

## **Self-Actualization Through Sport: A Coach's Role**

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Coaches face a constant challenge in determining what is the most important aspect of coaching. Fans, spectators, parents, athletes, and even administrators are consumed with winning. And as long as a team keeps winning, minor indiscretions are ignored. However, if a team begins to lose or even falls into a slump, the coaches often get blamed and accusations become personal.

Although coaches value winning too, many coaches are in the profession as a way to give back to children and young adults, to help them navigate the challenge of adolescence, and to provide a positive culture in which athletes can grow and mature as young men and women.

Many school-age students suffer from a lack of confidence, low self-esteem, a sense of helplessness or hopelessness, and have a difficult time seeing a very bright future. Although every teacher in a school has a responsibility to address these issues and help students, coaches are in a unique position to do so much more than teachers. The environment and structure of athletics provides so many opportunities for players to grow as students, athletes, and leaders.

This roundtable discussion will focus on Maslow's hierarchy of needs as applied to sport settings.