



INSIDE THE CIRCLE

DEVELOPING PITCHERS
FROM THE INSIDE OUT

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AGENDA

- Taking Inventory
- Our Role as a Coach
- 10 C's in the Circle
 - Activities & Drills
- Building Your Pitcher's Toolbox
- Feedback & Communication Styles
- The Big Three Questions



TAKING INVENTORY



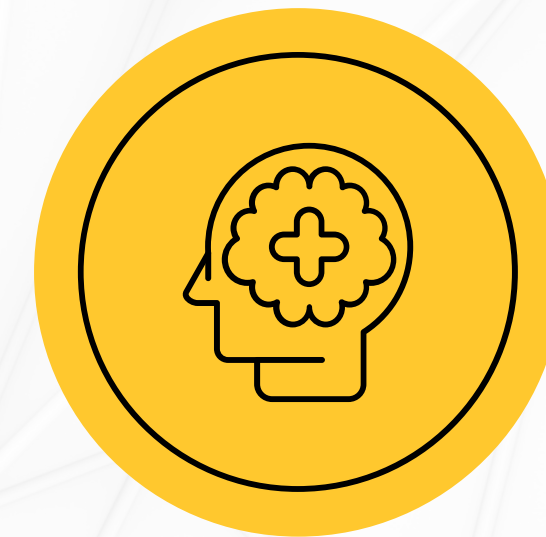
SKILL LEVEL

- Beginner
- Intermediate
 - B Level Travel Experience
- Advanced
 - A Level Travel Experience



PHYSICALITY

- Strength, endurance, flexibility, mobility
- How many innings/games can they pitch/catch?
- Willingness to pitch/catch multiple games?
- Current/previous injuries or health concerns



MENTAL TOUGHNESS

- Handling pressure & controlling the pace of the game
- Coachability, how do they respond to failure and feedback?
- Impact of mental health on their quality of life and ability to perform

