standards must swing in a wide arc moving from the seemingly inflexible to the "firm but fair", and on to the pleasant, friendly, fatherly type of approach. All must be used depending on the individual, the case in point and its importance. Failure to ponder the many consequences evolving from the poorly disciplined organization can cause the biggest heartache in a coach's life. Remember, he said, that the boys you have will represent a wide

range of discipline, reflecting their backgrounds. Require the same of all. Make everyone "toe the line" as you have it organized. Settle for nothing less.

Summary. If any group, athletic or non-athletic, is to realize success and worthwhile recognition they must designate and abide by certain group standards. Each individual must understand these group standards and have full knowledge of the consequences should he choose to act in opposition to them. The affects of group behavior may carry over to many people outside the group. This exposure must not present feelings of enmity in any form.

One can easily see the importance of team standards in coaching basketball. If one is to have a closely knit organization all team members must realize what affects their behavior will have on the group. The team should have a common bond of feeling that each one's behavior is essentially in line with the standards of the team. Basketball teams may be small in actual squad membership but they represent the entire school population in name. In many cases they are probably the number one representative of a certain school. For this reason they must depict the ideal of good behavior and attitudes that are indicative of their school and team affiliation.

GROUP SOCIAL CONTROL

Description. Beal, et. al., referred to group social control as the means whereby the group secures conformity to the expectations of its group members. Every group has its group standards (discussed in section IV) and the enforcement of these standards comes under the realm of social control. If groups are to be productive, members need to know what the standards of the group are and the means to enforce these standards. Once these controls are understood they must be enforced uniformly at all times.

In many cases deviant behavior from group norms may be understood by recognizing that members in a specific group are also members of many other groups that also have standards or norms. One should never place such a degree of importance on the outcome of group activity that they lose sight of acceptable tactics in reaching their goal.

Control may be in the form of rewards or punishment. Such rewards may include recognition before the group, being recorded a certain status, or being given certain other incentives. Control may also be in the form of punishment. Censure, ridicule, rejection, or physical acts against the offender are good examples. Other rewards are less tangible and may take the form of being accepted by the group, a feeling of response from other group

members. A smile, a word, or a pat on the back.

Application to coaching. LaGrand (1967) said that one of the surest means of maintaining control and discipline in an organization is to take swift action when a member shows signs of non-conformity. The maxim: "Give him an inch and he'll take a yard", is quite applicable in this regard. Immediate action is not only a cure for the offender, but strengthens your relationship with the rest of the team.

Bradley (1960) substantiated this in his philosophy of basketball coaching. He said that:

We have been concerned with boys who are continually late for meetings, practices, and appointments. The entire morale is broken if we are to meet at a certain time and the boy is late, because the others who are on time become disgruntled. We often penalize a boy for being late. In practice we dismiss them for that particular practice unless they have a valid excuse. I have made exceptions to the penalty rule for certain boys in the past, thinking I would gradually help the boy, but by doing so I know I hindered the over-all feeling of the rest of the squad. There must be uniform adherence to rules by all concerned as well as respect for each individual from other team members in order to have 100% cooperation. Frequent exceptions will only impair the group cohesiveness.

Wallace (1964) cited the following as important to the establishment of team norms and their ultimate achievement through group control:

School administrators, school boards and we as coaches need to realize that the educational values of athletics far outweigh the importance of winning games. Many schools put a premium on winning at all costs. Most of the coaches I know are real gentlemen, and are to be commended for their fine work. On the

other hand there are a few coaches who would do anything to further their own selfish interests at the expense of a group of ballplayers. All of us have a right to our opinions, beliefs, and philosophies; but as long as we are going to call ourselves coaches and work with young people, we need to possess a sound code of ethics and establish group standards that are acceptable and beneficial to all.

