I had the pleasure to interview my dad, Steve Land, for the final 3D Coaching assignment. Even though we talk sports often and we even coach against each other as rivals, I learned a lot about the district he is involved in. Steve has been involved in athletics in one way or another since 1987, so going on 35 years. We have often discussed the changing times of athletes and athletic programs. He has previously done some work with 3D Coaching; however, it has been a few years since taking part in the book study.

When discussing the 1st dimension- fundamentals, it was not a surprise that this was the most established in the Gering sports programs. It falls in line with the statistic that 75%-85% of coaches focus on the fundamentals and skills alone. Steve gave the examples of giving coaches a list of sport-specific website with fundamentals and drills. Coaches do meet several times a year in season to discuss expectations when it comes to the 1st dimension. He likes to see coaches who have knowledge of skills and fundamentals but who are also are willing to continue their learning.

When looking at the 2nd dimension or the psychology of sport, Steve talked about how the programs have a Google Drive that includes resources such as philosophies, core values and vision, various articles that include topics such as motivating athletes and providing positive experiences, goal-setting sheets, and culture building activities. All coaches are required to be a part of the Google Drive. Team cohesion has been a struggle recently in some of the athletic programs. We discussed how mutual respect between coaches, players, and parents is so vital to the program overall. The “me” to “we” mentality tremendously helps a team in many ways.

The 3rd Dimension- Heart involves issues such as identity, character, significance, self-worth, value, and purpose. Steve talked about this dimension being the one most lacking in their programs currently. The athletic department has identified six different areas to address to improve: connections, psychological safety for players and coaches, communication, structure, skill development, and challenge. These categories each fall into different dimensions but work hand-in-hand with the three different dimensions.

We discussed how the 1st dimension is important, but it can’t be the end and that’s where most coaches spend their time. When players can relate to you and trust, they are more likely going to give it their all. In today’s sports culture, it’s win-at-all costs can be detrimental to athletes if we don’t keep the bigger picture in mind. We discussed using trails and adversity in sports situations to help athletes persevere as this will greatly benefit them in life.

I would suggest to have parents be a part of the 3D journey along with the coaches. The three videos provided for parents are short, but informative. Lastly, I would have coaches evaluate their current practices in all dimensions and think about the question, “Who did you need as a coach?”