OUR ROLE AS A COACH

Be intentional & deliberate about creating space to get to know your pitchers

- Build trust
- Conversations & reflections off the field

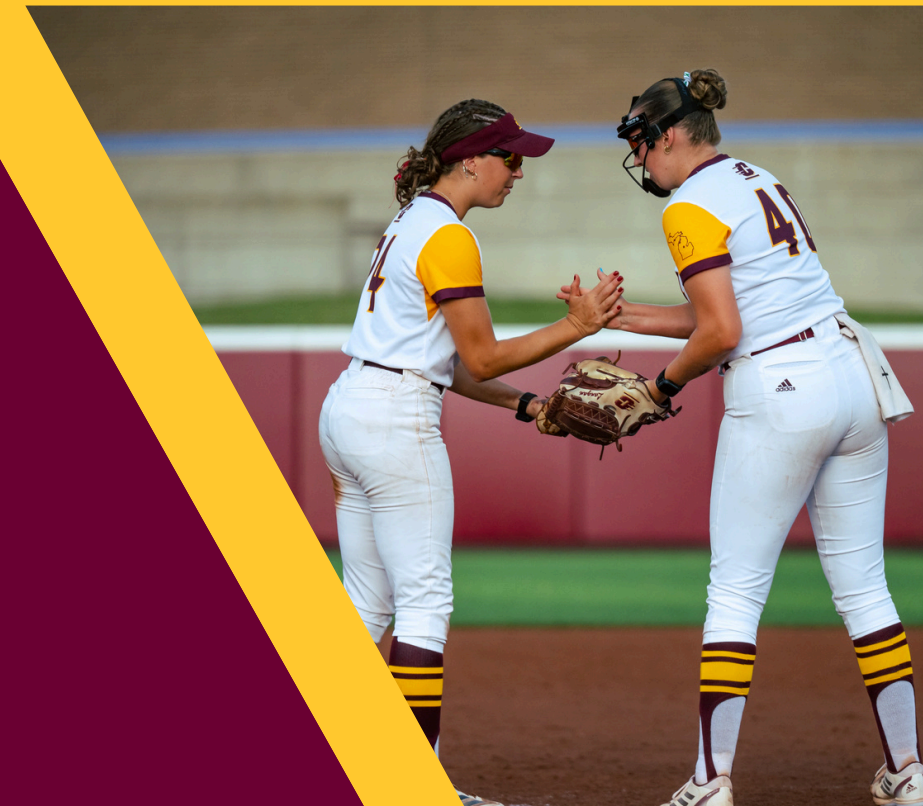
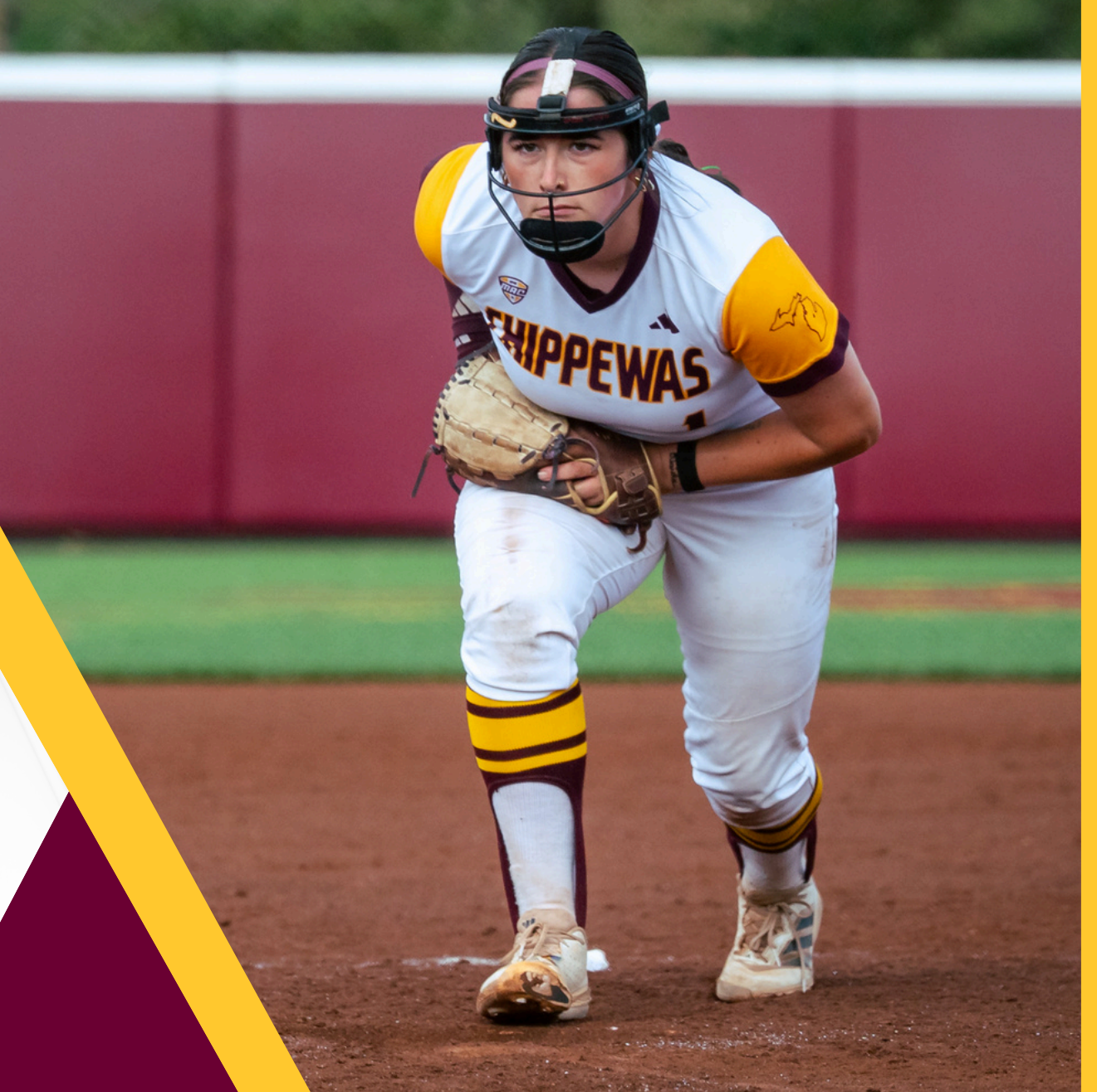
Help players find a way to give themselves their best chance at being successful

- Overcoming fear of failure & fear of judgement
- Help them become experts on themselves
- Accountability



