

**IDENTIFY HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY
RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS
BETWEEN**

Coaches & Athletes

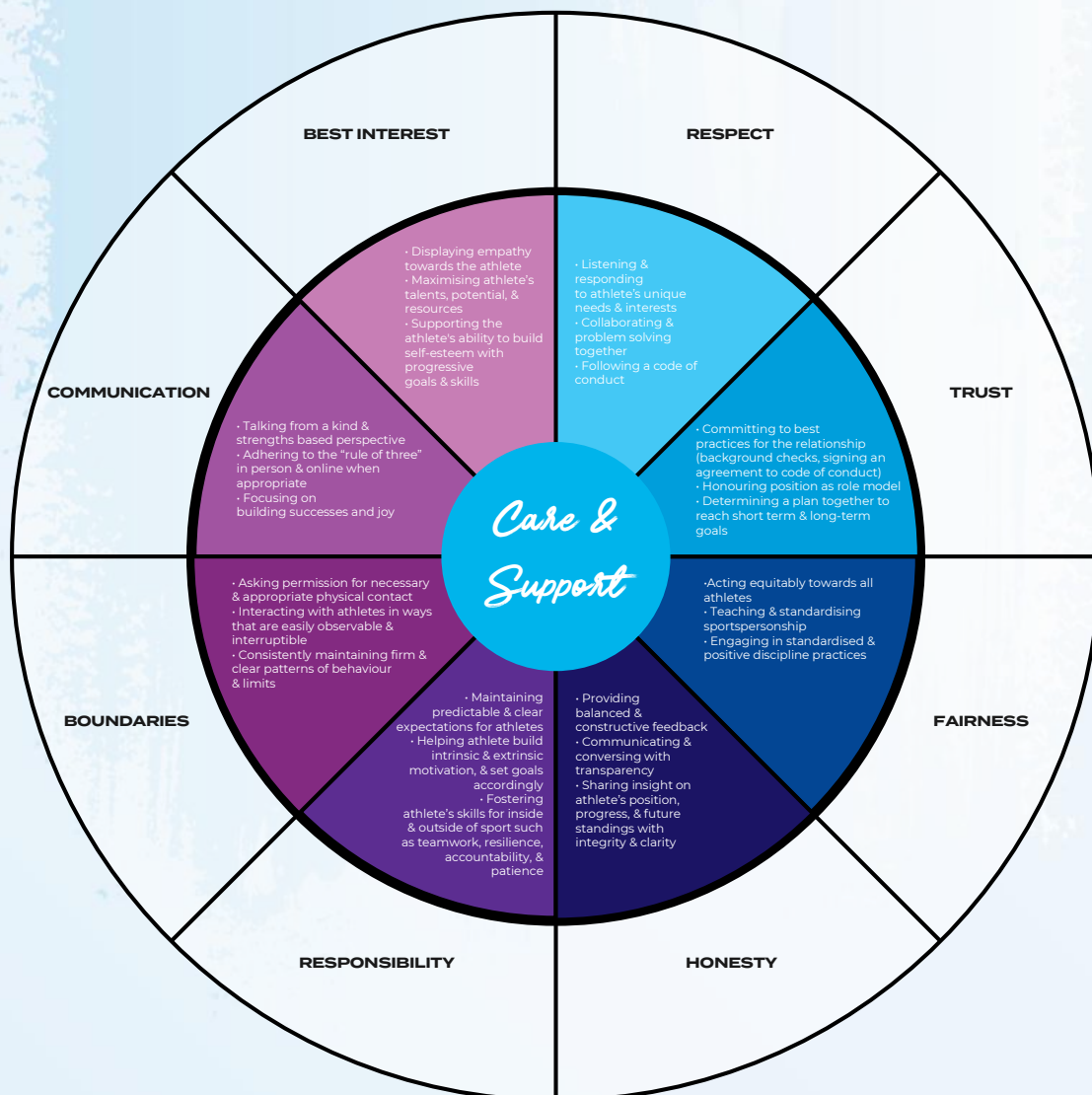
For all aquatics sports, there is a mutual goal of fostering healthy, safe, and positive relationships between coaches and their athletes. However, the power imbalance between coaches and athletes can lead to relationships based on power and control instead of care and support. The Coach Athlete Relationship Dynamics Diagrams (C.A.R.D. Diagrams) have been developed to help coaches, athletes, parents, and bystanders recognise and identify patterns of healthy and unhealthy relationship dynamics.

These diagrams can be used as a gut check; think about the conduct you experience and observe in your sporting community and discern if what is occurring aligns with a caring and supportive coach/athlete relationship.

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When athletes have a healthy relationship with their coach, their performance improves and coaches are empowered to further develop their athletes' success. Care and support from a coach fosters athletes' physical, mental, and emotional development, skillset, and resilience. The diagram below describes healthy relationship dynamics between a coach and an athlete. This includes coaches upholding and displaying respect, trust, fairness, honesty, responsibility, boundaries, communication, and the best interest of athletes. Mindfully establishing these positive behavior patterns between coaches and athletes promotes everyone's safety and well-being.



UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS BETWEEN

Coaches & Athletes

For athletes who have unhealthy relationship dynamics with their coaches, inappropriate behavior can be subtle and difficult to discern. Unhealthy behavior patterns may be hidden from those around an athlete, hallmark to the system of power and control. This diagram can help identify these unhealthy dynamics. This includes coaches displaying coercion and threats, intimidation and domination, emotional abuse, isolation and possessiveness, minimising, denying, and blaming, manipulation, sexual abuse, and physical abuse towards athletes. Experiencing misconduct, abuse, and trauma can impact athletes differently, having negative repercussions on their physical, emotional, and mental well-being, as well as their athletic performance. Awareness and prevention of these patterns of power and control help keep everyone safe.

