

On the Relationship Between Caring and Coaching Leadership

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This first attempt to map the territory between caring and coaching leadership posits that they share a common basis. A human-centred leadership philosophy of the educational leader and the sports coach is vital to the relationship between the educator/educatee and the coach/coachee, and leads to a socio-constructivist and experiential concept of knowledge and learning, where leading learning consciously takes place through interaction and sharing. Caring and coaching leadership are realized in a relational interaction based on mutual consent and trust which generate self-confidence, respect and commitment, a circumstance for learning and working devoid of intimidation, humiliation and oppression.

Keywords: caring leadership, coaching leadership, human-centred leadership philosophy, relationality

Introduction

Working and recreational life as well as leadership approaches align to the transformation of society. New visions and strategies are being built and implemented by new and younger recruits, but also by experienced experts reflecting the new dimensions against the past. Transformation and development require a combination of both resources (Kaski 2006, 25–26). This paper emerged from theoretical dialogue between two experienced educators, one of whom also with a long career in sports coaching, the other with a long career of engaging in leaving no learner behind through an administrative and leadership commitment for which the definitions are found in the field of ethical, especially caring, leadership.

In Finland the terms coaching or a coaching leadership approach originating from the sports world has gained fairly common ground in leadership discourse. Both are used to denote management and leadership through people. In the world of sports the older managerial coaching of giving orders and the current more humanistic and participating approach both have their supporters.

Coaching leadership requires from leaders the ability to engage in human encounters and understanding of the whole personality of the other, communication skills and ethically acceptable and sustainable actions. However, the concept of ethical leadership is vaguely voiced in the Finnish management and leadership discourse of any field, and that of caring leadership is unknown. This is not to say that they would not be exercised, but that they are not voiced in the discourse. Ethical leadership and caring leadership are realized with the human being in focus, via and with them for the benefit of not only the human being but also our entire habitat. In this regard they are very holistic concepts and commitments to action.

In the following chapters we will introduce the core contents of both coaching and caring leadership and their relationship so far detected by us in our comparative discussions and in analysing our practical work in sports coaching and in leading educational organizations, of which we have rich auto-ethnographic data.

On Coaching

Knowing Yourself and Self-Confidence

Leaders are guided by their values and their concept of the human being, on the basis of which they form their own concept about the objectives and methods of their work. In coaching leadership for example taking other people into consideration and respecting them, healthy values and tolerance are of essential importance. Coaching leadership is based on the interaction between the leader and the employee, which forces the leader to observe his/her own concept of the human being (Heikkilä 2009, 96; Nikander 2007, 13) The concept of the human being combines the moral and ethical values that guide the leader in action either consciously or unconsciously. It brings into light the multidimensionality of the human existence and answers the question about what the human being is.

Self-confidence, experiencing certainty and confidence and believing in one's capacities is important to a leader. It is healthy pride that guides both the leader's and the employee's action in almost all their tasks. On the other hand, the task of every leader is to continuously engage in healthy self-criticism as well as reflection and renewal of his/her own chosen methods. A good support facility is to work not only with a leadership team but also with a network of peers, with whom one can openly discuss also the

tricky issues (Salmi, Rovio and Lintunen 2009; Kaski and Kiander 2007, 187; Edwards 2005, 17–21).

The most important person to be led in a leader's work is the leader him-/herself. To be able to lead others, one must first know oneself. In the coaching leadership approach leadership is based on the leader's own leadership philosophy, where the leader defines his/her own values and world-view. A leadership philosophy assists the leader in his/her daily work by guiding the action, by directing how to set the objectives and by defining the work culture of the work community. The leader must be conscious of his/her own knowledge and skills as well as his/her areas of lesser quality and therefore in need of support from others, in order to be successful. The development of leadership skills is equivalent to the growth of one's own self-knowledge (Pulkkinen, Korsman and Mustonen 2013, 35–36; Loko 2007, 162).

Trust

In addition to self-confidence, leadership must be based on trust between the various parties in action. Trust should be shown to the employees and the leader, and also other parties in the organization. The leader is the flagship of the work community, whose leadership style and way to lead have a big effect on the work and on generating an atmosphere of trust (Salmi, Rovio and Lintunen 2009, 113; Nikander 2007, 101; Hershey and Blanchard 1988, 87–88).