Strach (1968) discussed several alternatives of punishment for the disciplinary offender. These types of action are varied, and may include such things as permanent suspension, suspension for the season, for a number of games or a game, suspension from practice or extra punishing physical work. The important thing is to have the punishment fit the crime. Be firm in the knowledge that you, as coach, have all the facts before you and are being fair, make the correct decision, and never second guess yourself. In my opinion, the average player of high school or college age does respect authority and does need and desire a fair set of terms to follow; he in turn expects to be guided firmly and fairly.

Hartman (1968) developed a feeling of reward for defensive play in several ways. He felt that first the coach must recognize and stress good defensive play as something special. In this day and age of high scoring ball games scoring points is often over-emphasized while good defensive play goes unnoticed. The emphasis may also be placed on defensive efforts through the press and radio media. He explained that certain feelings of reward and recognition can quite effectively be conveyed by announcers and writers. Still another source of reward for defensive ability

can be realized through the fan's recognition of blocked shots, rebounding, and glove tight coverage of the offensive player. All these forms of reward can be realized by the dedicated player through his defensive play.

Summary. Beal, et. al., referred to social control as the conformity of the group to the expectations of the group. This conformity is essential whether the group is a local service club or a collegiate basketball team.

The individual, through the processes of human nature, has basic desires in his particular situation. However, these desires must be controlled and channelled into acceptable behavior patterns. if the group is to function effectively.

In the athletic as well as the non-athletic atmosphere the individual needs some form of recognition. Accomplishments, achievements, and deeds must not go unnoticed. It is often through the deserved recognition of such actions that group conformity and control develop.

In contrast to rewards and recognition there is quite often a situation which required punishment. Punishment may exist in various forms in either group and its application must never be overlooked or put aside. Individuals, for the most part, want to act and perform in socially acceptable manners. Most people expect some form of disciplinary action when their behavior has been undesirable.

The expectations and standards of the group must be such that they are realistic and acceptable to all concerned. Winning basketball games must be accomplished within the ethical limits of the sport just as non-athletic standards must be in accordance with socially acceptable mores. A person will not operate effectively in either atmosphere if he is torn between the group's questionable standards and his own feelings of integrity.

Whatever the situation may encompass the control of the individual within the group is a vital dimension. Controls must be present, they must be understood, and they must be effective. They must also be in line with the ethical and realistic aspects of the particular situation whether it be athletic or non-athletic in nature.

"WE-FEELING" OR IDENTITY

Description. Beal, et. al., described the "we-feeling" or identity in a group as being a certain common bond, a common sympathy, and a definite consciousness of being united in some way. This force is sometimes also described as group solidarity, morale, or spirit, in that the individuals feel a common concern - a stake in what happens to the other members of the group and the group as a whole. The person feels he belongs, is a part of, and has a common concern with the group. The authors explained that these feelings involve the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which the word "we" is the natural expression.

Application to coaching. Silverberg (1962) described coaching as telling them, showing them, and making them do it. This instructional process begins long before you reach the gym. Organization begins with a pre-season meeting with the co-captains. We discuss the training rules, and I ask the boys for suggestions - either their own or their teammates. Giving the boys representation is the first step toward cultivating the "we" feeling all good teams must have. Our "we" - or "all for one and one for all" - spirit stems from our shared experiences. Silverberg went on to explain that, "We make the rules together, sweat together, suffer disappointment and happiness together, and win and lose together."

Brown (1963) used cooperation within the group to develop the feelings of being a part of the organization. You cannot induce the average American boy to do your bidding willingly, he said, without showing him your need for cooperation. That is why during the playing season, we have many squad meetings and encourage participation in strategy planning and schedule discussions. Even though these suggestions may not be used, there is created a definite feeling of being an integral part of an interesting project, rather than that of being a pawn selected to follow a master's inflexible instruction.