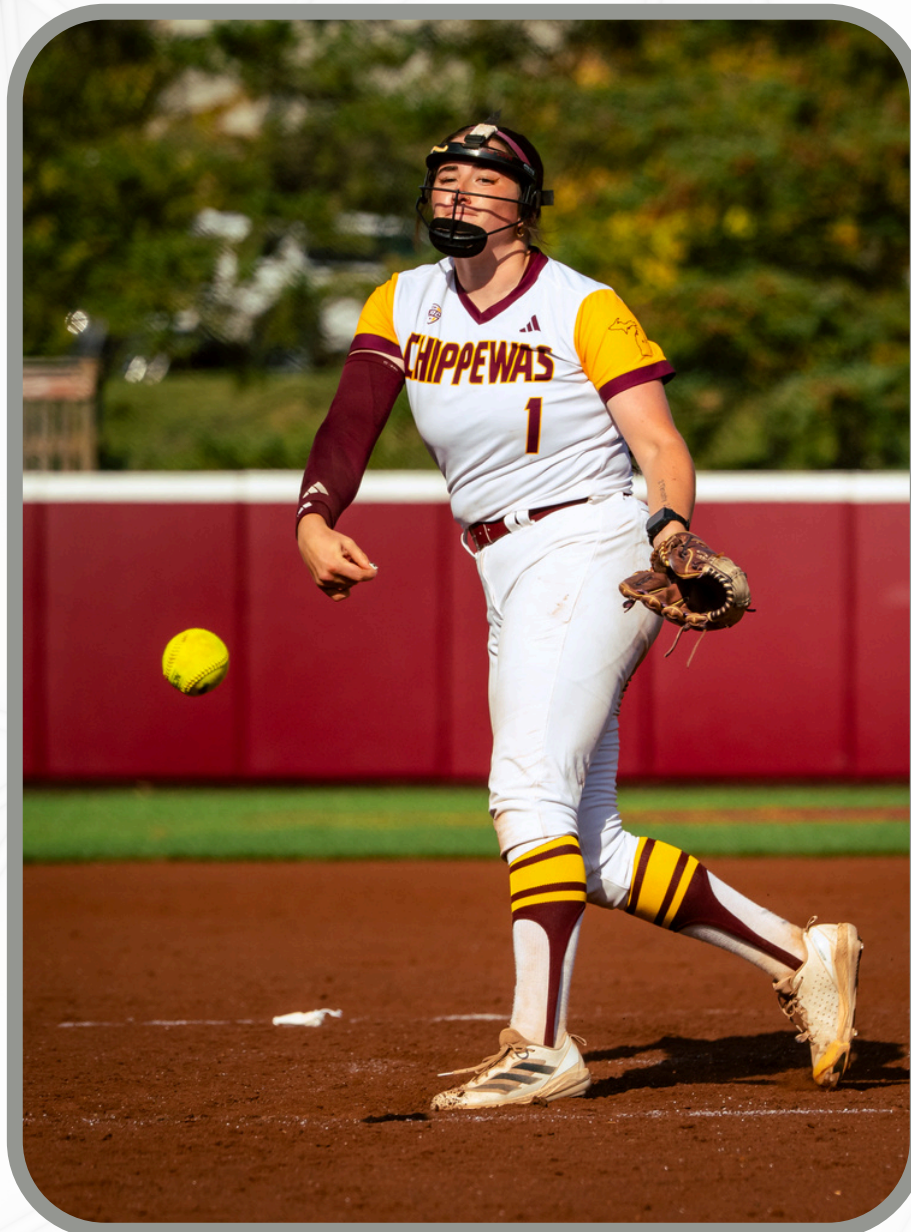
10 C'S IN THE CIRCLE

1. Confidence
2. Composure
3. Courage
4. Commitment
5. Consistency
6. Command
7. Connection
8. Competitiveness
9. Curiosity
10. Control the Controllables



CONFIDENCE

“You can’t beat the person who never gives up.”
– Babe Ruth



THE LEADER IN THE CIRCLE

- Presence in the circle
- Knowing pitches & being familiar with tendencies
- Who are they looking to after a pitch? Do they need validation?
- Go-to pitch
- Activity: What evidence do I already have that I’m prepared for this moment? Write 3 things you trust about your game today.
- Drill: Work on best pitch & change up, repeat spot even if it was a missed pitch

COMPOSURE

“Composure is the foundation of a strong and clear mind.”

–J.R. Rim

STAYING STEADY

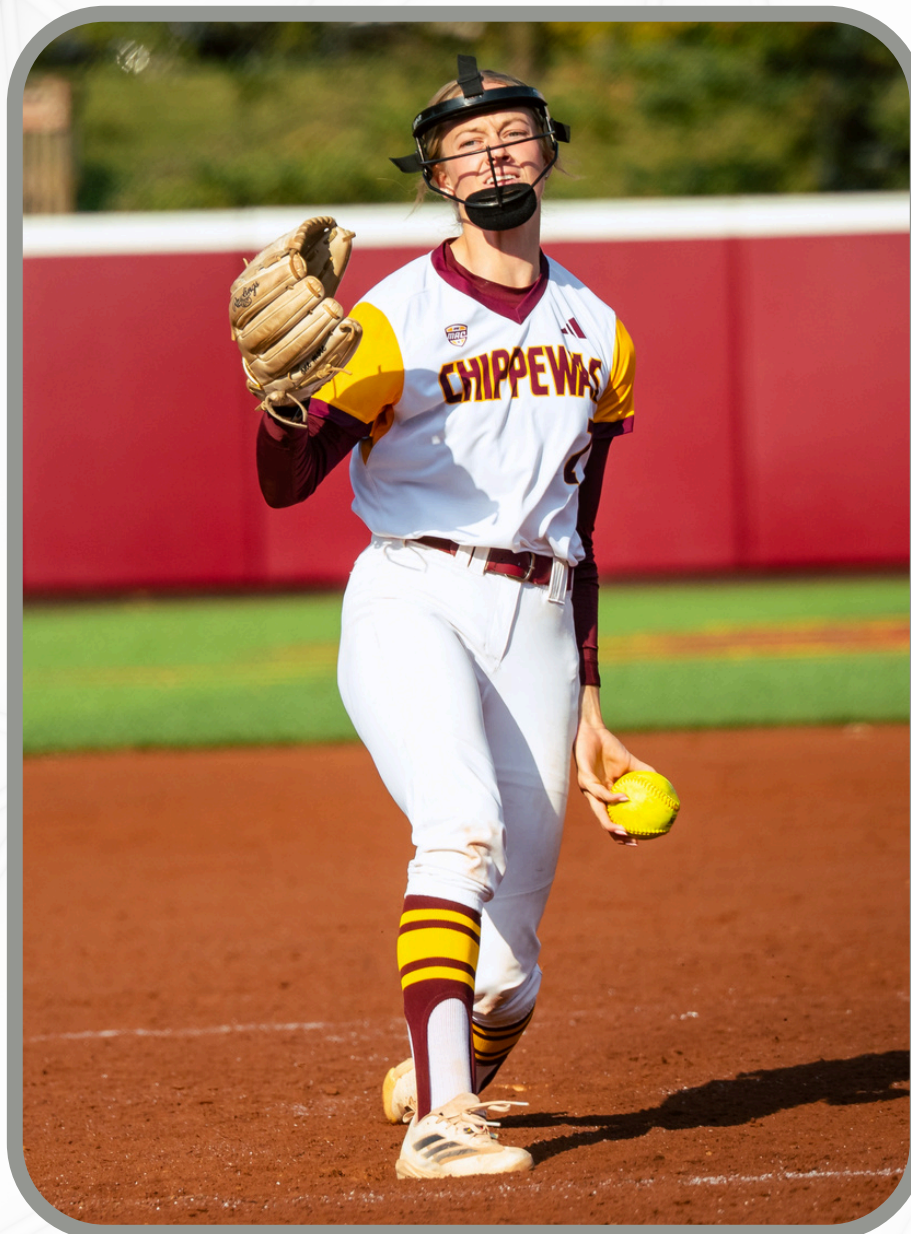
- Stay regulated even when outcomes shift, allow process to work
 - Breathwork
- Trusting that one moment doesn't define you
- Allow individuality - personality, performance characteristics, responses
- High leverage situation vs. high pressure
- Activity: What helps me reset when things don't go as planned? Create personal reset routine (breath, word/phrase, physical cue)
- Drill: High leverage situations, umpire takes away part of plate/plate shifted, practice reset in bullpen



