

# **We're All In**

## ***A culture of care in athletics***

DII APPLE Conferences 2019

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Institute *to* Promote  
Athlete Health *and* Wellness



To improve the **health and wellness** of all athletes through the translation of prevention research to **effective programs, policies, and practices.**

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# Today's Game Plan

- Defining a “culture of care” in athletics
- Reflect on your athletic department's current culture
- Assessment
- Brainstorming strategies
- Developing an action plan for *your* campus

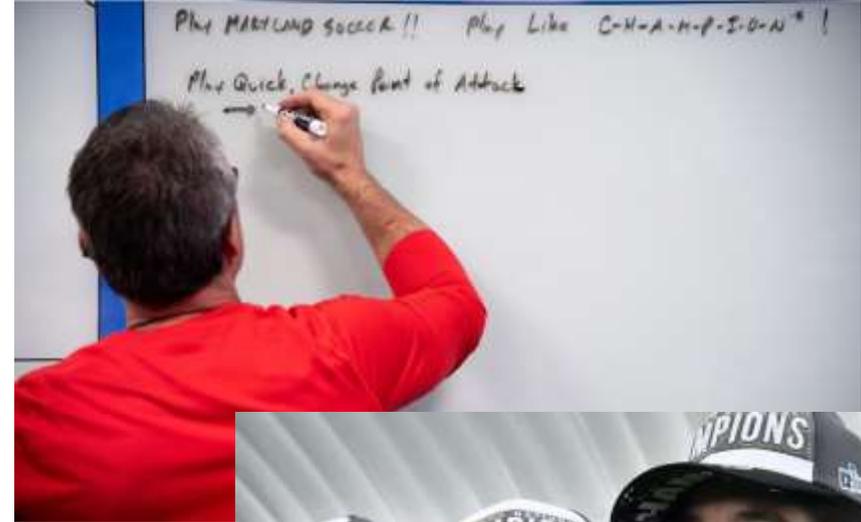


**What personal and professional motivation  
drove you to choose this session?**



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**Maintain the status quo  
or  
Challenge yourself to be better**



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# Reflect on your current athletics culture

- Does every member of the athletics department:
  - believe they are valued regardless of sport-based indicators of success (e.g., wins, external recognition, draft picks)?
  - know that they will receive support if they are struggling with drug or alcohol use?
  - trust that they will receive support if they report victimization?
- Does current policy communicate a desire to help or a requirement to punish?
- Do individuals of minority trust that concerns about discrimination will be taken seriously?
- Do members of your athletics community have the knowledge and skills to develop an athletics culture that is strictly based on **empathy, intentionality, and empowerment**?

**Is this all communicated regularly and consistently**



# em·pow·er·ment

/əm'pouərmənt/ 🔊

*noun*

authority or power given to someone to do something.

"individuals are given empowerment to create their own dwellings"

- the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights.

# in·ten·tion·al·i·ty

/in,tən(t)ʃhə'nælədē/ 🔊

*noun*

the fact of being deliberate or purposive.

- **PHILOSOPHY**

the quality of mental states (e.g., thoughts, beliefs, desires, hopes) that consists in their being directed toward some object or state of affairs.

# em·pa·thy

/'empəTHē/ 🔊

*noun*

the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

*synonyms:* affinity with, rapport with, sympathy with, understanding of, sensitivity toward, sensibility to, identification with, awareness of, fellowship with, fellow feeling for, like-mindedness, togetherness, closeness to; *informal* chemistry