LaGrand (1967) stated that the most obvious reason for participation is the enjoyment of play itself, but much more

important motives lie in the background. The thought of recognition and peer approval are dominating forces and must be considered in your approach. Today's athlete seeks status and approval just as every other youngster does, whether he is a member of the band, debate club or any other student group; and like his counterpart, according to the author, he is usually grossly unaware of just what is demanded to deserve the fruits of intelligent hard work. However, the drive for identification is very real and normal. It is because of this drive, LeGrand suggested, that much learning - technical, ethical, and motor - can be facilitated. Identity with the group can be realized through active participation and a strong feeling of desire to excel. Coaches, the author felt, must be ever alert to the need for spirit and ever conscious of its characteristics of being able to overcome tremendous odds. It must be generated by the coach's enthusiasm, organization, and ability to teach players the meaning of team identity and value of team membership.

Gardner (1961) had this to say about team identity and solidarity:

A team game such as basketball requires a lot of player cooperation on and off the floor. Players must always stand together as a unit and our team spirit and morale depends upon a "one for all and all for one" attitude. If you are a good player, it is because your teammates helped you along the way. A great team is one without jealousies. Its players do their jobs well, get along together, respect each other, and are solidly together as a team.

Lawther (1951) said that the feelings of team unity is a great asset to any ballclub. This morale tends to develop among a group of athletes who have played together, and won and lost together. It grows in boys suffering, enduring, battling together for a considerable period of time. Friendliness, comradeship, and gang spirit promote it. Worthwhile morale must be reflected in the good of the team and squad as a whole. The coach, according to Lawther, can guide the growth of team unity and team idealism by example, by fairness, by devotion and loyalty to his players, and by teaching them to respect and help each other.

Summary. The solidarity of groups, as indicated in the previous discussion, appears to have much in common in athletic as well as non-athletic endeavors. Individuals must possess a feeling of common concern or group solidarity if the group is to function properly. They must feel they are a part of the group and that their intentions are in line with what is desired for the group as a whole. Little will be achieved if these feelings are of self accomplishment rather than group accomplishment nature.

The very nature of basketball and its competitive surroundings would seem to indicate that this feeling of identity should automatically be present. However, this is not always the case and its absence or partial absence may provide

a major obstacle in developing strong team or "we" feeling. One of the prerequisites of successful basketball coaching is the ability to direct individual talents and desires toward a common goal. Each player must be brought to realize the importance of team unity and team identity rather than maintaining a feeling of individualness. Once this feeling of common concern has been achieved then each team member will strive to contribute the best in him for the welfare of the team. No player should feel left out or ignored no matter how insignificant his position. If a healthy feeling of team solidarity is to prevail it must be a totally collective endeavor.

GENERAL ROLE DEFINITIONS IN THE GROUP

Description. Beal, et. al., stated that the roles of group members must be specifically defined if the organization is to be successful in their goal achievement. The member's understanding of his role, his perception of how his role relates to other roles in the process of group productivity, and his feeling of the importance of his role all go to determine his sense of responsibility to the group and motivate him to contribute to group productivity. If the role of a member is ill-defined and he cannot see how it relates to other roles or contributes to group achievement, according to the author, he is less likely to be motivated to productive action.

Application to coaching. Metcalf (1964) handled role identification by telling each player that he is responsible for himself. He expressed complete trust in each man. The team captain is the liaison officer and no problems or situations are overlooked. The basic idea was conveyed that each team member's role evolves around being individually responsible for the success of the team. They must do the playing. This feeling, Metcalf explained, has worked wonders in achieving extra work by many players both before and after practice without any real pressure to do so. Through each team member's role identification as being individually responsible for team success, much can be achieved.

Gardner (1961) felt that the role of the coach is of vital importance. He explained that it is quite obvious that the coach is one of the most influential persons in a boy's life. This presents a serious challenge, since the coach is faced with a big share of the responsibility of guiding youngsters during their growing-up years. His stature as a coach is measured by his success in helping them firm up their personality traits; intelligently face their personal and emotional problems; develop self and group discipline, and recognize the importance of good citizenship. With these elements in a boy's life in mind, Gardner explained, one can easily see how important the role of the coach is in developing the mature human being.