COURAGE

“Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.”

– Robert F. Kennedy



CHOOSE BOLDNESS

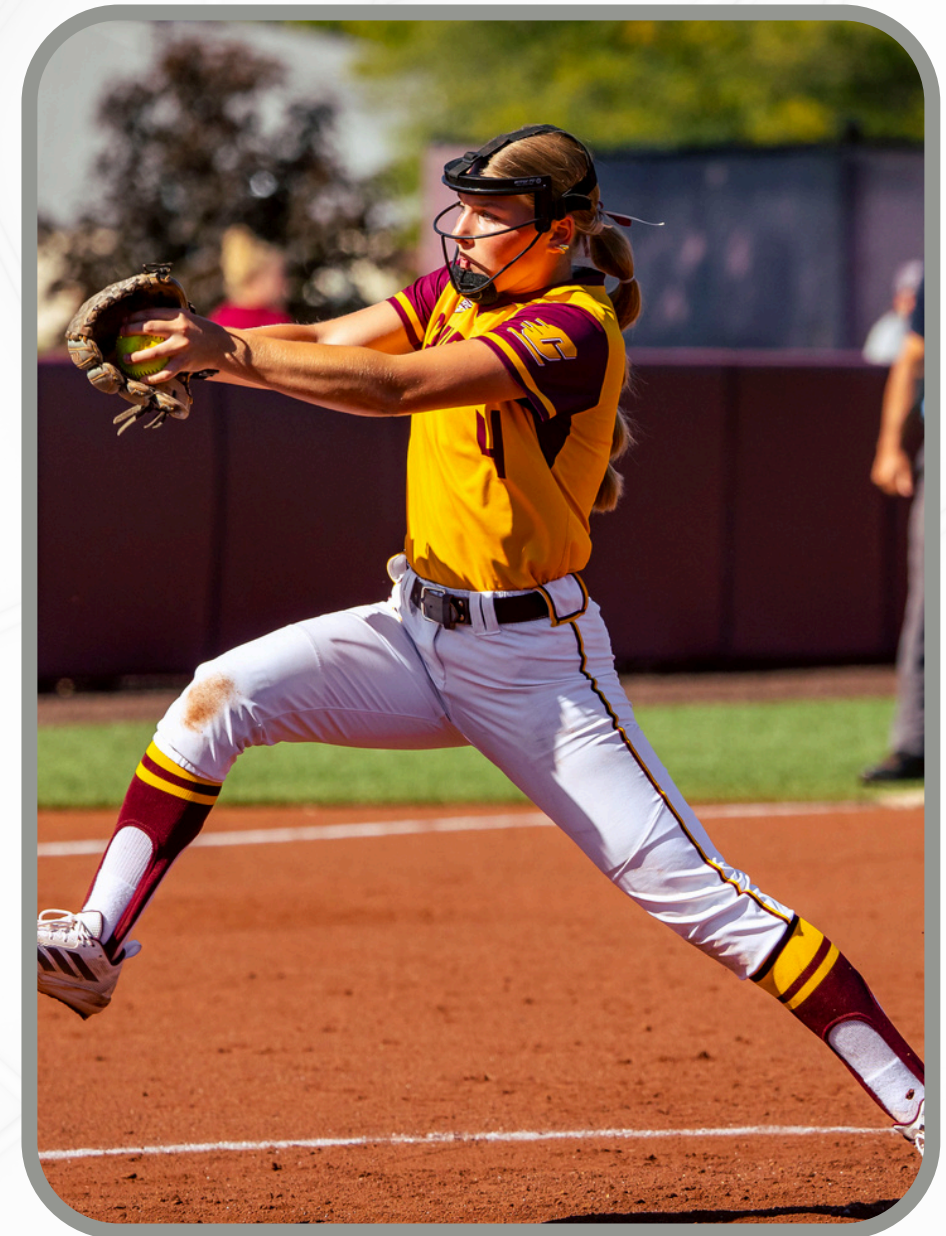
- Pitchers must be brave!
- Praise boldness & ANY adjustment
 - Don't wait for the perfect result
- Trust the process
- Activity: What would pitching freely look like right now? Choose one pitch or situation where you will choose boldness instead of safety.
- Drill: Did you go for it? Y/N (doesn't matter where pitch goes/answer out loud)