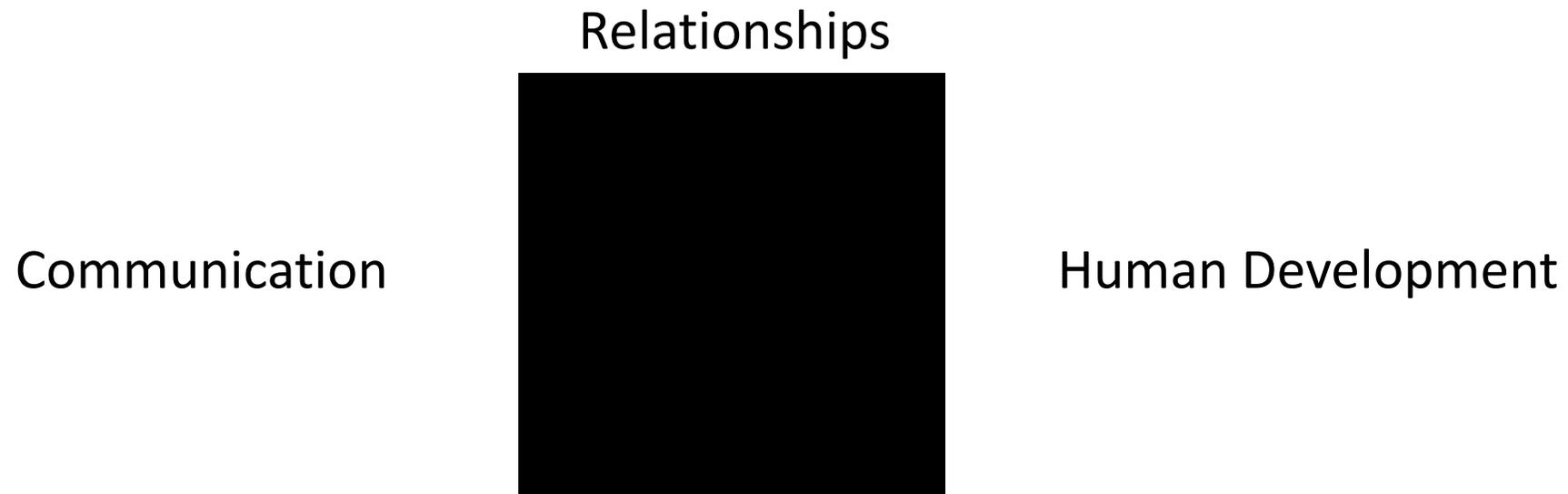


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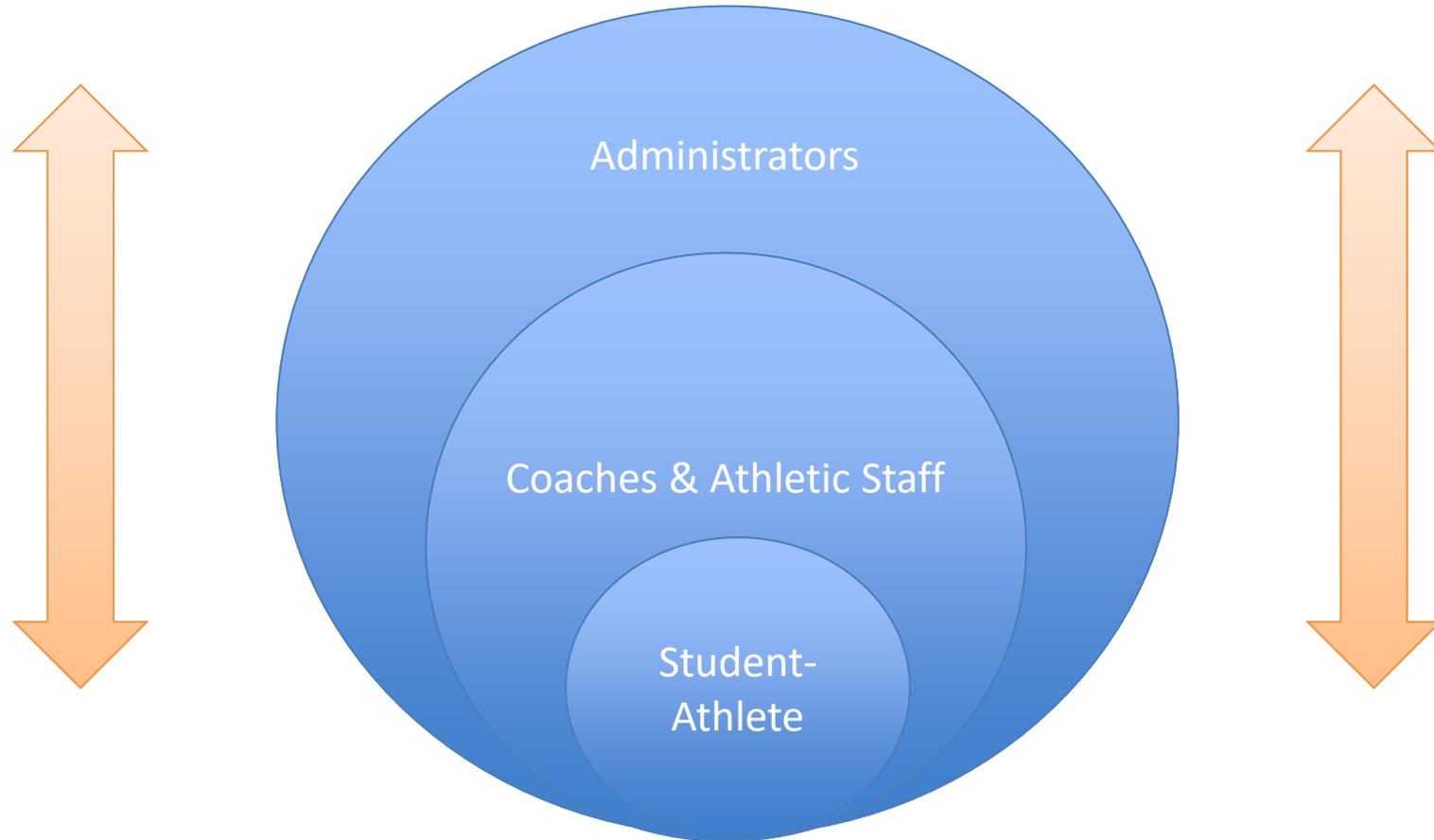
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# What is a culture of care in athletics?