Trust shown to the leader can be discussed from two perspectives: from trust inside one's own community and trust in external parties of the work community. Creating an atmosphere of trust in one's own community is a precondition to quality work in the work community as well as in any entity surrounding it. To generate trust inside one's own community four factors need to be in place: 1. the role of the leader in building trust, 2. trust in others, 3. openness, and 4. giving responsibility (Pulkkinen, Korsman and Mustonen 2013, 35).

Seeing the Big Picture

A cornerstone of a good leader has proved to be the ability to see the so-called big picture. A leader is expected to be conscious of the wide range of factors affecting work, and to possess the means of being the master of these factors. Being insufficiently aware of the big picture may cause illogical outcomes and decisions made

at a moment's whim (Drucker 2006, 1, 37; Fullan 2005, 90–92). Often too quick a reaction to one single factor or a possible error may lead into an even bigger damage and to changing an entire entity (Heino 2000, 149–150). Awareness of the big picture provides the leader with understanding conducive to problem solving. Understanding the meaning of the big picture is supported not only by one's own self-confidence, but also by one's belief in the goal. (Maxwell 2002, 52–57, 103; Puhakainen and Suhonen 1999, 70–71; Singer 1984, 79).

Team Building

Each leader should aim at having the chance to choose their team. The most important condition for team building is the golden motto that has spread widely from the American coaching tradition into the world of leadership, *Surround Yourself with Good People* (Edwards 2005, 118; Miettinen 1992, 183). The leader shall select into the team people he/she can cope with well, who like him and share the same world of values (Edwards 2005, 18). *Good people* can in this context be interpreted to be masters of their own sectors. The most essential message, however, is connected with the collaboration of the team. To be successful the members must have perfect trust in each other and the possibility to be themselves and to disagree with the team members without fearing that the team might dissolve due to diverse views. A team must be capable to operate, respect their team members and allow living space to each member (Pulkkinen 2011, 62; Adair 2009, 91–102).

Teamwork also involves taking joint responsibility for the given tasks and also for achieving success, led by the person in charge (Heino 2000, 16). A good attitude and the will to work together are the cornerstone of teamwork. One of the gurus in educational leadership, Andy Hargreaves (2011), has said, *Get rid of negativity*. This is an important principle to follow in any teamwork. Excessive negativity kills enthusiasm efficiently and ends at destroying the good team spirit. Negativity and being critical are not synonyms. There must always be space for critical observations, but a basic negative attitude is comparable to a cancer keeping growing and ultimately destroying the whole organization (Pulkkinen 2011, 62; Adair 2009, 91–102).

In addition to teamwork, coaching leadership consists of shared leadership and several diverse working methods based on inter-

action. However, the leader must be conscious of his/her own responsibility at all times. He/she must dare take responsibility for the work and the partners at work and meet the demands of the chosen tasks. Pressures are an inseparable part of leadership work, and one also learns to work under pressure. Pressure can also be seen as a force triggering action (Pulkkinen 2011, 139). The ability to work under pressure is characterized by peaceful reaction to different, quick and also sudden outbursts of emotions. It is important not to respond with strong emotional outbursts to issues causing strong emotions (McGowan and Bouris 2005, 340–354; Korpi and Tanhua 2002, 135–137).

Pedagogical Leadership

Pedagogical leadership is strongly connected to the world of school. In leadership discourse at large, pedagogical leadership is mostly overlooked, though it entails a great number of factors conducive to leadership. Often the inadequate leadership features are visible also in the basic daily work, where better outcomes could be achieved if leadership and pedagogy would be based more on mastering the theories of human behaviours and leadership (Gordon 2006, 387–398; Dyson, Griffin and Hastie 2004; Mustonen 2003, 61) Leadership can also be increasingly considered to be action comparable to teaching, and therefore the pedagogy of leadership should be discussed more widely. This approach could be supported especially in leading the young generation, but it expands also the leadership of adults into the educational direction and life-long learning. Pedagogical leadership also involves that the leader possess good manners and teach them to the whole work community. (Pulkkinen, Korsman and Mustonen 2013, 44–45; Mäkelä 2007, 199–200).