COMMITMENT

“Commitment is the foundation of great accomplishments.”
– Heidi Reeder

GOING ALL IN

- Commit to one pitch at a time
 - Conviction and belief
 - Green light to shake off
- All in with the staff
 - Not about YOU
- Activity: On pitches you didn't fully commit to, what were you protecting? What changes in your body when you protect instead of attack?
- Drill: Calling your own pitches, round of 5 with no mechanical feedback until after (committing to adjustment)



CONSISTENCY

“Consistency is better than perfection. We can all be consistent – perfection is impossible.”
– Michael Hyatt



TRUST THE ROUTINE

- Most important word in sports
- Mindset – understanding this is always accessible to you, sometimes harder to access
- Activity: How do you want to respond no matter what happens? Define one non-negotiable (body language, pace, routine)
- Drill: In a rows (3, 4, or 5!)

COMMAND

“Small wins compound into breakthroughs – celebrate the tiny victories.”
– Sarah Kwon

OWN THE ZONE

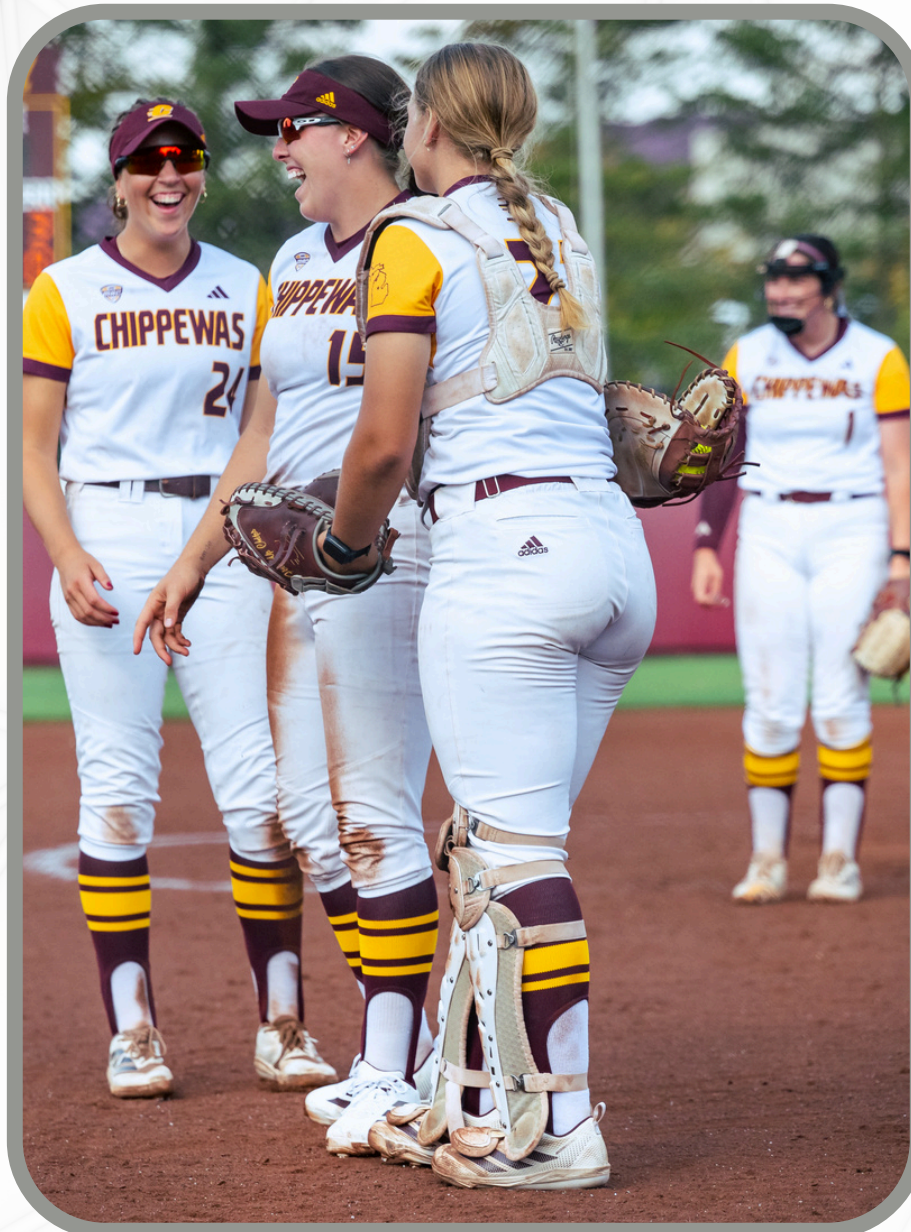
- Ability to command and control the zone
- Command over pitches
 - Opener, second, finisher
 - Change of speeds
- Command over self
- Activity: What parts of the zone feel easiest for you to attack right now? Which parts do you avoid? Does your intent change based on the pitch, zone, batter or umpire?
- Drill: Around the world, combos of opener, seconds, finishers

