I was very eager to complete this assignment because I wanted to hear the perspective of a youth coach. My children participate in youth sports, and as a high school athletic director, the youth sports culture has created many concerns of mine. I interviewed a youth baseball coach who also served on the board of directors for a youth baseball league. Although his answers to the interview questions were quite short and to the point, it allowed us to engage in deeper conversation, which I believe, was eye opening to the both of us. I have decided to break up this paper into the three dimensions and report both on his answers as well as on our overall conversation.

**The 1st Dimension -**

As longtime athletes, we both agreed that our youth athletes are not coming into sports with neither the knowledge nor the fundamental skills that we remember as kids. Furthermore, we are seeing a trend of a lack of knowledge of coaches at the recreation level. Regardless of how you dissect it, it is ultimately negatively affecting our youth athletes because they are not being equipped with the correct skills and techniques necessary to play the game at a higher level.

**The 2nd Dimension -**

We also noticed something that I also see at the high school level in our student athletes. Some refer to it as mental toughness, others as grit. Our youth seem to really struggle in athletics to battle back from adversity and/or keep their emotions in check. For example, we just played a football team who we were evenly match up with. Before you knew it, we had a turnover and a few costly penalties and found ourselves in a big hole. I observed our team completely self-destructing. We were falling apart in every way possible, including exhibiting behaviors on the field that were not like us. Truthfully, it seemed like our minds were our worst enemy at the time.

**The 3rd Dimension -**

We agreed that most coaches have good intentions, however good intentions sometimes just are not enough. It is unfortunate; however, I truly believe that the majority of our student athletes at our high school have never experienced a 3rd Dimension coach. Furthermore, I question whether many of these students are being taught these lessons at home. I was fortunate enough to have grown up in a home with parents who value this; however, it has often made me sad to know that I never have had a coach who captured my heart. I never truly felt valued and cared for on the field.

So where am I going with this? As a high school athletic director, I have required all of my 21 head coaches to become certified in 3D Coaching. I am proud to say that each coach has not only completed the training, but they are implementing the 3D strategies into their everyday coaching. In conclusion, I think it is our moral obligation to intervene at the youth level- not only for our youth, but for our parents as well. This interview made me realize that there is an urgency to better equip coaches for preparing our children to be tomorrow’s leaders both in their families and in our society.

Joe Generose