Defining Violence

What is Violence and how does it affect players and teams?

What is Violence?

We have all experienced violence in some form or another. Violence is words and actions that hurt people physically, psychologically and emotionally. Violence is the abusive or unjust exercise of power, intimidation, harassment, or the threatened or actual use of force which results in or could result in hurt, fear, injury, suffering, or death.

Much violence is intentionally, it is committed to achieve a certain goal, e.g. profit, pleasure, political gain, revenge, recognition, respect, honour, destruction, exploitation, fear, oppression etc. At times violence is unintentional, this is when accidents happen, but also when people are not aware of their own behaviour and how it may hurt another person. Often violence and abuse take on subtle and non-physical forms. Gossiping or verbal abuse, for instance, does not involve physical violence but often leaves the victim feeling violated and emotionally scarred. The same is true for neglect that is when a child does not receive any attention or care by its parents, teachers or coach.

Violence can be distinguished in direct, structural and cultural violence. In this short course we mainly deal with forms of direct violence. Under structural violence we understand conditions that include uneven life chances, inequitable distribution of resources and unequal decision-making power. Structural violence includes human sufferings, such as poverty, hunger, repression and social alienation. Cultural violence legitimizes the other two forms of violence as good, right or necessary. Examples for cultural violence can be the concept of “Apartheid” as well as cultural or religious beliefs that justify the discrimination of women or certain ethnic or social groups.

Forms of Violence in Football and in Communities

In football, in particular on the playing field you will encounter

e forms of physical violence such as
- foul play between players of the own and / or opposing teams including scratching, shaking, choking, pinching, punching, slapping, biting and pushing
- drug abuse by players
- fan rioting


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- forms of psychological and emotional violence between players of own or opposing teams, coaches and players, between coaches of opposing teams as well as between players / coaches and referees. This psychological and emotional violence includes
  - humiliation by harsh criticism or name-calling,
  - embarrassment,
  - intimidation by verbal threats,
  - pushing or the kicking of objects,
  - sidelining or lack of attention.

In their homes, schools, neighbourhoods or communities players may experience more serious forms of physical, psychological and emotional violence such as
- long term neglect by parents,
- corporal punishment,
- continuous fighting between parents and other family members, child abuse,
- wife battery,
- sexual assault and rape
- other assaults and murder
- drug abuse,
- robberies,
- gang violence,
- xenophobic or racially motivated attacks on people and / or their property,
- violent public protests
Violence in the community may impact on your players:

- players may not feel safe to walk to and from football field
- drug abuse has negative impact on fitness of players and therefore performance of team
- players may not be able to form a relationship with other players or may not be able to perform at their best
- public violence and protests may cause public facilities such as football fields being closed
- gangs may claim territory and deny access to football field
- players, their peers or others may bring weapons or drugs into your teams

Much violence that you experience on the playing field has been learnt by your players over years by copying other people's behaviour and by not having learned non-violent alternatives to deal with negative feelings and conflicts.
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Social Spheres and Levels of Violence

Violence involves different parties and occurs at different social levels. In the context of football there are three relevant levels of violence.

- **Interpersonal violence** takes place between two or more individuals.
  
  Examples for interpersonal violence are verbal or physical fights between players, foul play, sexual assault, child abuse, wife battery, other domestic assaults and rape.

- **Intra-group violence** occurs between members of the same group, e.g. the football team or political parties.
  
  Examples for intra-group violence could be faction fights, fights for power and control within a group.

- **Inter-group violence** occurs between social groups, such as football teams and their fans, organizations, ethnic groups, etc.
  
  Examples for inter-group violence are football fan violence, gang violence, xenophobia, and political violence (e.g. violence between supporters of different political parties, groupings within parties or between civil society groups and the state). Intergroup violence can take the form of injury to persons like assault, public unrest, the damaging of property and even murder.

- **Self directed violence** occurs at the individual level, which means within a person or against the own person. Self-directed violence often occurs when the person is in a state of confusion, distress, depression and dissatisfaction.
  
  Examples are: drug abuse, infliction of pain or suicide.