***** I never say “throw a strike!”



CONNECTION

“The best thing about sports is the sense of community and share emotion it can create.”
– Bob Costas



YOU'RE NEVER ALONE

- Team vs. hitter
- Charge your battery
 - Must establish chemistry, provide opportunities
- Cohesion amongst pitching staff
- Activity: Battery Activity
- Drill: Calling pitches for each other

Pitcher/Catcher Communication Questionnaire

Catcher Name _____

Pitcher Name _____

1. What is your best pitch?
2. What is your next best pitch?
3. What combo are you confident in throwing?
4. What is your weakest pitch?
5. What combo do you want/need to improve?
6. What do you like to throw...

Lead off?

Power hitter?

Slapper?

Bottom of the order?

7. Do you like me to come out to the mound?
8. What type of feedback do you find most helpful during a game?
9. What type of feedback do you find most helpful during practice?
10. How can I assist you in your pre-game warm up routine?
11. How can I adjust my approach if you're struggling with command?
12. In what ways can I help you stay focused and composed during a game?
13. How can I hold you accountable to trust your "reset" in game?

COMPETITIVENESS

“The best competition I have is against myself to become better.”
– John Wooden

BRING YOUR EDGE

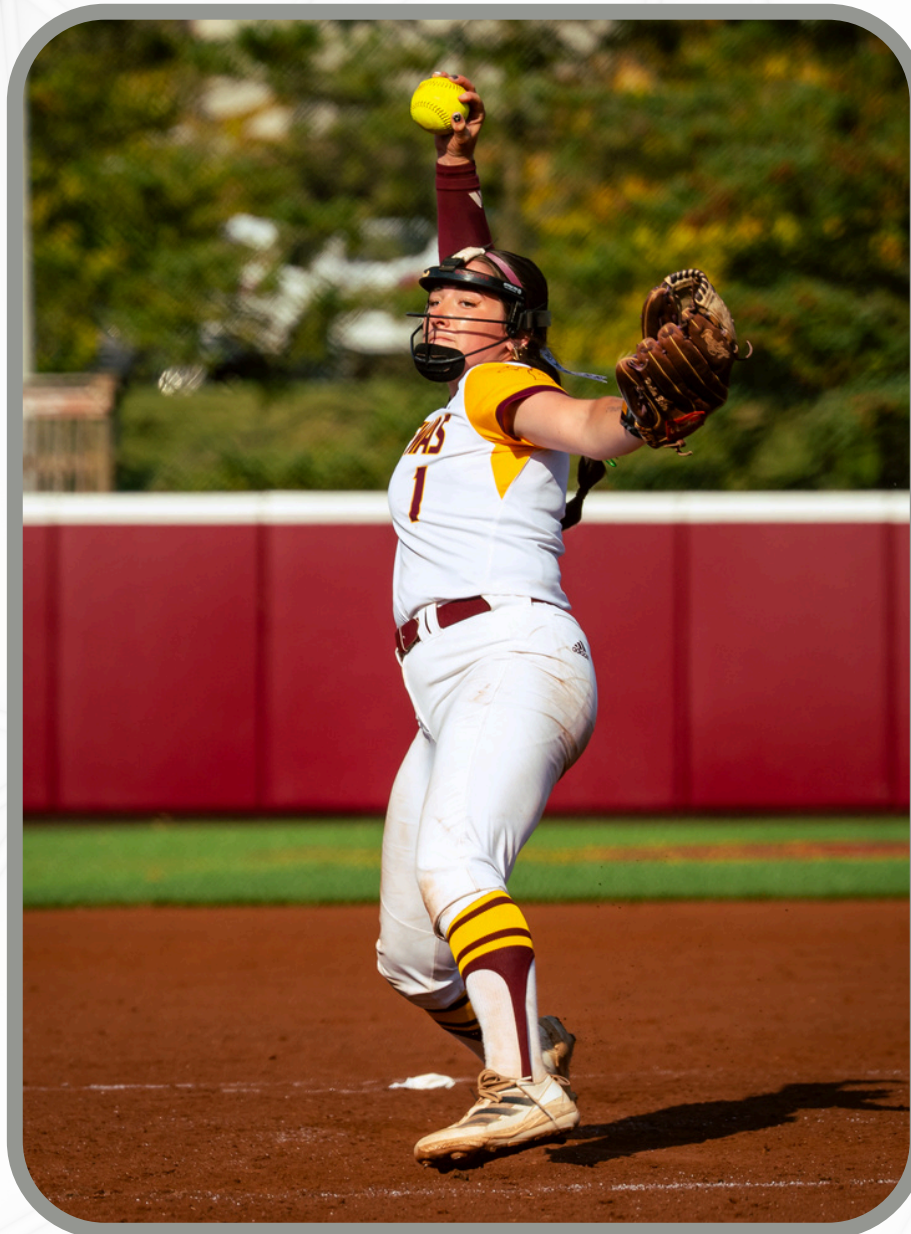
- Love the challenge
- Finding your flow & getting in the zone
 - What does it take for you to get there?
 - How can you access your flow/zone when you need to?
 - What are you naming it?
- Activity: What characteristics do I want to compete with today? Circle one word that represents how you want to compete (free, fierce, fun)
- Drill: CHIPS, 3 pitch challenge to get 2 strikes on batter, 2 pitchers vs. hitter (alternate each pitch)