Guided Discovery

One of the classic concepts in the teaching of physical education is the systematic classification of teaching methods developed by Mosston and Ashworth (1994, 251–256) or the 11-tier spectrum of teaching styles. The classification functions also in the field of leadership, especially in the pedagogy of leadership (Pulkkinen 2011, 61).

Amongst Mosston and Ashworth's (1994) methods, a leader is best challenged by *guided discovery*. It is a method developing both

the leader and the employee, containing problem solving and producing diverse solutions. In this method the leader gives the task, and the employees search for diverse solutions. The leader's task is to guide the employees with the help of questions and interaction to invent the right answer applicable to the case in question. It is the leader's task to guide the employee with questions and interaction to realize the correct and desirable solution to the situation. Guided discovery consists of four main principles: (1) Do not tell the answer. (2) Always wait for the reaction of the employee. (3) Give immediate feedback. (4) Maintain a patient and accepting atmosphere.

The guided discovery method is very applicable in particular when new solutions need to be found, and new modes of action need to be created. Guided discovery can be used in wide assignments involving decisions on the direction to take, where hearing the views of the employees is important. It also works in smaller everyday situations, for example in staff meetings or when planning a thematic day, a Christmas party for staff or any other event deviating from the ordinary. Guided discovery benefits the entire work community because it enhances the employees' commitment to engage in planning for the entire community. It has a strong motivating effect, with which the leaders can gain valuable information and diverse views from their staff. Giving responsibility to the staff is an important factor in guided discovery (Pulkkinen, Korsman and Mustonen 2013, 124–126).

On Caring Leadership

The call for *ethical leadership* has become increasingly voiced in the past few years due to the many disappointments in the inappropriate behaviours of financial, religious, political, industrial, media, environmental leaders, news of which reach us in regularly. Ethical leadership is basically defined as a moral philosophy that respects the rights and dignity of others (Trevino, Brown and Hartman 2003, 7). Much of the research has been about the behaviours and personal characteristics ethical leaders should have, and ethical leaders are defined as fair and principled decision makers who take care of people, pay attention to the broader society, and behave ethically in their personal and professional lives. However, attention should be paid to analyse also the background and the consequences of ethical leadership (Brown and Trevino 2006, 598–603).

Place of Caring Leadership and Ethic of Care in Ethical Leadership

The definition of the key concept of this paper is based on the model of the three ethics advocated by Starratt (1994), the ethic of justice, critique and care. In this paper the terms care and caring are used interchangeably. The ethic of justice requires the leader to know the rights, laws, policies and rules pertaining to the situation in question, and the ethic of critique means that the leader should be responsive to redefining and reframing prevailing circumstances of inequality, privilege, power, culture, or language to provide advocacy for the disadvantaged.

This paper posits that amongst the three ethics, that of care is of a predominant importance. It must be a consciously made decision. Once made, and the structures and follow-up systems thoroughly discussed and agreed on by all the stakeholders, the ethic of justice and critique result in practice. Care in this view is not confined to the concept of pastoral care, but it consists of the conscious decision to care, and of creating an administrative and social system and work culture negotiated and accepted by all stakeholders, which ensures that no one party is left behind, and that the decision made does not impose adverse consequences to any party (Kuusilehto-Awale in print).

To give an example of how the ethic of care and caring paves the way to the ethic of critique, improving the performance of the disadvantaged, a research into the difference of the Finnish basic education performance compared to the other, similar Nordic countries indicate that in the school context the explanatory factor may exist in the classroom management where the pedagogical communication and relations between the teacher and the pupils, and between the pupils was strong, with the teacher having a very important leader role. The Finnish teachers paid more attention to the learning outcomes and to the class as a well-functioning unit than the Danish counterpart. (Andersen 2010) This is in line with e. g. Darling-Hammond's (2000, 169) view that caring is one of the key factors in getting the classroom fully functioning for learning. Students who have good, caring relationships with their teachers pay more attention to studies than students who do not. This view shows also in Gamerman's (2008, 2) finding that Finnish teachers focus attention on weaker students rather than only on capable ones, and create an equal, relaxed study environment that makes the students more self-reliant, less pressured and more passionate to study.