The above classifications are important to the extent that they could be helpful in understanding the social sphere and the social origin of violence and its actors. However, reality seldom portrays such simple classification. As usual, the reality is much more complex, so too violence could have different dimensions.
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The Role of Coaches in Violence Prevention

- The coach is responsible for the behaviour of the players under his supervision.

- The coach is responsible for his own actions and has to make sure that he/she does not contribute to the use of violence. The coach is a role model and authority, the players watch him how he/she handles conflict situations and will imitate his/her behaviour.

- Coaches can broaden this violence free sphere and create a violence free league together with other coaches. Over time players will adapt non-violent behaviour and use it off the playing field, in their families, schools and neighbourhoods. This will be one important contribution towards preventing violence on a community level.

- Coaches can mainly intervene in situations where direct violence is used. However, coaches also have an opportunity to influence cultural attitudes and beliefs that may legitimize the use of violence (e.g. sexist or racist attitudes).
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- The coach has no direct influence on the opposing team, the referee or the parents / supporters of the opposing team.

- The coach has no direct influence on violence that is experienced by players in their families, schools and communities.

- However, he / she has the opportunity / responsibility to create a violence free sphere in the lives of his / her players: the football team. To ensure that the coach should
  - ban all weapons, alcohol and other drugs from the playing field.
  - ensure the safety of players when coming to practice sessions or games (e.g. encourage walking home in pairs or groups; do not delay practice sessions so that players can get home before dark; be aware of gang territories when choosing a place for practice sessions and games; be sensitive of gang territories when selecting players for your team.
  - teach players non-violent behaviour.
  - facilitate help for players who may have become a victim of violence.

Information regarding the topics “The Coach as a Role Model” (Supplement 1) and “Philosophy of Training with Children and Youths” (Supplement 2), have been added in the “Work Sheets - Supplements” section of this manual.
Conflict Analysis Tools

Causes of violence are complex. Much violence occurs because of a lack of ability to deal with conflict constructively. In other words at the bottom of much violence lies a conflict of interests and needs between the conflicting parties. Your ability to create a deeper understanding of each case of violence and why it happened is therefore important for you to successfully intervene. Moreover, violence usually does not happen out of the blue. Instead in many cases violence is the last stage of a conflict that has been simmering for a while without anyone intervening.

Effective intervention in conflict situations as well as teaching young people to deal with conflict constructively is an important part of violence prevention.

The two tools introduced in this lesson (Conflict Analysis Triangle and the Conflict Stages) shall help you to do so successfully.

Conflict Analysis Triangle

Conflict is an everyday occurrence in human and social interaction. It is neither negative nor positive. Its consequence (positive or negative) depends in the way individuals and groups see and handle their differences.

Our behaviour in a conflict situation is informed by our understanding of the conflict. This means that we all do some kind of conflict analysis. However, such analysis is often not comprehensive and is used to justify why we behaved in the way we behaved in a particular conflict situation.

The conflict triangle helps you as coach to get a more comprehensive understanding of a conflict and a case of violence, it will help you to understand the two sides of the conflict, in particular their needs and interests. This will allow you to develop strategies of how to intervene.
**Identifying Conflict Issues**

Issues are the things the conflicting parties are disagreeing or fighting on. Conflict issues could be material or ideal. Issues concerning ideals are things that have to do with perceptions (e.g., values, belief, ideology, religion, etc.), whereas material issues have to do with resources and power (e.g., access to sport fields, referees decisions, access to opportunities, money, property, political and social positions, etc.). In most cases there is a mixture of both material and ideal issues. Often, what starts as a material issue becomes a conflict over ideals or values one: If the conflict continues without being settled the conflict could assume subjective dimension as the two individuals develop perceptions and emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, etc.) of each other and consequently their relationship sours and they develop a strong feeling about “us and them”.

Example for a conflict between two groups: A female and a male football team have a conflict over the use of a sports field. The issue is a resource and with that an objective issue. However, it turns out that the male team members have a negative attitude towards the female team and believe that they are just fooling around and do not have a right to use the field because they are girls. And girls have no place in sport according to them. In that sense the real issue is rather ideal, it is the sexist attitude of the boys.