CURIOSITY

“When we listen with curiosity, we don’t listen with the intent to reply. We listen for what’s behind the words.”

– Roy T. Bennett



BE CURIOUS, NOT JUDGMENTAL

- Coaches & pitchers
- Mindset example: “I wonder what adjustments I’ll get to make today”
- What can I learn about myself today even if it’s not my best day?
- Become an expert on yourself
- Activity: What’s your definition of success? What’s your definition of failure? (practice, games, etc.)
- Drill: Progression drill (choose 4 and rotate through, no repeats & no judgements)

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

“Focus like a laser beam on identifying and committing to changing only the things you can, and not being confused into trying to change the things you can’t.”

– Greg Harden

NEXT PITCH MINDSET

- Provides CLARITY
- Let go of uncontrollables or they control you
- Process driven
- Faith based and solution focused
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Activity: Control the controllables hand out, read Stay Sane in an Insane World by Greg Harden
- Drill: Overcome the obstacles

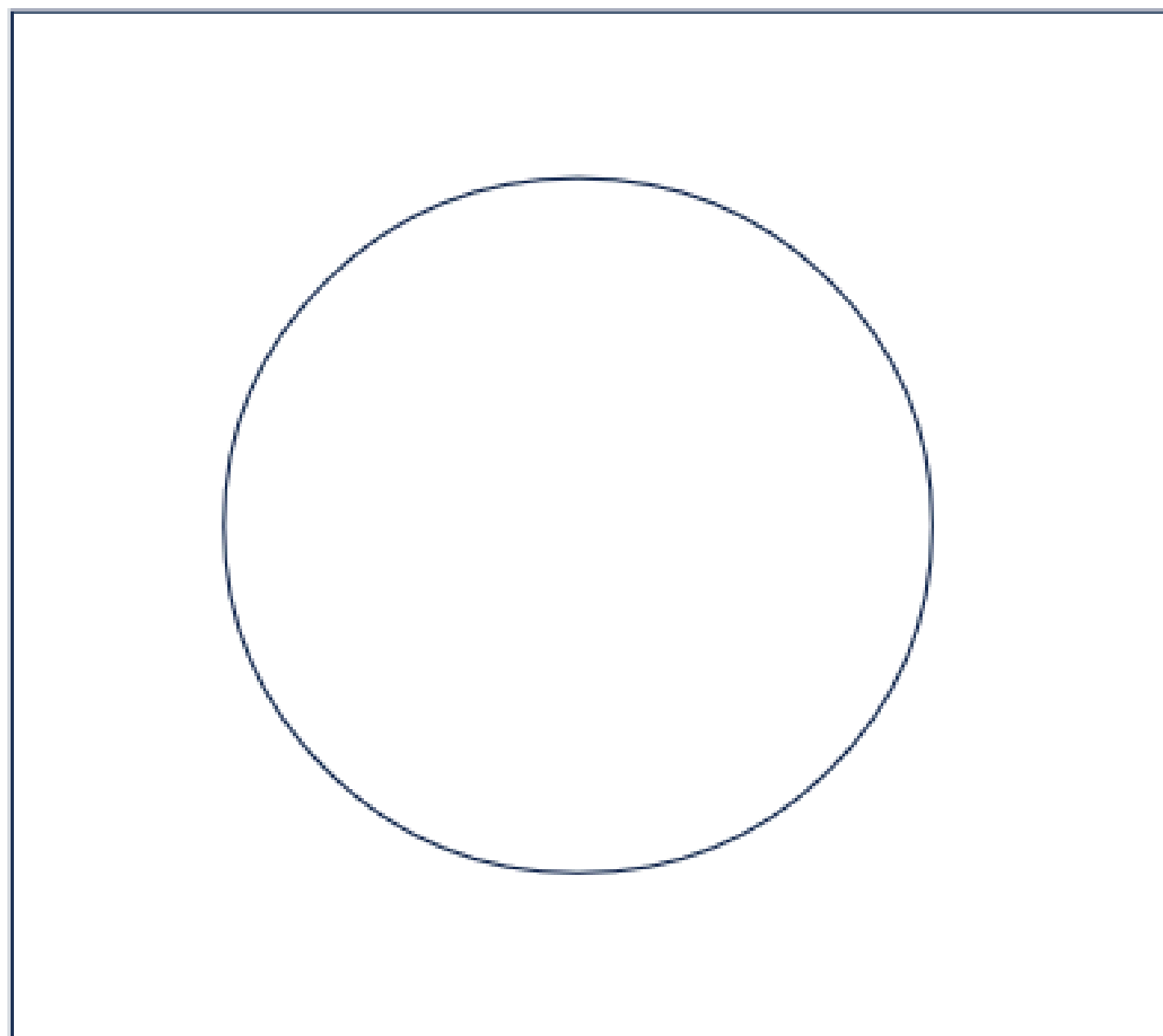


CHIPPEWA **SOFTBALL**™

Control the Controllables.