Relationality and Interaction

The above example is about functioning relationally in school. However, school as an establishment is facing a true challenge from the learner experience of *nobody caring* (Noddings 1992; 2005). Our schools are too much factories tuned in to produce cognitive outcomes. We educators try to transform by developing our curricula, methodologies and learner centred pedagogical approaches, and with immense investments in evaluating the outcomes and ranking the schools and the teachers. This has not erased the perception of *nobody cares* amongst our learners, or enhanced leading and teaching the big picture. On the contrary, regardless of these efforts, individualization, alienation from the community, fragmentation of realities and the sense of meaninglessness are on the increase and the importance of school as a centre of learning is seriously challenged.

The problem is that we are oriented to singular outcomes, whereas we should reformulate our answer to Noddings' (2005) question, 'What should the schools be accountable for?' According to Noddings, schools should be offering their students a diversity of opportunities and choices, to better prepare them to cope with deep social change. She claims that many of us are alienated from the practical realities of our students' lives and teach compartmentalized disciplines packed with 'methodolatry.' Many of us use the means of the industrial era to respond to the demands of post-industrial social change, which as e.g. Hargreaves (2006) posits, requires an education that provides the learners with skills in multi-literacies and skills to learn them, creativity, ICT, teamwork, lifelong learning, adaptation, change, and environmental responsibility. Still, the key is missing.

This is where the relationality of caring leadership enters into the picture. Offering a diversity of opportunities and choices for our learners to acquire state of the art skills, knowledge and love for learning takes place in a relation. The basis of caring leadership is the relation between two parties, the one who cares and the one who is cared for. Noddings calls these parties *the carer and the cared for*. True relationality must be based on mutual consent and accepted by the cared for. Mutual, respectful and consistent relationality is a guarantee for true accountability, as it provides space to perceive the individuality of the learner, the individual expressed and inferred needs, talents and aspirations. In a school where learning takes place in relationality, everyone counts and matters, and they are not only cared for but they learn to care

through the behavioural examples around them and through the themes of care that they study. Noddings' advocacy is for the following themes of care to be studied: caring for the self, the inner circle, the distant others, the earth, the man made environment and ideas (Noddings 1992; 2005). Other voices, such as Caldwell and Spinks (2008) challenge us to rethink teaching, learning and administration for the learners to become the focus.

Relationality takes place in interaction, and learning relies on social interaction and dialogue both for individuals and for organisations. As Collinson and Cook (2007) state, the social system influences the process of learning, and the relationships between the members of the organisation are the essential parts of this system. Dialogue, i.e. questioning, advising, deciding, arguing, and conversation bloom in positive relationships where mutual respect and responsibility are shared experiences (Brown 1994). Interaction and relationships are in the heart of socio-constructivist learning, which is a human centred learning concept. The quality of relationality, interaction and dialogue are all decisive factors also in the organisational culture and working climate.

Sharing Expertise, Leadership and Team Work

Relationality, interaction and every party having a voice in the work environment promote the sharing of expertise and leadership, and hence learning as the classroom research example above demonstrates. In regard to bigger organisational entities, the same applies for organisational learning in an inclusive culture and work atmosphere. Instead of hierarchical, top down governance, the governance is lateral through team work and division of work through shared responsibilities and sharing experiences. A caring school leader endeavours to ensure that the teachers engage in sharing their expertise to develop their professional capacity together, and that the students are inculcated in the skills of sharing and team work as well, learning from experience how knowledge and understanding increase, reshape and diversify in the exchange, as do the interaction, intra- and interpersonal skills. This enhances the self-knowledge and self-esteem of the involved (Collinson and Cook 2007). This kind of leadership is in the core of pedagogical leadership, which empowers and enables instead of only instructing, ordering, assessing and evaluating (Caldwell and Spinks 2008; Müller and Hernandez 2010).

However, shared leadership does not remove the overall re-

sponsibility of the leader. The leader remains accountable for creating and maintaining the work culture and atmosphere conducive to the tasks in question and enhancing the big picture, in interaction with the members of the work community. Mosston's guided discovery method referred to above is an excellent tool for a leader engaging his people in shared leadership.