Applying the metaphor “The Onion” it is also possible to go deeper in understanding issues:

- **Positions** are what the conflict parties say what they want.
  - Example: you must leave the sports field because we want to use it now

- **Interests** are what parties to a conflict really want to get or achieve so that they satisfy their needs.
  - Example: we want more practice time.

- **Needs** are things that are hard to compromise about, such as identity, etc.
  - Example: a need for recognition and a chance to improve their game so they do not have to lose again.
LESSON 2

Understanding Causes of Violence, Understanding Conflicts

Gaining an insight on these layers helps to understand the issues involved in the conflict and so too the behavior of the conflicting parties. Understanding the underlying interests and needs of the conflict parties may also help to find alternative solutions to a conflict.

Example: In the case of the girls and boys team fighting about the use of the sports field, it became clear that the boys could not use the practice time from before because half of the team had school commitments at the time. So they needed another time slot. The girls eventually agreed to swap their time slot with the boys.

Identifying Conflict Parties

In analyzing conflict it is also important to identify who has a stake on those issues that are fought over or disagreed about. Parties are individuals or groups that claim to have stakes in those issues. There are principal parties, parties that overtly demonstrate their claims and so are directly involved in the conflict. Secondary parties are parties that do not demonstrate their claim openly, but still have a stake and involve themselves in the conflict indirectly. Often, these secondary parties act as “instigators” - they stir up or provoke other people to be violent. In order to gain a clear picture on the conflict one has to identify the principal and secondary parties.

Example: In the example above the principal parties are the boys and the girls team. Secondary parties may be their coaches: they may have told their players that they must practice on the field. Possibly the coach of the boys team has even encouraged his players to chase the girls team away because he feels it is more important for his team to practice as they have an important game coming up.

Considering the Context

Issues emerge and parties interact with each other in a socio-cultural, economic and political environment or a context of a conflict. Conflicts could take place in a context with more or less social problems, such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, broken families, etc. Conflicts happen also in a community with depressed economic activities and high unemployment rate among young people, but also in highly polarized political situation. Understanding context is significant because it will assist to better imagine the factors to that could exacerbate an ongoing conflict. It also helps to identify strategies of how to best intervene in or prevent a conflict in the future.

Example: The context of the conflict is that the sports field is in a public park which has been opened only recently. It is the only sport field in the entire neighborhood of Hillbrow and there are no other safe public places for young people. No one is managing the park or regulates who is allowed to use the sports field at what times. The field has become more and more popular and the number of groups who want to use it have increased.
Conflict Timeline

Physical violence does not just happen out of the blue. Usually there has been a conflict simmering since a while. A conflict goes through different stages with the conflicting parties assuming different modes of communication and behavior until the conflict takes the dimension of violence.

Based on the change of mode of communication between and behavior of the conflicting parties four stages of conflict can be distinguished:

Discussion

Minor disagreements or misunderstandings

The relationship is still in relatively good shape in terms of trust and commitment and perceptions and images are relatively accurate and positive. The parties believe that joint gain is possible. However, for whatever reasons, communication difficulties may occur as the interaction moves from discussion to a debate involving adversarial behavior.

Example:

Two players in your team have a discussion about the rules of the street soccer league. They disagree about what counts in the final score. Both players repeatedly insist on their position, and they try to convince each other with arguments and examples from previous games.
LESSON 2

Understanding Causes of Violence, Understanding Conflicts

2 Polarization
Overt questioning and open challenging

Relationship issues become the focus of concern as trust and respect are threatened and distorted perceptions and simplified positions begin to emerge.

Example:

None of the players is willing to accept the argument of the other, and the voices are raised. The one player says: “That’s stupid, it cannot be that way, you have no idea of the game”. The other player blushes and shouts back: “No, it’s you who is stupid, you have no idea what you are talking about. You are useless!”

3 Segregation
Threats and ultimatums

Defensive competition and hostility become main themes. More importantly, the conflict is now seen as threatening basic needs such as those security and identity.