Why is this important embrace as a pitcher?

List things you can control as a pitcher in the inner circle. List things outside of your control in the square.



BUILDING YOUR PITCHER'S TOOLBOX

MOVING THROUGH SELF-AWARENESS TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT

- Modify dysfunctional thinking and unhelpful thinking styles
- Identify automatic negative thoughts & core beliefs
- Building toolbox of adjustments that work for them
- Problem solving process
 - Connectivity of pitching motion
- Ownership of drills that work for them

SETTING UP A BULLPEN

WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS!

1

INTENTION

What's going to be your specific intent during today's bullpen?

Encourage communication

Catchers learn pitcher's mechanics/spins

2

STRUCTURE

Duration & frequency
Pitch count: 60-90 pitches

Warm up
Drill Work
Pitching Sets
Challenge
Cool down

3

THEME

Specific Pitch Focus

Upper/Lower Half

4

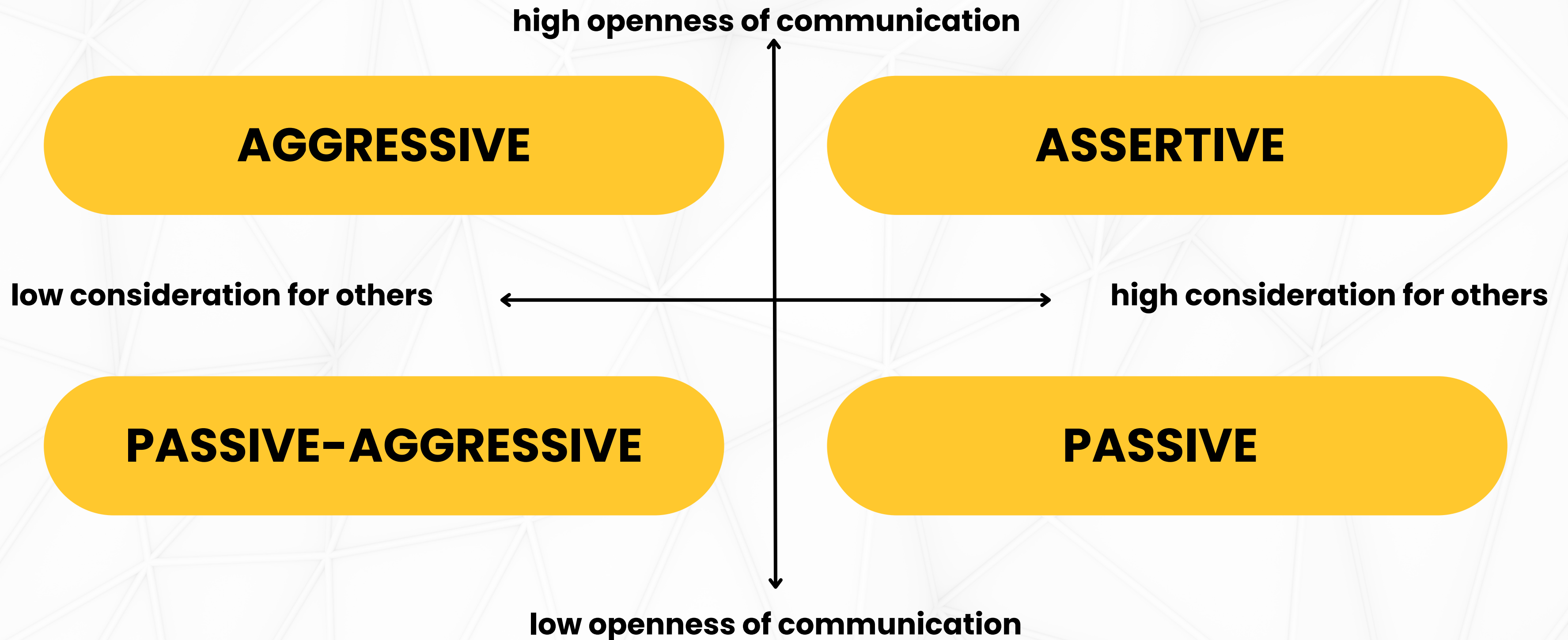
VARIATION

Mix it up!

Specific counts, sequences,
timed drills, partner work

Always working to get hitter
OUT!

COMMUNICATION STYLES



THE BIG 3

Did I go for it?

Was I on time?

Did I move it through the zone?





**THANK
YOU
MHSSCA!**

Questions?