What type of environment sets you up for success?  
When are you at your most successful?



# A culture of care requires leadership



# Benefits of a culture of care within athletics

## Individual

Security – to feel safe

Belonging – to feel part of things

Continuity – to experience connection

Purpose – to have a goal to aspire to

Achievement – to make progress toward goals

Significance – to feel that you matter as a person

## Relational

Mentorship

Nurturing

## Managerial/Organizational

Respectful

Balanced

Mindful Attention

# Strategies for developing a culture of care within athletics



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Security

Significance

Mentorship

What's the solution?

# Reflect on your current athletics culture

- Does every member of the athletics department:
  - believe they are valued regardless of sport-based indicators of success (e.g., wins, external recognition, draft picks)? *Revise job descriptions/responsibilities and annual review materials*
  - know that they will receive support if they are struggling with drug or alcohol use? *Train athletics staff in mental health/substance abuse literacy and standardize referral processes*
  - trust that they will receive support if they report victimization? *Mandate coach training in skills re: responding to sexual violence (e.g., Coaches Assist)*
- Does current policy communicate a desire to help or a requirement to punish? *Revise sanctions to prioritize rehabilitation over punishment*
- Do individuals of minority trust that concerns about discrimination will be taken seriously? *Hold a forum to discuss power, discrimination, alliance, and the departments role.*
- Do members of your athletics community have the knowledge and skills to develop an athletics culture that is strictly based on **empathy, intentionality, and empowerment**? *Budget money for continuing education in areas of specific need (e.g., mentorship, communication)*



# Culture of Care Assessment

<u>Most members of the athletics community at my school...</u>	No	Yes
...are deeply interested in listening to others	0	0
...care about all dimensions, people, stakeholders, aspects of a given situation	0	0
...support others whether we are winning or losing	0	0
...help others actualize and grow	0	0
...do not view others as commodities to be used and discarded	0	0
...respond rather than react	0	0

# Culture of Care Assessment

Reflect on your own	No	Yes
I am deeply interested in listening to others	0	0
I care about all dimensions, people, stakeholders, aspects of a given situation	0	0
I support others whether we are winning or losing	0	0
I help others actualize and grow	0	0
I do not view others as commodities to be used and discarded	0	0
I respond rather than react	0	0

# Best practices to develop a culture of care

- Find out how you and athletics department match up to what the definition of culture of care is at present time (again and again)
- Look for resources (they're all over the place)
  - NCAA tool kits
  - NCAA SSI Coaches Assist for Empathic Communication
  - IPAHW
- Be intentional and promote what the definition of culture of care really is (don't make it up)
  - Individual
  - Relational
  - Managerial



# Action Plan Brainstorming

1. What change would help you prioritize a culture change in your athletics dept?
2. Why is this change important for the *entire athletics community*?
3. Whose voices will enhance your perspective on this issue?
4. Who will help you advocate for this change?
5. What will you do first?
6. How will you ensure you do not lose steam?
7. When will you be satisfied?



# Shameless Plug: *Interested Graduate Students*