Example:

The first player now gets really agitated and shouts: “You never believe what I say, you always want to know better, even though you have no clue!” The other player throws back at him: “This is because I know better, and I will show you that I am better, and you are just a stupid ********... look at you, you *****!!!”
Destruction

Aggressive physical attacks and overt efforts to destroy the other part

The conflict has escalated to the point where the parties attempt to destroy each other through the use of various forms of violence, expressed as physical fight or war.

Example:

The first player now throws himself at the other player and punches him as hard as he can, and the other player fights back, eventually he picks up a cone from the playing field and throws it at the other player.

Useful questions to analyze Conflict and Violence (Use these questions for Sub-Group Work)

Analyze a story of violence by discussing the following questions:

- **Using the conflict triangle:**
  - What were the issues the parties were fighting about?
  - Which parties are involved in the violence - who are the primary and the secondary parties?
  - What are the conflict parties positions, interests and needs?
  - What is the context of the conflict and / or violence? What factors contributed to the violence / the conflict being solved with violence? Where there any factors that prevented the outbreak of violence?

- **Using the conflict timeline:**
  - What stages of conflict can you identify in your story?
  - What happened in the different stages? Can you discover different forms of violence in the different stages of the conflict?
**Mediation** - Process and Techniques

Conflict is a normal and inevitable aspect of social life. Since we all have different interests, values and beliefs, these necessarily may conflict with each other at times. People deal differently with conflict. It is actually the way we deal with conflict that determines our progress as individuals as well as a society. This depends on how capable we are in transforming conflict. Conflict transformation is a strategy to address conflict constructively by dealing with social or political sources of a conflict. It seeks to shift the negative energy to positive social or political change. For this purpose, different approaches in different circumstances could be employed.

**Mediation** is one of the widely used approaches of conflict transformation. It aims to assist two (or more) disputants in reaching an agreement. Important in this agreement is that the disputing parties themselves determine rather than accept an agreement imposed by a third party. The mediation process is facilitated by a third party, the mediator. He/she uses appropriate techniques and/or skills to open and/or improve dialogue between disputants, aiming to help the parties reach a mutually acceptable solution to the disputed matter. In this way, the conflict interaction between the parties is transformed and, as a consequence, the way the parties look at themselves and at each other changes. Such a process leads to two important effects, namely empowerment and recognition. Empowerment in this context means restoration of the parties' value and strength and their own capacity to make decisions and handle life problems. Recognition in this context means the evocation of individuals' acknowledgement, understanding, or empathy for the situation and the views of the other. The importance of these two effects of transformative mediation emanates from the very nature of conflict. Negative conflict interaction affects the experiences of the individuals and groups involved; and it generates a sense of weakness and incapacity within the parties, and at the same time, it evokes a sense of self-centeredness. In such a circumstance, a transformative mediation process should focus not on what solution the parties should agree on, but on breaking the cycle of interactional degeneration. Therefore, mediation should be understood as a process in which a mediator works with the conflicting parties to assist them to change the quality of interaction from negative and destructive to positive and constructive, as they discuss issues and possibilities for resolution.
The Role of the (Coach) Mediator

For the mediation process to be successful, the mediator should be impartial, and not take sides of any of the conflicting parties. It may be equally important that the mediator is known and trusted by the parties in dispute.

The mediator is not a judge, but rather a guide that enables the conflicting parties to see the conflict through the eyes of the other and to develop understanding and empathy for the needs of the opposing party. The mediator should not find or use power to impose a resolution to a conflict. As a coach or teacher you potentially do have the power to impose a resolution (e.g. sanction behaviour of the player, or setting a new rule etc), however the danger of this is that your conflict resolution is not sustainable, since you have only stopped the conflict but not transformed it.

Your role as a (coach) mediator is that the parties do find a resolution that is acceptable to both sides and that the parties do transform / restore their views of the other from negative to positive.

The mediator’s main tools to allow for the mediation process to be successful are skills and techniques such as:

- listening skills, ability to recognize and acknowledge hurt, anger and frustration in other people
- ability to communicate needs and emotions
- ability to negotiate
- ability to encourage empathy in others, to encourage forgiveness and to make constructive moves
A mediation process can take different forms depending on the socio-cultural setting of a particular conflict. However, the following are the general stages (0-4) that seem to occur in mediation processes across cultures.