LaGrand went on to say that you will not be everyone's friend initially but the ballclub will begin to get an idea of the responsibility necessary in order to develop a good ballclub. Convey the individual roles early in the season. It is easy to decrease the force of discipline but quite another story to attempt to tighten up after you have been lax.

Lawther (1951) believed the key to the coach's role lies in the adoption of an impersonal, analytical attitude to coaching. The means of handling the athlete then tends to be what careful planning indicates will succeed. Lawther explained the coach must meet situations when they arise and he must make the decisions. Athletes will respect discipline and profit by it if they respect the one who enforces it. Discipline means such management as will speed up the learning of the athlete and increase the chances of winning. It means kind, sympathetic treatment when analysis indicates that it is best for the boy and the squad. It means firmness and rebuke when such treatment seems most likely to improve the athlete. Whatever the case may be, discipline, role specification, coaching techniques must be all ways and always.

Summary. Beal, et. al., described roles as playing an important part in overall group productivity. However, these role responsibilities must be clearly defined and understood by all concerned or the achievements of the group will very likely

decrease in effectiveness. People may have several roles to play in life depending on the various situations in which they may be involved. Clear and concise perceptions of these roles are a must if the group is to accomplish their goals.

The roles involved in playing and coaching basketball also must be clearly defined and understood if the team is to function as a cohesive unit. Basketball, like many team sports, is a highly unified endeavor and all members must know their responsibilities to the team as well as to each other. The coach in the same sense must fulfill his role responsibilities by adopting a wholesome, effective manner of coaching basketball. He must convey the role responsibility to each player so that he fully understands the part he is to play in the success of the team.

If role realization is not effectively developed and built into the overall structure of the ballclub then a partially or totally disorganized team will likely emerge. Roles have real meaning and orientation only when the objectives and standards of the group are common and clear to all members. Effective basketball coaching is a by-product of this understanding.

The final chapter contains a summary of the purpose and methods of the study and implications of the study for basketball coaches.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the essentials of group dynamics and their application to coaching basketball.

The text, Leadership and Group Dynamic Action, was used as the source of information for small group dynamics essentials while various basketball textbooks and athletic journals were examined for applications of these dynamics in coaching basketball. The interapplication of the two areas, group dynamics and coaching basketball, were then compared and the similarities discussed in each area. These two segments of small group dynamics and basketball coaching techniques were then analyzed and their similarities discussed in each area. Many parallelisms were noted in each and this resemblance indicates a close correlation between the dynamics of both non-athletic and athletic groups.

The reader should be aware of course that many coaches who have written on coaching techniques have not considered group dynamics principles when describing their successes. Although it may perhaps be presumed that groups, especially such competitive

social collections as athletic teams, have various dynamics operating, coaches of these groups often have much to learn from those who have made more formal study of the operations of these groups. The reader should keep in mind that only those coaches were quoted who explained group control in a manner that related to Beal, et. al's presentation.

IMPLICATIONS

This study implies that many human behavior traits are recognizable and identical in both athletic and non-athletic endeavors. It was also found that the handling of individuals in non-athletic groups quite closely paralleled that of coaching basketball. Individuals seem to behave in similar manners when involved in group objectives and these behavioral patterns are quite analogous in both athletic and non-athletic situations. It seems to make little difference whether one is involved in a political contest or a basketball game. The behaviors, work processes and ambitions of all concerned, must be headed for the same objective or the group will not realize their potential effectiveness.

With these findings in mind it would seem appropriate to recommend the following: (1) the basketball coach should examine the similarities of human reactions in non-athletic

groups as compared to coaching basketball; (2) the dynamics of non-athletic groups should be closely analyzed and considered by the basketball coach; and (3) the preparatory education of basketball coaches should include course work in the study of group dynamics.

If further research is carried out on this topic an additional consideration might be given to a study of specific successful and unsuccessful non-athletic groups and to a comparison of their leader's techniques with those of winning and losing basketball coaches.

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