

Aims:

- To raise awareness of the importance of building relationship as a sports chaplain
- To suggest strategies to build rapport/relationships with sporting communities

Questions:

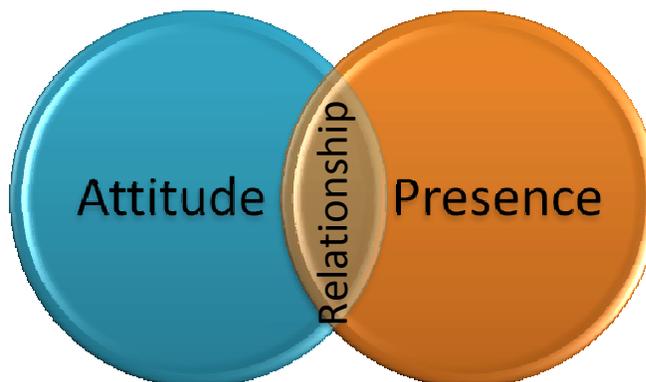
1. What does 'relationship' mean to you?
2. Think of a successful relationship you've had. Why was it successful?
3. Think of an unsuccessful relationship you've had. Why was it unsuccessful?

Relationship

Definition: "Relationship" is the way in which two or more people are connected with or involve each other. The key to all ministries is relationship.

- Matthew 22:39 "Love you neighbour as yourself".
- Philippians 2:5 "In your **relationships** with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."

For a Sports Chaplain, relationship is the foundation for everything they are involved in.



Basic **principles** for building relationships:



Sports Chaplain's process of building a relationship:

1. Pray
 - a. Pray for the opportunities
 - b. Intentionally look for the opportunities
 - c. Be ready for any opportunities
2. Have conversation
3. Listen
4. Establish credibility

- a. Be sensitive
 - b. Build trust
 - c. Have integrity
 - d. Be authentic
 - e. Know your values
5. Invest in people – no matter their role (coach to player etc.)
 6. Meet the family – know about the player or coach. Know their interests and hobbies
 7. Know your athlete or community and know how to approach the topic of faith with them – is it direct, or is it through action and then a later conversation?
 8. Know when to speak the right word at the right time.
 9. Be punctual
 10. Be professional – build rapport e.g. stick to the rules, speak on their level, dress respectfully and appropriately, know the correct body language, be consistent on the field and off the field

Helpful	Harmful
• Show unconditional love of God.	• Expect benefits.
• Do as you say you will do – be realistic in your and their expectations.	• Be negative.
• Show God – be Christ-like.	• Be self-seeking.
• Know the limits and boundaries .	• Overstep the boundaries.

Note: In relationships, anything could happen that could create conflict, but don't react, be humble because all that has been built in the relationship could be lost in an instant.

- "...be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry." James 1:19

Action points:

- Make a list of players (including names) and teams that you would like to work with. Pray for them.
- Learn about the sport, team, leadership and the culture of that group.
- Write down questions you could ask the team.
- Think of different ways you could serve the team
 - E.g. take photos of the team – even though media are not interested.
- Pray for God's divine appointment and guidance to bring the opportunity to talk to the right person at the right time.

Conflict Resolution:

Below are suggested steps to take when trying to resolve conflict:

1. Address the issue immediately. - 1 Corinthians 5:1-2
2. Address the issue privately with the person concerned.
3. Confront the person with the right attitude.
4. Make sure you separate the issue from the person and put the issue in the past to move forward.
5. Start on a positive note and set up a right atmosphere for the meeting.
6. Outline and explain clearly the issue with the person you are confronting.
7. Encourage the person to speak out their response and understanding of the issue.
8. Show that you understand the other person's position clearly.
9. Explain to the person why his actions are damaging the interests of others and the organisation
10. Indicate what kind of response and further action that you expect from the person
11. Affirm and reiterate the positive strength of the person

Attitude

- 1 Timothy 4:11-12 "Command and teach these things. ¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in **speech**, in **conduct**, in **love**, in **faith** and in **purity**."
- Integrity – holiness, without fault, transparent, being an upright citizen
- Humility
- Don't presume – have the right purpose
- Be faithful
- Don't be proud
- Be loyal, don't seek fame
- Serve, don't expect to be served
- Focus on the heart
- Be sacrificial
- Commit
- Treat everyone equally
- Be disciplined
- Motivation should be out of love for God, not to be honoured or for acknowledgement
 - 2 Timothy 1: 7 "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline"

We need to have a love for sports and for sports people

Treat everyone equally, by giving them an equal amount of your time and service – not creating a divide between elite / best players and others.

Helpful	Harmful
• Be humble	• Try to get praise, honour, power, control

• Love unconditionally	• Judge
• Be disciplined	• Boast
• Be with people	• Preach at people
• Be trustworthy	• Speak without thinking
• Respect confidentiality	• Cross agreed and expected boundaries
• Encourage, positive, motivate	• Seek fame
• Be loyal	• Share anything with the media

Presence

- Invest in the team's leadership – ongoing relationship with coaches / organisation.
- Invest time, interest, resources.
- Be consistent at both practices and competitions.
- Presence with individuals – make time for each person.
- Honour confidentiality.
- Be there after losses.
- Be present for someone after injury.
- Often it is about being available to have a conversation.
- Intentionally 'hang out.'
- Pre-plan interaction.
- Pray for the person – to present opportunity, to build relationships, to have a conversation.
- Know their names – they are not just a number.
- Be patient.
 - Meet the family – knowing about the player / coach and their interests / hobbies.
- Know the sport – ask questions, comment, have conversations about the game / sport / race.

- Develop a question strategy – ask and answer questions to develop critical thinking – not always taking things at face value.

Be available – LISTEN & be discerning – otherwise your contribution is limited or not valued.

The role of a Sports Chaplain is not as a psychologist or counsellor, but as a friend, listener.

Build a network – connections in your community – so that you can refer players to the right people (spiritual, physical, emotional, mental).

Note: Be aware of your time commitment and self-care.

Action points:

- Identify key people in your sporting community to connect with.
- How can you build effective relationships with them?

Summary:

Why do we need to build relationships?

Because:

- we love sports.
- we love God.
- we love people.
- we believe gifts and talents are from God.
- we want to glorify Him through all He has given us.