



BETTER ATHLETES
BETTER PEOPLE

Discussion Guide: *Whiplash*

Whiplash, based on director Damien Chazelle's own experiences, portrays the relationship between an ambitious and talented young musician and his abusive instructor. Often called a "sports movie" about jazz drumming, *Whiplash* includes themes of coach-student relationship, psychological approach to skill improvement, effects of verbal and physical abuse on mental health, and motivation.

Take advantage of the teachable moments presented in *Whiplash* by using these questions to help guide a discussion with your team or children.

- 1.) Does Fletcher's yelling motivate Andrew? If so, how? What other approaches could Fletcher have taken to motivate his students?

- 2.) Fletcher crosses the line again and again as he instructs Andrew to be a better musician - abusing him physically and verbally. Consider these actions with Andrew's growing psychosis. What other tactics could Fletcher have taken to teach Andrew but maintain an appropriate teacher-student relationship?

- 3.) In the film, Andrew struggles with keeping tempo. This struggle becomes a road block for him throughout much of the movie. What skill have you struggled with mastering and how have you overcome any mental road blocks?

- 4.) Fletcher's coaching style is antithetical to Positive Coaching Alliance's concept of a Double-Goal Coach® - a leader that strives to win while also pursuing the more important goal of teaching life lessons. List at least 3 reasons why Fletcher's philosophy differs so much from PCA's.

- 5.) At the core of this film is a question of whether it's more important to be great or be a decent human being. What do you think and why?

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