



EMPATHY

THE ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND AND SHARE WHAT SOMEONE ELSE IS FEELING WITHOUT JUDGMENT

TERMS COACHES CAN USE WITH ATHLETES

- ▶ “Take perspective of others”
- ▶ “Show compassion”
- ▶ “Be kind”
- ▶ “Understand what someone else is feeling”
- ▶ “Take care of our team/teammates”
- ▶ “How would you feel if that were you?”

WHAT IT LOOKS & SOUNDS LIKE WITH ATHLETES

- ▶ Shows care and concern for others
- ▶ Celebrates teammates who are successful
- ▶ Articulates what others might be feeling correctly
- ▶ Engages in active listening (eye contact, facing the person, asking questions)
- ▶ Seeks out others who need support or encouragement

HOW COACHES MODEL EMPATHY



SEE & HEAR

Listen to athlete to understand their perspective



COMMUNICATE UNDERSTANDING

Mirror back to athlete what you heard and saw using feeling words



APPRECIATE

Reflect and appreciate the connection that was made with the athlete

TIPS TO INCORPORATE EMPATHY

- Engage team in cooperative games
- Focus on helping athletes identify & name feelings
- Provide athletes with opportunities to share new strategies and ideas with each other
- Teach athletes how to be good active listeners (e.g. make eye contact with the speaker, don't interrupt)
- Ask athletes to take the perspective of others and reflect on how their behavior impacts others
- Provide athletes opportunities to get to know each other and find commonalities
- Share real life examples of empathy in sport with your athletes
- Remind athletes to show gratitude to the officials and other team
- Show care and concern when athletes get injured and encourage them to do the same, even to members of the opposite team
- Use words with athletes that invite or encourage different thinking or behavior
- Remove judgment when giving feedback/coaching
- Empathy isn't an end goal, it's a process; incorporate empathy into all facets of coaching, from motivation to behavior management
- Listen to understand, which encourages thinking about other athletes' perspectives and what they might be feeling
- Don't assume what athletes are feeling, ask them how they feel
- Show gratitude when athletes express their feelings