Multidimensional, Morally Responsible Leadership

Being responsible has a moral dimension because a responsible leader cares about the outcomes of their actions on the lives of others and our habitat. According to Starratt (2005), as the world is globalising, and we are challenged to decide whether we educate our children to be spectator tourists or proactive citizens of the world, a *multidimensional leader* is needed. S/he understands the various dimensions of the learning tasks that the schools inevitably face. This kind of leader has a moral vision of what is required from the whole community, and they are proactive in making multidimensional learning take place.

Starratt (1994; 2005) provides a five-tier model for development into a morally responsible leadership, those being (1) a human being; (2) a citizen and a public servant; (3) an educator; (4) an educational administrator; and (5) an educational leader. Each of them affects one another, but the two most important domains in developing into morally responsible leadership are the growth as a human being, and as a citizen and a public servant. It is only thereafter that the other domains can be reached. As stated earlier, the most important focus for the leader to develop into leadership is the leader him-/herself (see also Fullan 2005; Collinson and Cook 2007) This tenet is enriched by Starratt's three ethics, those of justice, critique and care providing depth to the development into moral responsibility, and as posited in this paper, the prerequisite is the conscious decision to care.

Passion and Emotions

Hargreaves (2005) says that caring and emotions are aspects of hope empowering both teachers and students, and that caring is to bring passion into the classroom and to change the structures in such a manner that every teacher can engage in caring. Structures are indicative of our values. It is for the caring school leader to ensure that every teacher engages in caring in the way they teach and in the way they relate to others.

TABLE 1 On the Relationship between Coaching and Caring

<i>The common basis:</i> The leadership philosophy of the leader’s own growth and development.	
<i>Coaching leadership:</i>	<i>Caring leadership:</i>
Know yourself, self-esteem, see the big picture.	Know yourself, self-esteem, see the big picture
Conscious decision to take and to give responsibility; to engage in own growth, to relate to the other with mutual consent.	Conscious decision to care, to take and give responsibility, to engage in own growth, to relate to the other with mutual consent.
Interaction, relationality with the other(s), mutual consent, trust, everyone counts and matters, full involvement = human being in centre.	Interaction, relationality with the other(s), mutual consent, trust, everyone counts and matters, full involvement = human being in centre.
Presence, positive drive, inclusion.	Presence, positive drive, learning how to care, experience how to be cared for.
Emotions, passion.	Emotions, passion.
<i>The common outcome:</i> Coaching and caring leadership based on humane behaviors, relationality, trust, empowerment and sharing responsibility engender creativity, innovativeness, situational intelligence, problem solving intelligence, environment free of intimidation, humiliation and oppression.	

A caring school leader recognises the emotional dimension of schooling, as emotions are essential human qualities, and emotional learning is necessary for cognitive learning. The caring, emotional aspect of relationships provides feelings of safety, security, and meaningfulness, and a sense of worth and happiness (Coleman 1995; Noddings 1992; 2005).

On Similarities between Coaching and Caring Leadership

Table 1 compiles similarities between coaching and caring leadership, with their common basis and common outcomes. The common basis is the leadership philosophy that the leader’s own growth and development are the basis of leading people. The similarities consist of strong identity building, and of seeing the big picture, of conscious decision making on how to engage in this work, of interaction and relationality, of presence and positive drive, and of emotions and passion. The outcome is a working and learning environment devoid of intimidation, humiliation and oppression.

Conclusion

In conclusion, modern coaching leadership and caring leadership have much in common. Their basis is the humanistic concept of

the human being, and hence the concept of knowledge and learning is socio-constructivist and experiential.

Human-centeredness comes first, attention to knowledge acquisition and transfer comes second, but with a natural flow thanks to the mutual consent and trust in the relationality and interaction. The absence of intimidation, humiliation and oppression generates enthusiasm, innovation, commitment, meaningfulness and self-esteem, and flexible problem solving skills.

This paper was based on auto-ethnographic data in the fields of modern coaching leadership and caring leadership, as well as comparative discussions of the two researchers, and was the first attempt to map the similarities in this leadership territory. As the results of these approaches for organisational well-being and achievement are remarkable, the issue merits further research.

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