0 Preparation

Purpose: to be informed and conflict analysis

- Initiate contact, build trust with parties involved, and talk to each party separately to understand their side of the story
- Gather information about the conflict and decide upon the best approach for intervention
- Deal with the logistical arrangement (e.g. where and when to meet)

1 Introduction

Purpose: to provide safety

- Greet, seat and introduce participants - show respect and give both parties the feeling of being welcome
- State goals, emphasize that this is a voluntary process for parties to reach a mutual agreement, establish confidentiality
- Describe the mediator’s role:
  ▲ to help the parties talk, but NOT to judge or give answers
  ▲ to help both parties to understand the other side of the conflict
  ▲ to help parties find a resolution to the conflict
- Describe the process:
  ▲ each side will speak in turn
  ▲ the mediator will then summarize what each party has said, highlighting the issues brought forward by each party but also highlighting common interests
  ▲ both parties will agree on basic issues and will work with these, one at a time, with their suggestions for resolution
- Gain commitment to the group rules (not interrupting, confidentiality, respect)
2 Storytelling

Purpose: understanding

- Get party A's perspective of the conflict:
  - give him/her enough space and time to talk, use follow up questions so that the "real" issues are mentioned and that it becomes clear how party A feels about the issue and what his/her needs are
  - summarize party A's story, using phrases such as: "If I understand you correctly, then you are unhappy about party B because he/she has done..."; in your summary, identify hopes and concerns of party A
  - give party A the opportunity to correct your summary

- Get party B's perspective of the conflict:
  - give him/her enough space and time to talk, use follow up questions so that the "real" issues are mentioned and that it becomes clear how party B feels about the issue and what his/her needs are
  - summarize party B's story, using phrases such as: "If I understand you correctly, then you are unhappy about party A because he/she has done..."; in your summary, identify hopes and concerns of party B
  - give party B the opportunity to correct your summary

- Listen for issues and common ground

3 Problem Solving

Purpose: building ownership

- Ask follow up questions to clarify the issues; Identify common concerns and establish common ground
- Work on one issue at a time (usually start with the easiest one to solve to show progress)
- Maintain control by using a list of the issues and interviewing each party in turn
- Move away from parties' demands and focus on each party's underlying interests and needs
- Evaluate the options and plan implementation; At all times, look for opportunities to:
  - Point out areas of communality and positive intentions
  - Acknowledge hurt, anger and frustration
  - Suggest that parties speak directly to one another (coaching direct dialogue)
  - Affirm constructive moves and highlight progress made
4 Agreement

Purpose: seeking sustainability

- Summarize agreement reached
- Ensure that specifics are addressed - who, what, when, where, how, etc.
- Be realistic, clear and simple
- Maintain balance on the parties' responsibilities
- Make sure the agreement is just and contributes to the dignity of each party
- Agree on how to handle any further problems that might arise
- Ask the parties to start their intent to support the agreement
- Write out the agreement and have the parties sign it (OPTIONAL)
The Continuum Conflict Analysis-Mediation-Discussion

Using the conflict triangle, it is possible to gain a better understanding and insight about the problem, namely the conflict/violence, the involved parties and the context. This helps to design an appropriate approach (mediation) to address the immediate issues. Building on the progress achieved at this stage should be a foundation to initiate a sustained dialogue process aimed at addressing the underlying issues. This shall help to prevent the use of violence around the same issue in the future. Football can play an important role in this. See Lesson 7 for more information on this.

Ensuring sustainable solutions in conflict mediation process

When looking for sustainable solutions, it is crucial to initiate a dialogue process that is aimed at making the agreement reached through the mediation process sustainable and also to address the underlying issues that contributed or have the potential to contribute to the conflict or violence.

In so doing attempt to answer the following questions:

- What are the underlying issues of the conflict?
- How best could the agreement reached through mediation be made sustainable?
- What process should be introduced?
- Who should lead that process?
- Who should be included in the process?
- How can football activities support the process? What football activities would you choose?
- Who should play a role in the football activities?
- If you organize a football event: What message should the football event carry and convey to the players and spectators?

Once you have found answers to these questions, start implementing it step by step.